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News, Research and Events

April 1, 2022



## 2022 Baker Prize to honor Austin Tice, journalist and Marine Corps veteran still held captive in Syria

In recognition of his courage and service in reporting on Syria's civil war, veteran Marine Corps captain and journalist [Austin Bennett Tice](#) will be awarded the 2022 [James A. Baker III Prize for Excellence in Leadership](#) at a special public event on Wednesday, April 13.

In May 2012, while a student at Georgetown Law School, Tice traveled to Syria as a freelance journalist to report on the country's ongoing conflict. He was abducted at a roadside checkpoint near Damascus three months later, and six weeks after his capture, a video emerged showing a blindfolded Tice detained by unidentified armed men. In the nearly 10 years since, no person or entity has claimed responsibility for his captivity. The U.S. government, the Tice family and others have reason to believe that he is alive, and that the Syrian government is best able to assist with his secure release and safe return.

When Americans are taken hostage abroad, the U.S. government is duty bound to secure their release. However, three different presidential administrations over the past decade have so far been unsuccessful in obtaining Tice's freedom.

Tice's outstanding work exemplifies the values of the Baker Prize, which this year will be conferred for the eighth time in the Baker Institute's 28-year history. At the April 13 event, Baker Institute Director Ambassador [Edward P. Djerejian](#) will provide welcome remarks, followed by a presentation of the prize by former Secretary of State and Baker Institute Honorary Chair [James A. Baker, III](#). Marc and Debra Tice will accept the award on behalf of Austin Tice, their son, and then deliver their own remarks.

For full event details and to register, [click here](#).

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***“Texas still burns more coal and emits more sulfur dioxide and other pollution than any other state. ... Even though a transition is inevitable, it's urgent that we move off coal as quickly as possible to improve air quality and health.”***

[Daniel Cohan](#), Baker Institute Rice Faculty Scholar, in [Futurity](#)

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**Latest research**



**A Bridge Over Troubled Water: LNG FSRUs Can Enhance European Energy Security.** The war in Ukraine could severely disrupt exports of Russian gas to Europe. Energy fellows [Steven R. Miles](#) and [Gabriel Collins](#) explain how existing LNG floating storage vessels can provide a rapidly implementable gas supply solution. Read their brief [here](#).



**Are Texas Hospitals Practicing Price Transparency?** A new report by fellow [Vivian Ho](#), health economics scholar [Marah Short](#) and co-authors finds that less than half of Texas hospitals are complying with federal price transparency regulations, despite a measure passed by the state Legislature intended to increase the financial penalty for noncompliance. Read it [here](#).



**The GCC and the Russia-Ukraine Crisis.** In an article for Arab Center Washington DC, Middle East fellow [Kristian Coates Ulrichsen](#) considers how the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council are responding to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and how the crisis could have numerous second-order consequences for the region. Read it [here](#).



**Venezuela Oil Sanctions: Not an Easy Fix.** A U.S. government delegation's visit to Caracas in March has led to speculation that sanctions on the Maduro regime could be lifted to rapidly ramp up Venezuelan oil production. But it may not be so simple, explain fellow [Francisco Monaldi](#) and co-author Luisa Palacios. Read their commentary [here](#).

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**The 24-hour annual fund challenge starts next week**



Next **Thursday, April 7**, is Rice University's **24-Hour Annual Fund Challenge**. The Baker Institute is grateful for the generous support it receives to produce independent, data-driven public policy research. Make your tax-deductible gift by clicking [here](#) to support the **Drug Policy Program** or [here](#) to support the Baker Institute General Program Fund on **Thursday, April 7**. Contact Rachel Smith with any questions at [rachel.smith@rice.edu](mailto:rachel.smith@rice.edu) or 713-348-4984.

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## Upcoming events

**Things Are Never So Bad That They Can't Get Worse: Inside the Collapse of Venezuela**. Author and journalist **William Neuman** discusses his newest book, which chronicles Venezuela's devastating slide from petro-riches to poverty. **April 4 | 6:30 pm CDT**

**Davoudi Emerging Leaders Lecture Series: A Conversation with Dr. Rola El-Serag**. At this member-exclusive webinar, **Dr. Rola El-Serag**, director of the Baker Institute **Center for Health and Biosciences**, shares her strategic vision for the center and explores public health issues brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic. Join the **Roundtable Young Professionals** to enjoy this and other exclusive events! **April 7 | 8:30 am CDT**

**Developing the Next Generation of Civic Scientists: Rice Science Policy Symposium**. The next generation of civic scientists will have to contend with enormous challenges in the coming decades. This symposium explores a diverse range of science policy issues and topics of interest for early career professionals and the general public. **April 8 | 9:00 am CDT**

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## Get Involved with the Baker Institute

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