

RICE UNIVERSITY'S  
**BAKER INSTITUTE**  
FOR PUBLIC POLICY



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank in Houston, Texas. The institute produces independent research on domestic and foreign policy issues with a focus on providing decision-makers in the public and private sectors with relevant and timely policy assessments and recommendations.

By bringing statesmen, scholars and students together, the institute broadens the content and reach of its policy assessments and recommendations, and provides an open forum for debate and discussion.

The institute educates students on public policy issues and related subjects by offering courses at Rice University and sponsoring student intern and mentoring programs at home and abroad.



Above

From left, former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, former President Barack Obama and Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian attend a private reception before the Baker Institute 25th anniversary gala.

***“What makes me proud is that the institute is strictly nonpartisan. Frankly, it would be good if our dysfunctional political system could get back to being more civil and more willing to compromise to get things done. That’s the way our democracy works.”***

**THE HONORABLE JAMES A. BAKER, III**  
Honorary Chair

It is not without pride that I write today at the dawn of the second quarter-century for Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy. While we have made history throughout our brief time span and become a major global public policy institute, we vow to keep our sharp and steady focus on some of the most pressing issues facing our country and the international community. We shall continue to abide by our core mission and remain a nonpartisan, data-driven think tank whose research programs play to our comparative advantage. Our formula has proven itself, as is consistently reflected in our high rankings.

The Baker Institute provides an ideal forum for objective and well-informed discussion and debate on domestic and foreign policy challenges through our substantive research programs and events. To this end, our fellows and scholars produce relevant and timely policy analyses and recommendations to decision-makers in the private and public sectors, and the institute is a sought-after platform for national and international leaders to convey their views on crucial policy subjects.

Through our various centers, we strive to impact the study and formulation of policy issues, including energy, public finance, entrepreneurship and economic growth, presidential elections, space, drugs, health and biosciences, the Middle East, United States-Mexico relations and China, among other vital topics.

We are recruiting new fellows and scholars to broaden our research base and establishing collaborations with other think tanks and organizations, such as the Texas Medical Center. As we move forward, we are restructuring and upgrading our technological and communications capabilities to extend our outreach to wider national and international audiences. We do so through our website, the internet, social media, and our fellows' and scholars' personal outreach with decision-makers locally, nationally and internationally.

The Baker Institute is an integral part of Rice University. Our fellows and scholars are committed to teaching students on campus and in our Master of Global Affairs Program — in collaboration with the School of Social Sciences — as well as in the Master of Energy Economics Program, a joint effort of our Center for Energy Studies and the Economics Department. Our student internship programs are expanding in both the research and administrative fields.

In conclusion, it is my honor to convey my gratitude to our Board of Advisors, Roundtable and Roundtable Young Professionals members, as well as all our donors, for sharing our vision and mission along with the Rice administration, faculty, staff, students and community who assist in our noble endeavor. None of our past accomplishments or our future goals could become a reality without your generosity.



**EDWARD P. DJEREJIAN**

Director

# ENERGY STUDIES

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Although energy markets evolve constantly, the speed and geographical reach of today's energy transition is unprecedented. Thanks to its diverse team of experts, the **Center for Energy Studies (CES)** is uniquely positioned to explore the impact of new developments while devising market and policy scenarios to help facilitate the transition. This work includes issues like technological change in the conventional and unconventional oil and gas industry, opportunities and challenges in renewable generation, geopolitical and market shifts between old and new oil and gas producers, trade policy, and the developing world's quest to achieve economic growth and eradicate poverty — all at a time of heightened concerns about world's ability to address climate change.

CES research on global energy markets has been highlighted in books, reports, policy briefs and opinion pieces. Fellows and scholars organized and participated in conferences and workshops at the Baker Institute, and provided keynotes, lectures and workshops from West Texas to Venezuela, Mexico, Chile, Malaysia, South Korea, the UK, Greece, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Poland. Senior Director **Kenneth Medlock**'s testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources highlighted CES policy outreach and expertise in U.S. and global energy developments.

An annual conference co-hosted by Baker Botts on the economic, policy and technology drivers that influence global energy markets set the stage for the year that followed, with CES fellows and scholars building upon and going beyond this agenda.

Together with **Peter Hartley**, Medlock analyzed the evolution of liquified natural gas (LNG) markets and the effects of U.S. trade policy on Asia's energy markets. Using satellite data, **Gabriel Collins** and research associate **Elsie Hung** created an interactive map to illustrate oil trade in China. Collins also explored China's demand for motor fuels and delved into the geopolitical issues associated with China's rare minerals endowment, which is critical for electricity-powered transportation and renewable power. CES also shared its expertise on the impact of U.S. LNG exports on Asian markets with government and industry delegations from Korea, Japan and Southeast Asia.

**Jim Krane**'s research on the Gulf countries, including his new book "Energy Kingdoms," explored the challenges that unconventional oil and gas and climate action pose to Middle East energy-exporting countries. A conference on energy and politics in the Persian Gulf addressed similar concerns while adding geopolitical considerations and issues related to U.S. security.

Collins and **Anna Mikulska** explored the geo-economic effect

of U.S. LNG on Russia's natural gas market power and its influence in Europe. And Hartley reported on how the growing trade in LNG is impacting the pricing of LNG contracts.

CES also increased its focus on Latin America. **Francisco Monaldi**'s new initiative — the Latin American Energy Roundtable — brought in energy experts from Mexico, Venezuela, Guyana and Argentina. **Benigna Cortés Leiss** and **Adrian Duhalt** considered Mexico's energy reforms in light of a new administration less welcoming to foreign investment. Together with Mikulska and **Michael Maher**, Duhalt also analyzed the impacts a ban on shale development would have on natural gas development in Mexico. Monaldi and **Luis Pacheco** examined the negative impact of Venezuela's worsening economic and political conditions on its oil output, and the political and economic changes needed to turn the trend around. **Mark Jones** reflected on the potential effect of Argentina's 2019 elections on the country's shale development. The center also held events that considered the prospects and impacts of Guyana joining the leading ranks of oil producers, and the future of Venezuela.

CES experts additionally addressed environmental concerns of energy production and use. Collins expanded his research on water and wastewater issues in shale development in the Permian Basin,



*Former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, delivers a keynote address at an energy summit co-sponsored by Baker Botts.*

while **Rachel Meidl** focused on global concerns over plastic waste. Meidl, Medlock and Maher engaged in a multi-stakeholder collaboration to develop carbon capture projects at refineries and other industrial facilities on the Gulf Coast. The center hosted experts, including from Shell and Equinor, who addressed various paths to a less carbon-intensive future.

With the launch of an Energy and Minerals Program spearheaded by **Michelle Michot Foss**, CES is at the forefront of research that explores the relationship between minerals production and the pace and cost of renewable energy expansion. The program will look at the challenges

associated with the unprecedented amounts of lithium, platinum, copper, zinc and other rare earth minerals required for expansion in renewable generation and battery storage.

The CES' international scope is enhanced by its engagement with centers and scholars around the world, including in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, California, Colorado, the Persian Gulf, Mexico and Spain. With **Todd Moss**, executive director of the Energy for Growth Hub, CES embarked on research to reduce global poverty through better energy policies in Africa and elsewhere. The center also engaged a postdoctoral researcher from Mexico, research analysts from

Venezuela and Taiwan, and graduate students from Australia, Venezuela and Germany. As co-sponsors of the Master of Energy Economics Program, CES experts taught students from China, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Australia and the U.S.

The expansion in CES expertise is complemented by its growing outreach to industry, governments and the public. The CES has joined the T-20, a global group of think tanks, tasked to prepare energy-related briefs for the 2020 G-20 meetings in Saudi Arabia. CES also completed its second year as the curator of the energy transformation hub for the World Economic Forum.



Migration Policy Institute President Andrew Selee, left, and fellow Tony Payan at an event on the U.S.-Mexico relationship.



# UNITED STATES & MEXICO

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As differences over immigration and border security strained U.S.-Mexico relations this year, the **Center for the United States and Mexico** launched a series of initiatives to strengthen ties and explore new areas of cooperation.

One recently completed project uses an innovative methodology to forecast how 16 issues of concern to the U.S. and Mexico — from drug trafficking to shared groundwater — will fare if conditions improve, deteriorate or remain the same over the next 25 years. To ensure the forecasts have a bilateral perspective, each scenario is co-authored by scholars from both sides of the border. This study will help decision-makers understand the effects of their choices as they formulate new policies, says center director **Tony Payan**. Its findings will appear in a book published in English and in Spanish, and be widely disseminated in a series of Baker Institute reports in 2020.

Despite tariff and border tensions, U.S.-Mexico trade remains a major economic driver for both countries. In early 2019, Mexico became the United States' single largest source of imports, eclipsing China. Against this backdrop, fellow **David A. Gantz** assessed the renegotiated NAFTA — named the United States-Mexico-Canada

Agreement, or USMCA — to determine its effect on the U.S.-Mexico commercial relationship. Gantz wrote five Baker Institute reports that analyze the 1,800-page USMCA as a whole, and also focus on customs issues related to automotive trade; dispute settlement mechanisms; labor and environmental provisions; and energy. These issues are of vital importance to policymakers and the business sector throughout the United States, but particularly in border states such as Texas.

Center experts are also focusing on other issues critical to the U.S.-Mexico relationship, including policies to strengthen Mexico's rule of law. To increase understanding of the region's systemic corruption, the center held a conference that examined how the problem significantly affects neighboring countries in Latin America and some of the solutions available to advance public sector integrity. Similarly, postdoctoral research fellow **Jose Ivan Rodriguez-Sanchez** wrote about the social and political costs of corruption in Mexico, and further shed light on the issue through lengthy interviews with journalists in Mexico and the U.S.

The center is additionally advising Mexico's government as it creates a financial intelligence

system to track the money trail of drug traffickers and other felons. Research scholar **Rodrigo Montes de Oca** plans to analyze the intelligence laws and capabilities of the country's 32 states as a step toward a government network that crisscrosses Mexico and stretches to the U.S. and major world capitals. Separately, Payan is working with the governor of the state of Tamaulipas, which borders Texas, on developing policies to reduce crime and impunity.

The center has become a go-to source for journalists on both sides of the border. Its op-eds and other commentaries provide insight into issues like the border wall and the separation of immigrant families. To maintain a strong connection to the broader community, Payan and his team continue to hold lectures in Houston and across Texas to engage the public in a conversation about immigration. The events typically involve a short film on the history of U.S. immigration and personal stories, followed by an extended Q&A session with Payan. "We want to reach out to people at the grassroots level so that opinions, whatever they are, are informed by facts," he says.

# HEALTH & BIOSCIENCES

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When asked to identify the most important financial problem facing their family, Americans are likely to name health care costs more than any other issue. “Expenditures go up year after year and at this point, the best we can hope for is to slow the rate of growth,” says health economist **Vivian Ho**, director of the **Center for Health and Biosciences** (CHB).

To that end, the CHB continues to analyze ways to provide better care at a lower cost. Ho’s impact on the issue reflects her thorough, nonpartisan research that is valued by state and national decision-makers alike. Earlier this year, a major CHB study funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality showed that consolidation of hospitals with physician practices drove up costs, with no evidence of better quality. In a second CHB study released in 2019, analysis by Ho, nonresident fellow **Hagop Kantarjian** and their co-authors found that of total U.S. health care expenditures of \$3.21 trillion in 2015, only \$1.4 trillion to \$2.86 trillion was used to provide care to patients. “There are a number of opportunities to redirect expenditures to increase access to health care without the need for additional funding,” Ho said.

Ho and Kantarjian, chair of the leukemia department at MD Anderson Cancer Center, are also outspoken proponents for policies that reduce skyrocketing prescription drug prices. In commentaries and interviews with major news outlets, they provide fact-based assessments of policy solutions, including allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices and requiring justification for price increases that exceed 10% a year. “The research and development costs of drug companies do not justify higher prices in the U.S. Americans are paying twice — once to fund research that benefits the drug industry, and a second time for unjustified prices three to 10 times higher than other countries,” says Kantarjian.

Much of the public debate regarding health care reform this year has centered on whether Obamacare should be preserved or the U.S. should adopt Medicare-for-all. Ho explains that the latter, as-is, is not a practical alternative — not least because it would be prohibitively expensive. To improve public understanding of universal health care, she led a discussion of the subject at a CHB event in October 2018. Experts from Canada, the United Kingdom, Taiwan and

Germany talked about the benefits and weaknesses of their countries’ health care models, and the parts that could work best in the U.S.

In the coming year, the CHB will be seeking policy solutions that increase the negotiating power of consumers and employers — including Rice University — in the face of rising health care costs.

The CHB’s work also includes a global health agenda led by fellow **Peter Hotez**. His research and publications continue to bring neglected tropical diseases to the world’s attention and advance policies that can help millions lead full, healthy lives.

Another significant focus of the CHB is the **Child Health Policy Program**, founded on the well-established principle that the first few years of life set the trajectory for a child’s future. Early adverse experiences, such as neighborhood violence and neglect, can irreversibly impact a child’s brain development, leading to poor academic outcomes and economic instability as an adult. The program, led by fellow **Quianta Moore**, seeks to change this path through evidence-based policies that promote positive child development.



*Fellow Quanta Moore speaks with U.S. Rep. Dan Crenshaw after a congressional health care summit at the Baker Institute.*

This year, Moore created and led a parenting class for Houston-area participants in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. Using data from the class, Moore and her team will evaluate the feasibility of adding an early childhood development component to WIC, and the impact of doing so. She will work closely with city and county leaders to apply the findings to WIC.

The program also completed a comprehensive survey of the Third Ward and Sunnyside neighborhoods

in Houston. Community members went door-to-door, interviewing more than 2,000 residents about food security, transportation, personal safety and myriad other issues that affect daily life. The results will be distributed to government and private agencies with the goal of improving neighborhood conditions and the quality of life for residents and their children. “If children grow up in a safe, secure environment they are more likely to be healthy, productive adults,” Moore says.

Looking ahead, the program will expand a recently launched project on the mental health of children statewide.

Moore will also study the social determinants of health and the critical role of prevention in health care policy. This work will inform policies that address the link between social inequality and poor health, and support efforts to proactively advance positive health behaviors — ultimately improving health outcomes and lowering health care costs.

## PM Olmert's proposal to Abbas, Sep. 16, 2008



Gilead Sher, a Middle East fellow based in Tel Aviv, assesses the aftermath of Israel's 2019 elections.

# MIDDLE EAST

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Political, social and economic challenges continue to confront the broader Middle East region from Algeria to Sudan. Tense relations between the United States and Iran have sparked serious concerns over military miscalculation and escalation while, at the same time, there are slight indications of a possible dialogue. The intersection of Islam and politics remains a perennially important factor in the dynamics of the region. Moreover, the absence of an Israeli–Palestinian agreement is still a source of instability. These issues lead many to debate the region’s tenuous future. The **Center for the Middle East** (CME) addresses these questions through original research and policy recommendations.

CME fellows **A.Kadir Yildirim** and **Annelle Sheline** contributed valuable insights into the social and religious fabric of the region in the past year. Yildirim served as a principal investigator on both a Carnegie Corporation–funded project on pluralism following the 2011 Arab uprisings and a Luce Foundation–supported study on religious authority in the Middle East. He also convened two separate Washington, D.C.–based conferences with top scholars to present original survey data from these projects on the social and

religious opinions of individuals across the Middle East and North Africa. Sheline, the CME’s Zwan Postdoctoral Fellow, serves as a bridge between the institute and Rice’s Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance.

CME fellow **Kristian Coates Ulrichsen** is a noted expert on the politics of the Persian Gulf region. Ulrichsen’s October 2018 Washington Post piece provided a timely perspective on considerations among U.S. policymakers following journalist Jamal Khashoggi’s death. As a prolific author on the Gulf Cooperation Council, Ulrichsen has provided in–depth commentary and is cited frequently on the political–economic situation in the Gulf and intra–Gulf rivalries such as the rift between Qatar and its neighbors.

Against the backdrop of the ramifications of the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) and the tense relations between the two nations, the CME’s fellow on Iran, **Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar**, has provided critical analysis of U.S.–Iranian relations. In an April 2019 New York Times op–ed, he argued that anti–Americanism is growing stronger in Iran, even among those disenchanted with the Iranian regime. Tabaar’s recently published book, “Religious Statecraft: The

Politics of Islam in Iran,” has become an important reference.

In the wake of Israel’s elections and the Trump administration’s intentions to roll out its Israeli–Palestinian peace plan, the CME continued to build its focus on this central issue. The institute collaborated with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to produce a landmark study analyzing both the one–state and two–state models as potential solutions to this enduring conflict. CME fellow **Gilead Sher** made an April 2019 presentation at the Baker Institute on Israeli domestic politics and the future of the peace process. **Ambassador Edward Djerejian** visited Israel and the Palestinian territories in June 2019 to meet with key civil society and political figures as part of a joint Baker Institute–United States Institute for Peace project on the long–term prospects for a peace settlement.

Lastly, the dire refugee crisis in the Middle East has wide–reaching political and social implications regionally and globally. For this reason, the CME has appointed a new fellow, **Kelsey Norman**, to broaden the scope of the institute’s work on human rights in the Middle East through her expertise on refugee and migration issues.

# PUBLIC FINANCE

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The **Center for Public Finance** (CPF) continued its focus on a more sustainable, efficient and equitable fiscal environment, analyzing issues that informed policymakers at the federal, state and local levels.

The center's research agenda included rising property taxes and the deteriorating public school finance system, which have been sources of widespread contention in Texas. In response to the Texas Supreme Court's call for "transformational, top-to-bottom reforms" to school financing, fellow and CPF director **John Diamond** and public finance fellow **Jorge Barro** produced a report on the economic effects of several reform proposals. The findings were widely disseminated through Diamond's testimony before the Property Tax Reform Committee of the Texas Senate, meetings with members and staff of the Texas Legislature, private discussions and public presentations. Future CPF research is likely on two recently passed bills in the Texas Legislature that alter the way the state's schools are financed.

The center also addressed the mounting federal deficit, which will require major fiscal changes such as entitlement reforms and new revenue sources. Diamond and faculty scholar **George Zodrow** were

invited by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to model the economic effects of Social Security reform. They presented their preliminary findings at a fall 2018 CBO symposium and the 2019 Annual Spring Symposium of the National Tax Association.

Diamond and Zodrow additionally examined the economic effects of three alternative generic carbon taxes and a specific carbon tax proposed by Rep. Carlos Curbelo of Florida. Their papers were published by Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy. Barro's research on the distributional effects of state and local taxation is currently being used to supplement estimates produced by the state of Texas and is expected to play a major role in the scoring of tax reform proposals in the next legislative session.

The U.S. government's most recent reforms under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act led CPF fellows to evaluate the act's impact on businesses and individuals. Barro assessed its immediate and long-term economic effects on federal corporate income taxes. And in a series of Baker Institute reports, fellow **Joyce Beebe** examined how tax reforms affect the marriage penalty or subsidy, state and local tax deduction limits, student loans, and a tax on a child's unearned

income, such as interest and dividends. Beebe also focused on paid family leave policies, publishing an op-ed in *Houston Chronicle*.

The U.S. is additionally facing policy issues related to the taxation of the emerging digital economy and large U.S. technology companies. In several formats, Beebe assessed the federal policy considerations of taxing sharing economy companies such as Uber and Airbnb. She also wrote about the proliferation of European digital taxes on large U.S. technology companies, recent OECD efforts to reconcile U.S.-E.U. perspectives, and proposed a variety of policy options. Her work this year on a broad range of issues attracted extensive media coverage, from Bloomberg and NPR affiliates across the country to major newspapers and specialty law and accounting news outlets.

### *Opposite*

*The late Robert C. McNair, shown with student interns in 2016, was a great friend and supporter of the Baker Institute. The previous year, he generously endowed the McNair Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth.*



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP & ECONOMIC GROWTH

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The **McNair Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth** has a new director and fellow, **Jennifer Rabb**, who brings to the role many years of experience as a tax attorney representing businesses of all sizes, and insights on the lawmaking process from her work with the Texas Legislature and the state's lieutenant governor and comptroller.

Rabb applied her expertise during the 2019 session, when her proposal for transparency in property

tax rates was passed by legislators as Senate Bill 2 and signed into law by the governor. As a result, business and private property owners have a new opportunity to give timely input on their property tax bills beginning in 2020. Such efforts by Rabb and the team she is assembling will advance the McNair Center's recalibrated objective to focus on a broader concept of entrepreneurship — one that includes both Main Street or “mom and pop” businesses and

venture capital-backed startups, as both types of small businesses play substantial roles in the U.S. economy.

In the coming months, the center will focus on ways to simplify the formation of a new business and, separately, on the literacy and agency of property owners in the property tax process. In spring 2020, the center will host a conference to discuss the complex relationship between small business success and economic growth.



*Google Vice President Vint Cerf (right), with senior fellow Neal Lane, shares his vision for a free and open internet.*



# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Science and technology (S&T) underpin the nation's economy, quality jobs, national security, and innovations in health, energy, the environment — and most other things that are important to the American people. It is vitally important that evidence-based federal policies are in place to ensure that the public safely receives the benefits of new developments.

In view of this, the **Science and Technology Policy Program** is collaborating with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to update an influential earlier report, “Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream” — a call to action for stronger federal policies and investment to drive domestic research and development. The update, to be published in 2020, renews the appeal for funding and other support, focusing on recent global changes including U.S. innovation, our competitive position in the world and the rise of China in S&T.

The S&T program additionally established a long-term research project, funded by the National Science Foundation, to study the role of independent scientists and engineers as government advisors. In August 2018, the program published its first major report on the subject, documenting the recent history of the President's Council of Advisors

on Science and Technology (PCAST), an influential panel that counsels the White House on domestic policy issues related to science, technology, innovation and education. The report, authored by fellow **Kirstin Matthews** and scholar **Kenneth Evans**, provided recommendations for PCAST's organization and membership as a step toward shoring up the nation's lagging research and development leadership.

2019 also brought the alarming news of the world's first gene-edited babies. Matthews' ongoing research on the regulation of emerging biotechnologies positioned her to comment extensively in the national media on the social and ethical issues surrounding their birth. This outreach dovetailed with her long-standing focus on stem cell and human embryo research policy. In particular, Matthews has been a leading voice in the global conversation on the so-called “14-day rule,” which limits the time that human embryos can be cultured outside the womb. She and her collaborators organized a workshop in Switzerland with scholars from around the world to explore the scientific, ethical and legal implications of conducting research beyond the initial two weeks. They followed up with a series of Baker Institute papers on these issues, and recommendations for a rational policy response.

## DEBUNKING VACCINE MYTHS

As the anti-vaccine movement gained strength this year, health policy fellows **Peter Hotez** and **Kirstin Matthews** countered with a response grounded in science. Hotez — a renowned vaccine scientist and pediatrician — sustained public trust in vaccinations through interviews, academic studies and essays in publications from Newsweek to scientific journals. Though he became a target for harassment and threats, he continued to challenge the idea that vaccines cause autism and that diseases like measles are benign. “One thing is guaranteed: If your children are not vaccinated, they'll be at risk of potentially deadly infections from disease,” he says.

Matthews and a group of Rice University students traveled to Austin, where they met with state legislators and distributed a Baker Institute report on “Vaccine Myths and Challenges,” co-authored by Matthews and Rice graduate student Melody Tan. Such efforts informed Texas lawmakers, who shelved a bill that would have made it easier to opt out of vaccine requirements for school entry. “States with permissive vaccine exemption policies are among those seeing outbreaks today,” Matthews says.

# DRUG POLICY

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Cannabis law reform is spreading across the country. The majority of the U.S. population now lives in a state that has removed penalties for cannabis possession or legalized medicinal use, or created a commercial market for cannabis sales. Texas is one of 13 states where cannabis remains fully illegal. During the 2019 Texas legislative session, drug policy fellow **Katharine Neill Harris** testified in support of a bill that would have reduced penalties for possession of one ounce or less of marijuana from a Class B to a Class C misdemeanor, removing the threat of jail time and the stain of a criminal record. “The evidence shows that reducing penalties leads to fewer arrests and cost savings without causing increases in marijuana use or impaired driving,” she says. The bill got further along in the legislative

process than prior attempts at penalty reduction, passing in the House but stalling in the Senate.

Another bill with potential to advance Texas’ cannabis policy would have significantly expanded the state’s limited cannabis oil program.

**William Martin**, director of the **Drug Policy Program**, testified in favor of this bill, presenting evidence for the scientific basis for allowing cannabis use for certain conditions, such as PTSD, autism and chronic pain. Martin and Neill Harris also co-authored two Baker Institute reports and published op-eds in the *Houston Chronicle* explaining the fact-based merits of reducing penalties for cannabis possession and legalizing its use for medical purposes. After Martin’s testimony, confirmed by two physicians alongside him, the House committee chair noted his

considerable background in chemistry and said, “Why don’t we hear more concerning the biochemical makeup in regard to [cannabis]?” After further testimony, the committee unanimously voted to send the bill forward. Though weakened by Senate amendments, the final bill passed, with the House voting in favor by a margin of 136 to 5.

In contrast to the reluctance to reform Texas drug laws, criminal justice leaders in Harris County have increasingly sought to divert low-level drug offenders from incarceration to community services. In collaboration with the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, Neill Harris is currently working on a project assessing the challenges of drug diversion efforts in Harris County and opportunities for improvement.

***“The opioid epidemic is part of a larger problem of drug and alcohol misuse that affects millions of Americans every year. The policy response requires long-term interventions that address the many and complex drivers of addiction, including economic despair, mental illness and social isolation.”***

**KATHARINE NEILL HARRIS, PH.D.**

Alfred C. Glassell, III, Fellow in Drug Policy



*Drug policy fellow Katharine Neill Harris guest hosts a Baker Institute podcast on the opioid epidemic.*

# STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Across the nation, college students are increasingly engaging with policy matters, from marching for human rights and immigration reform, to driving conversations on social justice issues online and pressing public officials for accountability and action. These students are acutely aware of how policy impacts lives — and of their own ability to effect positive change. The Rice University students who participate in the Baker Institute’s outreach programs are an exceptional case in point.

For the past 15 years, the **Jesse Jones Leadership Center Summer in D.C. Policy Research Internship Program** has provided stipends to students who secure summer internships with think tanks, NGOs and government agencies in Washington, D.C. Through the program, students gain hands-on experience in policy research and analysis, including developing their own original policy research papers with guidance from Baker Institute experts. The 2018 cohort drafted policies that addressed challenges such as Central American migration and Medicaid expansion. Of the 102 alumni of the program who are currently working full-time, more than half are in the public sector, and about a third had or are continuing policy careers in D.C. and beyond,

says fellow **Steve Lewis**, who directs the program.

For students seeking to broaden their knowledge of public policy and its application, the **Baker Institute Student Forum (BISF)** fosters student participation in key issues of the day and introduces them to careers in public policy. “Students are keenly interested in issues ranging from U.S.–China relations, to drug policy, to affirmative action,” says fellow **Joe Barnes**, the BISF’s faculty advisor. This year, the BISF’s sixth annual undergraduate public policy competition focused on health and technology policy in the U.S. The finalists presented their proposals to a panel of industry experts and had the opportunity to network with leaders in the field. The BISF also held student debates on felon voting rights and domestic energy policy, soliciting debaters from the Rice College Republicans and Rice Young Democrats for a bipartisan examination of both issues.

The Baker Institute also provides students with opportunities to engage in policy internationally. The **Moscow Summer Intern Program** took six U.S. students to the Youth Space Center at the Bauman Moscow State Technical University this year. The students visited Russia’s space facilities, worked with teams of

international students to develop simulated space missions and learned about the international cooperation and innovation at the heart of 21st-century space exploration. Graduates of this program have gone on to work at NASA, SpaceX, Blue Origin and Virgin Galactica.

At the graduate level, the **Master of Global Affairs Program**, co-sponsored by the Baker Institute and Rice’s School of Social Sciences, welcomed its fifth class of students this fall. The unique, two-year course of study offers practical training for careers in government, the private sector and international organizations. The **Master of Energy Economics Program**, built upon programs in the Baker Institute Center for Energy Studies and Rice’s Economics Department, combines the study of market and economic principles with a deep understanding of the energy industry to prepare students for leadership roles in the energy sector.

*Opposite*

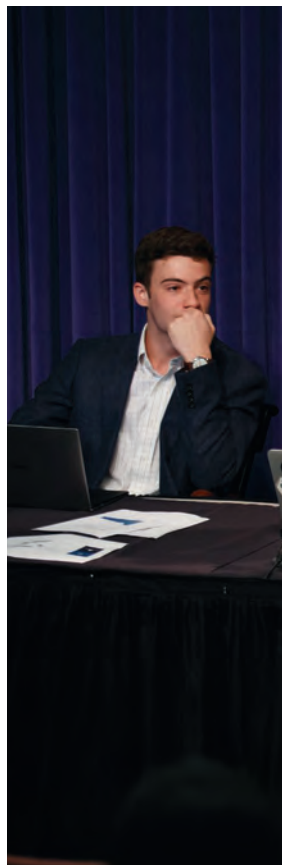
*Rice University students Eliza Martin and Teresa Smith win the 2019 Baker Institute Student Forum Undergraduate Policy Competition.*

***“The Baker Institute is one of the many educational resources at Rice, and students should take advantage of our opportunities for involvement. Adding an understanding of public policy is important for achieving growth inside and outside of the classroom.”***

**EDWARD P. DJEREJIAN**

Director, Baker Institute for Public Policy







*Clockwise from top left*

*2018 Summer in D.C. interns present their policy projects to institute fellows and Rice faculty members.*

*The Rice Young Democrats challenge the College Republicans at the Baker Institute Student Forum spring debate.*

*Moscow Summer Intern Program participants join Bauman Moscow State Technical University students in Orevo, Russia.*

*Baker Institute interns working the 25th anniversary gala meet former President Barack Obama.*

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

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The Baker Institute was privileged to host former President Barack Obama as the guest of honor at its 25th anniversary gala in November 2018. The event featured a conversation between Obama and former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, on the importance of bipartisanship, their experiences in office, and U.S. leadership abroad. More than 1,100 guests attended the event, which raised \$5.4 million to support the institute's longstanding commitment to independent policy research and informed debate. Two longtime friends of the institute, the Honorable Hushang Ansary and Mrs. Shahla Ansary, served as honorary chairs of the 25th anniversary year.





*Former President Barack Obama with James A. Baker, III, (foreground) and moderator Jon Meacham.*



- (1) Susan and Mac Dunwoody
- (2) John and Lynn Elsenhans with Nancy and Stephen Thorington
- (3) Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, Baker Institute director, with gala co-chairs Franci Neely, John L. Nau III and Andrea White
- (4) Steve and Sheila Miller
- (5) Bernard "Bun B" and Chalvalier "Queenie" Freeman
- (6) Former President Barack Obama with honorary chairs Hushang and Shahla Ansary
- (7) Rice University President David W. Leebron





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(8) Melza Barr

(9) James A. Baker, III, with moderator Jon Meacham and former President Barack Obama

(10) Anne and Charles Duncan

(11) Phoebe and Bobby Tudor

(12) Singer Michelle Williams

(13) Josh and Natalie Earnest

(14) Sheikh Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani and Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian

(15) Janet and Paul Hobby



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## A COMMITMENT TO OPEN DIALOGUE

From the start, the Baker Institute has provided an independent platform for leaders from all walks of life to discuss current policy issues. The images on these pages highlight some of the year's most prominent speakers.



*Clockwise from top left*

*As the #MeToo movement gains momentum, Anita Hill discusses the national reckoning about the treatment of women.*

*Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney meets with Rice students after a moderated conversation on public service.*

*A conference on U.S. economic growth featured a keynote address by Martin Feldstein, former chair of the Council of Economic Advisors.*

*Brian Mulroney, former prime minister of Canada, is the 2019 recipient of the Baker Prize for Excellence in Leadership.*

*Vice President Mike Pence outlines U.S. efforts to restore democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela.*





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## BAKER INSTITUTE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

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The funds raised for the 25th Anniversary Gala support our mission as a nonpartisan catalyst for the exchange of ideas and their translation into action. We extend our deepest gratitude for the philanthropy of donors that makes the work of the institute possible.

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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The fiscal year of Rice University's Baker Institute corresponds to that of the university, running from July 1 to June 30. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, the Baker Institute received \$14.80 million in revenue and spent \$13.14 million in expenses.

Fiscal year 2019 was exceptional for the institute due to the revenues and expenses of the 25th anniversary gala celebration in November 2018. The fundraising event raised a total of \$5.4 million, including \$2.7 million in FY19. Current use gifts from supporters and distributed earnings from the Baker Institute's endowment represented the two largest sources of revenue during the year. Revenue from research grants constituted 19% of the institute's total revenue.

Research expenses from the institute's policy centers and programs represent over two-thirds of all expenditures. The remaining expenses cover operating costs such as management and administrative staff salaries; communications, marketing and fundraising expenses; and building maintenance costs. All expenses relating to the 25th anniversary gala celebration are included in the budget as administrative costs.

In fiscal year 2020, the institute will continue to pursue sustainable endowment and current use funding to provide financial security for centers and programs to develop new initiatives and expand research activities in key policy areas.

## ENDOWMENT HISTORY

FISCAL YEAR	MARKET VALUE	EARNINGS DISTRIBUTED	NEW CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENDOWMENTS
2010	\$ 60.85	\$ 3.19	\$ 1.05
2011	\$ 65.19	\$ 3.26	\$ 1.44
2012	\$ 78.16	\$ 3.37	\$ 3.86
2013	\$ 81.31	\$ 3.33	\$ 1.08
2014	\$ 88.69	\$ 3.61	\$ —
2015	\$ 101.09	\$ 3.77	\$ 2.35
2016	\$ 104.24	\$ 4.43	\$ 0.01
2017	\$ 99.12	\$ 4.53	\$ 3.10
2018	\$ 113.05	\$ 4.69	\$ 1.10
<b>2019</b>	<b>\$ 119.75</b>	<b>\$ 5.01</b>	<b>\$ 4.70</b>

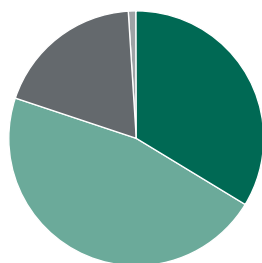
\*Market value as of June 30 of the previous fiscal year

(in millions of U.S. dollars)

## INCOME STATEMENT — FISCAL YEAR 2019

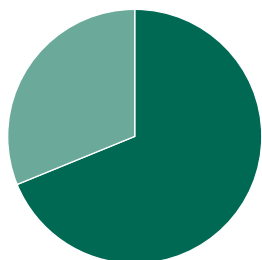
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 14.80</b>
Baker Institute endowment distribution	\$ 5.01
Current use gifts from supporters	\$ 6.95
Research grants	\$ 2.74
Rice University funds	\$ 0.10
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 13.14</b>
Research programs and grants	\$ 9.06
Administration, communications and development	\$ 4.08
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 1.66</b>

(in millions of U.S. dollars)



### REVENUE — FY2019

- Baker Institute endowment distribution (34%)
- Current use gifts from supporters (47%)
- Research grants (19%)
- Rice University funds (1%)



### EXPENSES — FY2019

- Research programs and grants (69%)
- Administration, communications and development (31%)

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