A New Chapter for Founding Director Ambassador Edward Djerejian

After serving for 28 years as the Founding Director of the Baker Institute, Ambassador Edward Djerejian is set to retire at the end of this month.

When Ambassador Djerejian was named Director of the institute in 1994, former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, the institute’s honorary chair, called him “simply one of the best diplomats I know.” An expert on foreign policy and Middle Eastern affairs, Ambassador Djerejian previously served under Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton. His appointments over 30 years of public service included U.S. ambassador to Israel and to the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Ambassador’s extensive Foreign Service experience prepared him well to lead the Baker Institute. By recruiting a team of distinguished fellows and scholars and launching the institute’s various centers and programs, the Ambassador has been
pivotal in establishing the Baker Institute's reputation as a respected source of nonpartisan research and furthering its mission of bridging the world of ideas and the world of action. Under his leadership, the institute quickly joined the ranks of the world's leading university think tanks, rising to the No. 1 position in 2021.

During Ambassador Djerejian's tenure, the institute has also hosted many esteemed speakers including five former U.S. presidents and heads of government and foreign dignitaries from around the world. Notable speakers over the years have included Madeleine Albright, Kofi Annan, Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama, among many others.

Following Ambassador Djerejian's departure, Ambassador David Satterfield, who has over four decades of diplomatic service and policy and leadership experience in the United States and overseas in the Near East and Europe, will take on the role of director of the institute.

"I could not be more delighted with my successor as director of the Baker Institute," Ambassador Djerejian said in a statement announcing the new director. "No one is better prepared than Ambassador David Satterfield to take on the institute's reins. He brings a most distinguished Foreign Service career, outstanding substantive and management skills as well as his extensive experience in policy formulation."

Ambassador Djerejian's legacy will continue in countless ways at the institute. In recognition of his service, he has been named a life member of the institute's board of advisors, and the Center for the Middle East has been renamed the Edward P. Djerejian Center for the Middle East. Room 111 in Baker Hall has also been named the Françoise and Edward Djerejian Founders Room to commemorate the remarkable work of Ambassador Djerejian and his wife, Françoise, in building the institute into what it is today.

As they begin a new chapter along the East Coast, the Djerejians will be closer to family, including their grandchildren. The Ambassador's future plans also include teaching at Harvard Kennedy School's Middle East Initiative, where he will be a senior fellow, and serving his third four-year term as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Visit our website to view a slideshow highlighting key moments of Ambassador Djerejian's tenure.

New from the Baker Institute Blog
Cryptocurrency Tax Implications in Senate Proposal

A new Senate bill “declares a position on most of the unclear yet critical issues” in regulating cryptocurrency, guidance that industry participants have been requesting for years. What are the key provisions in this bipartisan proposal? Read public finance fellow Joyce Beebe’s post on the Baker Institute Blog.

The Art of the Deal ... in Arabic

The Saudi leadership won a major U.S. concession while making a largely symbolic change in oil policy at an OPEC+ meeting earlier this month — and kept Russia on board with the plan. But consumers hoping for relief from rising prices at the pump are likely to be disappointed, writes Mark Finley, fellow in energy and global oil, on the Baker Institute Blog.

“Failing to develop new water supplies needed for a future severe drought places our state’s prosperity at risk. ... [We must] weigh the costs of inaction today in order to take the steps we need for tomorrow.”

Joyce Beebe, Fellow in Public Finance, in the Weatherford Democrat

Latest research

Can immigrants fix the U.S. labor shortage? A new paper by research scholar José Iván Rodriguez-Sanchez examines the economic impact of U.S. labor shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic and estimates how many unfilled jobs may exist by 2030. Higher levels of legal immigration could help ease the shortage of workers and boost the economy, he writes. Read it here.
Are heat pumps and solar panels needed for national defense? Solar panels, heat pumps and hydrogen all play a part in a clean energy economy, but are they “essential to the national defense”? Rice faculty scholar Daniel Cohan writes that efforts to expand their production must be accompanied by policies to stimulate demand. Read his article in The Conversation.

The origins of Saudi-Turkey rapprochement: Is it for real? A decade of increasingly confrontational policies that pitted Saudi and Turkish leaders against each other appears to have given way to a period of greater pragmatism in inter-regional relations. Middle East fellow Kristian Coates Ulrichsen explains why tensions are easing in an article for Responsible Statecraft.

China’s energy nationalism means coal is sticking around. In an article for Foreign Policy, energy fellow Gabriel Collins and co-author Andrew S. Erickson write that despite its COP26 green energy rhetoric, China has continued to expand its coal mine capacity. This is all the more reason why, they argue, climate cooperation with China simply won’t work. Read it here.

Recent events

Preventing Firearm Injury in the Greater Houston Area through Purpose and Policy. This symposium highlighted local research efforts in firearm injury prevention, public health-based community interventions and innovative strategies to address firearm injury and violence in the greater Houston area and beyond. Watch video of the event here.

Quarterly Oil Market Update. Prices at the pump are soaring. What’s happening in the oil market, and what does it mean for consumers, producers, the economy — and policy? Industry experts weighed in on the unprecedented challenges impacting the global oil market. Watch video of the event here.

Stay tuned for information about our fall events — coming soon!
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Become a member of the Baker Institute Roundtable, Corporate Roundtable or 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!