



News, Research and Events

Oct. 6, 2021



Director of the Baker Institute announces retirement

Ambassador [Edward P. Djerejian](#) last week announced his retirement effective at the conclusion of his 28th year, on June 30, 2022.

[Click here](#) to read his remarks and those of former Secretary of State [James A. Baker, III](#), and Rice University President [David Leebron](#).

Commentary



Uncoupling vaccinations from politics: A call to action

“This is a moment to prioritise health over short-term political calculations,” write fellow [Peter Hotez](#), contributing expert [Rekha Lakshmanan](#) and nine other authorities in *The Lancet*. [Click here](#) for their call for action against anti-vaccine rhetoric and COVID-19 misinformation, and five short-term recommendations.



How chili peppers and federal funding led to a Nobel Prize

On Monday, David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian received the [2021 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology](#) for their research showing how our nervous system senses mechanical stimuli, cold and heat — including capsaicin from hot peppers. In a new post on the [Baker Institute Blog](#), fellow [Kirstin R.W. Matthews](#) notes their research was made possible by vital U.S. federal funding for science.

“Often, groups of color need to come together and galvanize around issues — because one issue that affects one population really affects all.”

[Quianta Moore](#), M.D., J.D., Huffington Fellow in Child Health Policy, at a conference discussion on [“The Repercussions of Racism on Mental Health”](#)

New research



Renewables reduce risk in mining, trade and politics.

In a [recent article in Energy Research & Social Science](#), energy fellow [Jim Krane](#) and graduate fellow [Robert Idel](#) demonstrate how transitioning to renewables enormously reduces the materials, mining and political risks involved compared to coal. Read their article [here](#).



Cartels planned, profited from latest border chaos.

Mexico's criminal organizations are undoubtedly responsible for the caravans of Haitian and other migrants that converged at the U.S.-Mexico border last month, writes nonresident fellow [Gary Hale](#). Smugglers aimed to take advantage of the chaos, sending multiple shipments of drugs into the U.S. Read more [here](#).

Center for Energy Studies and Baker Botts L.L.P. hold fifth annual energy summit



The [2021 Annual Energy Summit](#), co-hosted by the Baker Institute [Center for Energy Studies](#) and [Baker Botts L.L.P.](#), last week explored current issues affecting global energy markets, renewables and more through discussions with energy experts in industry, government and policy research. Former Secretary of State [James A. Baker, III](#) — our honorary chair — gave the keynote address on Sept. 30. Videos of the conference sessions are available on our [YouTube channel](#).

Upcoming Events

Using blockchain technology to improve capital access for entrepreneurs. The emerging use of blockchain technology and cryptocurrencies in financial services has the potential to transform small business lending and improve capital access for businesses excluded by conventional lending processes. In the third and final installment of its series on improving access to capital for entrepreneurs, the McNair Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth will host a panel discussion on these issues. **Oct. 6 | 2:00 p.m. CDT**

Member exclusive: Davoudi Emerging Leaders Lecture Series — Leadership and life in the private sector. This virtual event, the first of four planned for the fall's Davoudi Emerging Leaders Lecture Series, will feature Ann Fox, a Baker Institute board member and the president and CEO of Nine Energy Service Inc. Fox will discuss her experience as a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps and how it defined her leadership style as an executive in the energy sector. She will also provide her insights on the Baker Institute's role in today's public policy arena. Consider joining the [Roundtable Young Professionals](#) and enjoy this and other member benefits! **Oct. 8 | 8:00 a.m. CDT**

Get Involved with the Baker Institute

Become a member of the [Baker Institute Roundtable](#) and [Roundtable Young Professionals](#). Contact [our development office](#) for more information on how you can join the conversation on the relevant issues and ideas that shape our world, or text **BAKER** to **243725** to donate today!



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Rice University, MS-40, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251-1892