

GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE

QUARTER TWO 2023

BUSH INSTITUTE BRIEFING



The Bush Institute is focused on ensuring opportunity for all,
strengthening democracy, and advancing free societies.



*President George W. Bush surprises SMU student veterans in Oval Office replica in the George W. Bush Presidential Museum.
(Grant Miller / George W. Bush Presidential Center)*

A NOTE FROM DAVID J. KRAMER

There's much to be proud of at the George W. Bush Institute as the summer winds down and we gear up for the fall after a very busy first half of the year.

In April, we hosted our sixth annual Forum on Leadership, which featured Glenn Youngkin, 74th Governor of Virginia, in a keynote conversation about governing in a polarized world with Ken Hersh, President and CEO of the George W. Bush Presidential Center. The event also explored the topics of empowering the next generation and the future of American capitalism.

A few days later, President George W. Bush [surprised a group of SMU student veterans](#) in the Oval Office replica during their tour of the George W. Bush Presidential Museum. The surprise marked the 10-year anniversary of the Bush Center opening its doors.

Three hundred schools across the country were awarded grants in May from the [Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries](#). The funds totaling \$1.5 million will be used to update and diversify book and print collections.

As part of the 2023 [Lindsay Lloyd North Korea Freedom Scholarship](#), the Bush Institute awarded a total of \$70,000

to 15 North Korean escapees pursuing higher education in the United States. We look forward to seeing these aspiring leaders make an impact in a variety of fields ranging from science and sociology to education, political science, and more.

I'm pleased to share that retired Army Lieutenant Colonel [Jason Galui recently joined the Bush Institute](#) as the Director for Veterans and Military Families. Jason served in the military for more than 20 years, on the National Security Council staff during two presidential administrations; he remains a Professor of Practice in Executive Education at SMU's Edwin L. Cox School of Business.

Thank you once again for your support of our work ensuring opportunity for all, strengthening our democracy, and advancing free societies.

Sincerely,



David J. Kramer
Executive Director, George W. Bush Institute

POLICY IN FOCUS

ENSURING OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE

The state of immigration

Laura Collins, Director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative and a highly regarded expert on immigration policy, authored an [op-ed](#) in the *Chicago Tribune* on the end of Title 42 and what's next for the U.S.-Mexico border.

As a [guest on WFAA's Y'all-itics podcast](#), Collins discussed how the end of Title 42 returned our southern border "to normal." In a [virtual event](#) hosted by the National Immigration Forum on the Afghan Adjustment Act, she also discussed options for Afghan parolees, solutions for Dreamers, and more.

Blueprint for Opportunity

Cullum Clark, Director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative, shared insights on the [Austin Next podcast](#) about challenges facing Austin and the Texas Triangle, including recommendations to address them. Clark also moderated a panel on urban innovation districts in the Americas before an audience of policymakers and practitioners at the Cities of the Americas Summit hosted by the U.S. State Department.

STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY

Civility and our institutions

Senior Editorial Advisor William McKenzie and Chris Walsh, Director of Freedom and Democracy at the Bush Institute, continued [The Pluralism Challenge](#) series and explored how three mayors have successfully governed in notoriously purple cities. In June, McKenzie [delivered remarks on media pluralism and the media's role in a democracy](#) to a group of NPR station managers from the West Coast, Gulf Coast, Midwest, and Texas.

Ken Hersh, President and CEO of the Bush Center, reminded us why our democracy is imperfect and why we must answer the call through op-eds published in the [Dallas Morning News](#) and [Real Clear Politics](#).

Inspiring the next generation

Brian O'Donnell, a 2015 Presidential Leadership Scholar, [launched a global campaign](#) to safeguard at least 30% of the world's lands and oceans by 2030 while simultaneously advancing Indigenous rights and significantly ramping up global finance for conservation. The [Presidential Leadership](#)

[Scholars program](#) inspired the campaign, which was supported by other Scholars in his class. At the end of 2022, at the U.N. Biodiversity Conference, nations across the globe committed to the largest conservation goal ever in an agreement known as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

In June, we concluded the final module of the [eighth class of Presidential Leadership Scholars](#), composed of educators, physicians, public servants, and corporate professionals. We are proud of the 60 Scholars and look forward to seeing how they continue to lead across divides.

ADVANCING FREE SOCIETIES

PEPFAR

In April, David J. Kramer, Executive Director of the Bush Institute, submitted a statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee before its hearing on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). "We can take great pride as Americans in the good we have done in saving lives and improving societies, even knowing our work is not yet done," Kramer wrote. "We can end the public health threat posed by AIDS as long as we sustain our commitment." Read additional excerpts from the statement in an op-ed for [The Hill](#).

On the 20th anniversary of PEPFAR's passage, Ken Hersh published an [op-ed](#) in the *Houston Chronicle* reminding us of the great success of the program.

Struggle for Freedom Series – Dr. Gulshan Abbas

Bush Institute Fellow Ellen Bork continued to profile democracy and human rights activists around the world in her monthly series, [The Struggle for Freedom](#). Political prisoner [Dr. Gulshan Abbas](#) was recently featured. She is one of an estimated 2 million Uyghurs imprisoned in Chinese internment camps.

The parallels between Ukraine and Taiwan

Igor Khrestin, the Bradford M. Freeman Managing Director of Global Policy at the Bush Institute, and Kramer authored an [op-ed in The Bulwark](#) on the parallels between Russia's war on Ukraine and China's relationship with Taiwan. They also wrote several articles that explained [developments in Ukraine](#) and the [U.S.-China relationship](#).

Broken China?

The [spring edition of The Catalyst: A Journal of Ideas from the Bush Institute](#) explored how China has drastically changed in the past two years. Experts looked at how the war in Ukraine, COVID-19, and President Xi Jinping's consolidation of near-absolute power have altered the country, and what this means for the United States.



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