



THE HOWARD H.
BAKER JR
CENTER
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Marianne H. Wanamaker

We are doing the business of the American people... And if we cannot be civil to one another, and if we stop dealing with those with whom we disagree, or that we don't like, we would soon stop functioning altogether."

—SENATOR BAKER

For the past twenty years, the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy has been a vital part of the UT Knoxville campus through its research and engagement missions. In recognition of this history and of a rising need for skilled public problem solvers, **the Baker Center will become the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs on July 1, 2023**, giving us a new and essential academic mission. Despite being a state known for outstanding political leadership, the Baker School will be the first public policy school at any public institution in the State of Tennessee.

Our goal is to be a nationally known school graduating skilled public problem solvers, grounded in the legacy of Howard H. Baker Jr. and prepared to take leadership roles as public administrators, policymakers, policy entrepreneurs or candidates for public office.

Thank you for supporting us with your encouragement, your gifts, and your presence. We would not be where we are without you, and we will need your ongoing support in the days ahead as we work to make the Senator's dream for the Knoxville campus and the State of Tennessee a reality.

Marianne H. Wanamaker

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS
HOWARD H. BAKER JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY



Howard H. Baker Jr.

SENATOR HOWARD BAKER

The late Senator Howard H. Baker Jr., sometimes referred to as "The Great Conciliator," grew up in Huntsville, Tennessee, and served as a U.S. Senator, Senate Majority Leader, White House Chief of Staff, and U.S. Ambassador to Japan. His Senate leadership resulted in landmark legislation, including the Panama Canal Treaty and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

Founded in 2003, the Baker Center has sought to foster a living tribute to the legacy of Baker by conducting research, informing policy, and convening critical conversations. In 2023, the Baker Center will become the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs, the first school of its kind in the State of Tennessee.

COMING...
JULY 2023



BAKER SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Howard H Baker Jr. School of Public Policy and Public Affairs—the first such school at any public institution in the state—and the groundbreaking Institute of American Civics are dedicated to improving the health of our civic life. At a time of intense polarization, civic disengagement, and eroding public trust, we offer a way forward for those with the resolve to make things better. Our academic and public programs model productive, pluralistic debate; we educate future policy leaders to be tenacious builders of consensus and courageous champions for the public good. Civic renewal is not only possible but essential—and because our home is the University of Tennessee, we have the Volunteer determination to light the way.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

SARAH KEETON CAMPBELL ('04) is from Campbell County, TN. She was one of the earliest Baker Scholars. The inspiring legacy of Senator Baker captured Justice Campbell's interest as a student and influenced her to pursue a career committed to public service. After graduating from UTK, Justice Campbell went on to Duke Law, clerked at the U.S. Supreme Court and started her legal career before returning to Tennessee to serve with the Attorney General's office. In this role she quickly demonstrated leadership and thoughtfulness with the same acumen and grace she had displayed as a student. In February 2022, Justice Campbell began her tenure with the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Justice Campbell is not only an accomplished alum, she's an engaged one. She has mentored numerous students who want to pursue careers in law. She has worked directly with Student Programs to help the Center more fully define what it means to be a Baker Scholar and what the Center can do to support its students. With her help, the Center was able to build on all the great foundations that have been keeping this idea alive for twenty years. To her and those early Scholars, we say "thank you"!



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

From picking up Senator Howard Baker's laundry as a summer intern to serving as the Ambassador to Poland, **VICTOR ASHE** ('74) has a story to tell. In fact, he has many stories to tell. The former Knoxville Mayor and UT College of Law graduate, Victor Ashe began sharing his experiences in Poland with a small group of people over lunch at the Baker Center in 2010. That simple lunch has expanded to numerous lectures, delivered to hundreds of people, by special guests each year.

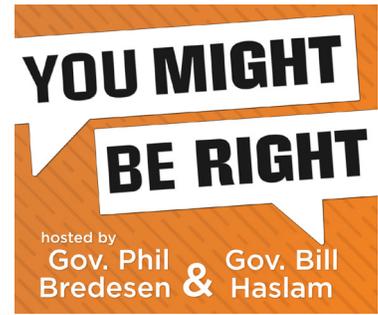
The Ashe Lecture Series, typically held twice a year, is fully supported financially by Victor Ashe. For Victor, bringing in special guests to deliver newsworthy thoughts and insights on world events continues his legacy of sharing global stories to people in his community. The Ashe Lecture Series hosts ambassadors, mayors, world leaders, and other renowned guests each year at the Baker Center. These lectures provide an audience made up of UT students, staff, faculty and the broader community a better understanding of our world. In Spring 2022, more than 600 people attended the Ashe Lecture with former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch.

Victor Ashe's generosity and support have been important parts of the Baker Center's growth and impact over the past several years. That growth and impact ultimately drove UT Leadership, the Board of Trustees, and the State of Tennessee to endorse the new Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs.

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*January 2021-December 2022



HOWARD H. BAKER JR.
CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

PODCAST

In September 2022, we were proud to launch the “You Might Be Right” podcast series hosted by former Tennessee governors Phil Bredesen and Bill Haslam. The podcast takes its name from Senator Baker’s famous quote that “the other fellow might be right.”

Bringing back Senator Baker-style civility and public policy debate, each episode of “You Might Be Right” tackles a tough topics such as gun violence, climate change, and the national debt. Notable guests in the first season included Lamar Alexander, Paul Ryan, Al Gore, Erskine Bowles, Nancy Ann DeParle, and Arne Duncan.

Over the course of the eight episode season, listeners downloaded the podcast 50,000 times, and the podcast hit No. 10 in Apple Politics podcasts and No. 1 in Apple Japan Politics.

The Baker Center is proud of the reach this podcast has achieved in its first season. We are excited to build on this success in the second season.

“Howard Baker was a Tennessee hero and my friend and mentor. I was lucky enough to work for him many years ago, and his advice in the face of disagreement—‘always keep in mind that the other side might be right’—has stuck with me ever since. It has never been more important for us to have thoughtful conversations focused on actually solving problems instead of just scoring points.”

—BILL HASLAM



“I always appreciated Howard Baker’s expertise and insight. We shared a particular interest in energy and environmental policy, and his bipartisan work on that issue and so many others is badly missing from politics today. I hope that these conversations can help spark a renewed interest in the civility and principled leadership that Senator Baker modeled throughout his remarkable career.”

—PHIL BREDESEN



Left to right: Former Tennessee governors Bill Haslam and Phil Bredesen



Former South Korea Ambassador Harry Harris with UT Students

CAMPUS EVENTS

The Ashe Lecture Series continues to be a point of pride in the extensive event schedule at the Baker Center. In April, we hosted former Ambassador to the Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch and had more than 600 people in attendance. Events are a critical component of our community engagement strategy and work to bring the world to Knoxville.

In addition to Ambassador Yovanovitch, we also were privileged to host social psychologist Jonathan Haidt, former House Speaker Paul Ryan and former U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp, to name a few speakers. Each speaker delivers timely, relevant and insightful perspectives on poignant topics within the Center's research areas.

Another standout event this year was "Constitutional Conversations." This series consisted of three separate events during the spring and fall, bringing together community and campus leaders, faculty and students to discuss the same difficult topics the Founding Fathers worked through during the formation of the U.S. Constitution.



Guests at the Constitutional Conversations dinner event



Former Ukrainian Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Student programs at the Baker Center had a monumental year. The Center engaged with more students than we ever have before. Context is important. The global pandemic seriously disrupted students' lives. A typical stint at college is four years. For this year's graduates, three of those four years had restrictive rules about socializing, a nearly wholesale shift to online learning, and limited opportunities for professional development such as internships and study abroad. In response to this adversity the students in our programs are thriving and hungry for engagement.

We added new team members to help handle the growing demand. We built new programming, reflecting the Center's widening impact. We have taken on local politics with gusto, and students are learning how government works as participants in the process. We're sending students to Japan to follow in Ambassador Baker's footsteps and learn more about one of the U.S.'s most important allies and a major investor in Tennessee's economy.

Our signature programs are brimming with bright students. The Baker Scholar program has two full cohorts. The exchange of ideas in the seminar is a joy to experience as 30 students share their work on topics from U.S.-China relations to the effect of environmentally-friendly labeling on consumer behavior to zoning in Knox County.

To help usher in the Baker School, we began planning a return of the Living and Learning Community, which will allow us to reach a wider audience of incoming students. From the day they step on campus, we will be able to plug them into our vibrant programming, providing a community of peers and mentors.

Our signature programs teach students the value of pragmatic problem solving. They are interdisciplinary and collaborative by nature and plug students into a network of scholars and partners across disciplines and sectors. They also guarantee that each student has first hand experience in the work of public service.



BAKER AMBASSADORS: Baker Ambassadors get professional mentorship from Baker Center staff and faculty. The students host events, interact with distinguished guests, and promote civic engagement at the University. The program is open to all students.

BAKER SCHOLARS: Baker Scholars is a thesis-writing program. Scholars either conduct research on a specific policy or undertake a creative initiative that contributes toward an understanding of public policy issues, governance, civic engagement, or public service. Each student is paired with a faculty advisor who acts as a resource and helps direct the student's project. The program is available to juniors and seniors of all majors.

WASHINGTON FELLOWS: A two-week study trip to Washington, D.C. Students meet with Washington insiders including elected officials, bureaucrats, lobbyists, and members of the media. Students explore the political system and experience how individuals work in policy-related fields. Fellows have the option of receiving course credit.

JAPAN AMBASSADORS: Modeled after the Washington Fellows, these Ambassadors explore Japanese culture, history, politics, and U.S.-Japanese relations, following in the footsteps of former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Howard Baker Jr. While in Japan the students will visit museums, cultural sites, think tanks, and Japanese government offices.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FELLOWS: Sets students up for success in internships and real-world experiences. We provide numerous local, state, and national opportunities for students through close relationships with government offices and campus partnerships. This program ensures our students have the tools necessary to feel confident navigating the public policy process. We provide individual mentorship, collaborative small-group workshops, and a supportive cohort of peers to provide a more robust environment.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

INSTITUTE OF
AMERICAN CIVICS

“In a time that cries out for civic action, we are in danger of becoming a nation of spectators.”

—NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CIVIC RENEWAL (1998)

The Tennessee General Assembly has charged the new Baker School with establishing the Institute of American Civics. The Institute’s legislated mission is to provide a deep and comprehensive civic education for University undergraduates and the state at large, including America’s founding principles, the economic and political institutions that maintain our American democracy, and the basics of civic participation.

In addition, the Institute is to model civil discourse and purposeful pluralism for all Tennesseans by embracing viewpoint diversity and the free exchange



Ambassador AB Culvahouse, UT President Randy Boyd and Chancellor Donde Plowman



Heidi Heikamp, Hallerin Hill and Paul Ryan

social scientists Arthur Brooks, Danielle Allen, and Robert George; and UT faculty members Amy Elias, Glenn Reynolds, Marianne Wanamaker, and Claudia Williamson-Kramer; and Tennessee higher education administrators Paul Stumb (Cumberland University) and Daniel Diermeier (Vanderbilt University) round out the board membership.

The Institute has launched a number of programs in its inaugural year, including voter education and engagement drives, public lectures, and new courses for UT students.



Chancellor Plowman and Secretary of State Hargett with award

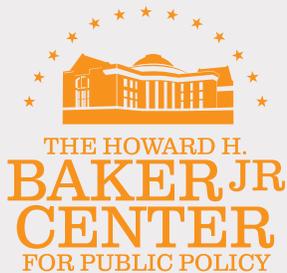
Read more about the Institute’s mission at tiny.utk.edu/InstituteWhitePaper.

Facing page: Secretary of State Tre Hargett presenting award for the Vols Vote Campaign.

“Registering to vote is the first step to making your voice heard at the polls. I hope these newly registered Vols become lifelong voters.”

—SECRETARY OF STATE TRE HARGETT





IN THE NEWS

BAKER CENTER PARTNERS WITH CITY OF KNOXVILLE ON STUDENT FELLOWS PROGRAM

In October we formalized an official agreement with the City of Knoxville for our students to work as fellows within city government in areas of interest to the student, giving the student valuable work experience and providing public service to the city.

Our partnership with the City of Knoxville provides meaningful opportunities for students to acquire real-world, hands-on experience that will prepare them for a career in public service.

“Programs like these exemplify the education we offer our students—one grounded in academic excellence, experiential learning, and service and leadership,” Chancellor Donde Plowman said.

In Fall 2022, there were four Baker Center students working among the city ranks, working with the chief operating officer, Communications, Community Empowerment and the Office of Sustainability.

“This is a win-win partnership,” Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon said. “The city benefits from the energy, talent, fresh ideas and new perspectives of the Baker Center Fellows. The students gain tangible real-world problem-solving experience, plus a paycheck for their hard work. It will be exciting to watch as the Baker Center Fellows program matures, and its students go on to become future leaders in public policy and public service.”

OPINION | RARE EARTH ELEMENTS COULD BE NEW FRONT IN STRUGGLE FOR U.S. ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(The following represents a condensed version of an op-ed appearing in the Knoxville News Sentinel written by Charles Sims, the director of the Energy and Environment program at the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, and Deborah Penchoff, a Baker Center fellow and associate director of the Innovative Computing Laboratory at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.)

The gasoline shortages of the 1970s and 1980s were created by trade embargoes and political upheaval in the small handful of countries responsible for the vast majority of global oil production.

Since that time, the US. has fought several wars in the Middle East and provided tremendous sums of foreign aid in its perpetual struggle to ensure a reliable supply of oil for U.S. consumers.

Unfortunately, there’s the potential to re-create the energy security problems of yesteryear with materials relied upon for today’s technology.

Rare earth elements (REEs) are vital components in computers, satellites, medical devices, cellphones, hybrid vehicles, batteries, lasers, steel production, clean energy and many other instruments used every day by Americans.

Without REEs, these devices do not work. And China has become the largest producer of rare earth elements in the world.

In 16 of the past 20 years, the U.S. has imported 100 percent of the REEs used in domestic manufacturing.

This dependence on foreign sources for such a critical resource presents an economic and national security risk to the U.S.

The U.S. has, however, two strategies at its disposal that are the focus of

continued

research efforts at universities, including the University of Tennessee.

The first strategy would be to find viable alternatives to REEs that allow firms to pivot away from REEs when global supply is disrupted.

The second strategy is to diversify its supply of REEs and become less reliant on a single country. Here the U.S. has three promising options. First is to improve processes for recycling rare earth elements from electronic waste, such as discarded laptops and cellphones. Second is to develop separation and refining processes that are less dependent on toxic chemicals or using supercomputers to increase the efficiency of the separation process

to reduce the environmental impact of these processes. Third is to leverage nontraditional reserves that contain REEs in higher concentrations than the underground reserves currently mined.

Successfully implementing any of these strategies will require altering the policy landscape to make new technologies more economically viable as well as federal investment in research and development.

Failure to understand the U.S.'s reliance on rare earth elements obtained from China and to make needed policy adjustments could land us with the same energy security challenges the U.S. experiences with oil dependence.

CLASS OF 2026 TAKES "VOL IS A VERB" PLEDGE

In August at the start of the school year, the Class of 2026 came together in Thompson-Boling Arena to take a new school pledge. The 'Vol is a Verb' pledge embodies the life and legacy of Senator Baker.

Started by the Dean of Students, the "Vol is a Verb" initiative is a call to action as a community to help make the campus a place where everyone belongs. At the request of the Dean of Students, our faculty and staff wrote this pledge for all future UT students to take.

Board members and staff brainstormed on the values and traits of Sen. Baker, ones that would promote his legacy through our

work. Those identified values and traits were used as a base for the writing of this pledge.

"The Vol is a Verb vision articulates what we hope students aspire to for themselves and for others- to create a campus environment that is thoughtful, challenging, and courageous," stated Senior Director, Katie Cahill. "The vision was inspired by the contributions of many great Volunteers who have been part of the campus community, most particularly Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. who served as

SGA President during his time at the University."

"VOL IS A VERB" PLEDGE

To Listen First,

**To Build Space for
Challenging ideas and diverse
points of view,**

**To Cultivate Relationships
that contribute to my growth
as an individual,**

**To respect myself and those
around me,**

**And to act with honesty,
compassion, and courage.**



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