

ILLUMINATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA'S MILLER CENTER

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**CONFERENCE ON THE
AMERICAN PRESIDENCY** p. 4

FINANCIAL REPORT p. 18

‘FAMOUS PEOPLE COME RIGHT UP TO ME’

MEET JOLINA DONG (UVA '27): MILLER CENTER INTERN AND ASPIRING LAWYER

Jolina Dong, a government and global studies major and native of Goshen, New York, has a passion for connecting with people from all backgrounds. Dong discovered the Miller Center by setting a goal during her first year at UVA: “I decided to talk to someone new every week, and one week an upperclassman mentioned the Miller Center.” Dong now welcomes visitors and provides administrative and event support to Alfred Reaves IV, the Center’s faculty and program coordinator, who describes Dong as “someone with a great future in public service.”

After UVA, Dong hopes to combine law, policy, and strategic communications to bridge the gap between government institutions and the communities they serve. She comments, “I’ve always been grateful for the opportunity to come to UVA. My parents never went to college, and my family didn’t speak a lot of English. Working at the Miller Center, I met Barbara Perry [cochair of the Center’s Presidential Oral History Program]. After my shifts, I would sometimes sit in her office and just talk. She has worked everywhere, in all three branches of government. She’s prominent. She has her own Wikipedia page. She’s everything I want to be. She encouraged me to apply for my dream internship at the Supreme Court, and I got it!”

In summer 2025, Dong spent 13 weeks at the Supreme Court’s Public Information Office as the only undergraduate intern. Dong helped manage “the dynamics between the Court and the press.” She continues, “I have met so many interesting people just by working at the Miller Center. Early on I met a cabinet member from President Trump’s first term. I tell my mom all the time, ‘I sit at the front desk, and famous people come right up to me!’”



BY THE NUMBERS **Q & A EDITION**

Q: HOW DID THE MILLER CENTER DRAW AN AUDIENCE OF MORE THAN 12,000 PEOPLE FOR THE CONFERENCE ON THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY ON SEPTEMBER 24–25, 2025?

A: Vigorous discussions attract robust audiences to the Miller Center. Our combination of practitioners, scholars, and journalists is unique. And our communications and audio-visual teams distribute our events beyond our Forum Room, via live webinar and YouTube. PBS News Hour’s website and C-SPAN are additional audience multipliers for us.

Q: HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE READING THE MILLER CENTER’S NEW SUBSTACK NEWSLETTER, “NOTES FROM THE MILLER CENTER”?

A: Nearly 1,200 readers have subscribed at uvamillercenter.substack.com and each article has averaged more than 1,700 views. The short essays feature expert commentary on the U.S. presidency and related topics, such as emergency powers, health care costs, and U.S. diplomacy.

Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST WATCHED SHORT VIDEO ON INSTAGRAM SINCE THE MILLER CENTER STARTED POSTING BRIEF EXCERPTS FROM PUBLIC EVENTS IN 2023?

A: A clip from the Center’s 2025 presidency conference has been viewed more than half a million times. The clip shows Philip Zelikow, who served as a senior diplomat in the George W. Bush administration, discussing how President Donald Trump’s Supreme Court tariff case is “the most important test of presidential power since the Truman administration.”

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millercenter.org/donate



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

By BILL ANTHOLIS *Director & CEO*

The Miller Center celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2025, marking five decades of exploring and engaging. In this issue of *Illumination*, we look ahead to the next 50 years—to 2075.

At first, “2075” looks like a year from a science fiction movie. But after the past half century, dizzying transformations should not come as a surprise.

From 1975 to 2025, our nation witnessed massive economic changes, from stagflation to technological transformation to market dynamism. Looking back over 50 years, we have seen enormous wealth creation but also increasing wealth inequality and lack of affordability for many Americans.

Politically, the Miller Center began during the Ford presidency, as the nation was recovering from Nixon’s Watergate scandal. We moved from the deep divides of the Vietnam War and the civil rights era into a period of competitive centrism, only to revert to crippling partisan polarization.

In global terms, the Center’s work has tracked the ups and downs of geopolitics. We’ve watched détente between the U.S. and the Soviet Union revert to Cold War hostility during the Carter and early Reagan administrations. We watched Soviet communism’s subsequent collapse, ushering in a period of global democratic capitalism. But that hopeful new world order quickly yielded to Middle East turmoil and a return to great power rivalry with Russia and China.

One can only imagine what the next 50 years have in store for us.

We’re embarking on our second half century with a renewal of our founding mission: The Miller Center explores how the American presidency meets national priorities and engages scholars with leading citizens to help solve major problems.

Just as we have since 1975, the Miller Center meets the moment with rigorous, nonpartisan scholarship. Our core historical work continued this spring, as we rolled out our latest oral history, the Barack Obama Oral History Project. Our team has two more oral history projects underway, addressing the first administration of Donald J. Trump and the Joseph R. Biden Jr. presidency.

Our full-time faculty—those who conduct White House oral histories and those who explore the secret Oval Office recordings—are looking forward, combing the archives across administrations for lessons from presidential

history for current and future leaders. They are increasingly using the latest data science tools to empower their research.

We are applying those learnings toward a new project to help shape and improve the modern presidency. In fall 2025, following a year of intensive research, we brought together more than 50 experts for our Conference on the American Presidency—former White House chiefs of staff and cabinet secretaries from both Republican and Democratic administrations, scholars, and journalists. This extraordinary bipartisan group is helping address a sobering reality: In recent decades, presidents from both parties have become more powerful, more partisan, and less popular.

As part of a new initiative, “The Presidency Project: Toward a Responsible and Effective Executive,” the Miller Center is actively exploring how to address challenges such as presidents’ excessively declaring emergencies, Congress failing to pass budgets, and government performance failing to earn public trust.

We are advancing our policy studies to help set agendas and frame debates around the issues that will shape the lives of the next few generations to come, especially in the areas of health care policy, democratic capitalism, and international affairs. And our treasured public events and special convenings continue a tradition of informed debate, intellectual honesty, and varied perspectives.

Fulfilling an ambitious mission requires the continued partnership of our dedicated community. The Miller Center is, and has always been, entirely a product of philanthropy. Individual presidents come and go, but with your partnership, the Miller Center’s vital work will continue for another half century and beyond. Thank you for your enduring belief in our work and our mission.



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FROM CONFERENCE TO PROJECT

TOWARD A MORE RESPONSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE PRESIDENCY

PARTICIPANTS FROM DAY 1 OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE AMERICAN
PRESIDENCY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

By Brielle Entzminger

Americans across party lines are increasingly concerned about the growth of presidential power. Recent presidents from both parties have significantly expanded executive authority. At the same time, presidents have become more prone to failure, challenged by major crises and dwindling public trust.

On September 24–25, 2025, more than 80 presidential experts scrutinized this paradox at the nonpartisan Miller Center’s second Conference on the American Presidency. Building on discussions from the Center’s 2023 conference, senior officials of Democratic and Republican administrations, presidential scholars, and Washington journalists proposed answers to the event’s central question: How can the nation foster a more responsible and effective presidency?

That two-day conference has now spawned a project aimed at helping reshape the American presidency.

DEMOCRACY AND BUREAUCRACY

Panelists opened the conference by examining issues facing what some experts regard as the most important place in government: the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

OMB reflects “the president’s priorities through the most powerful mechanism that the president has,” explained Joshua Bolten, who served as OMB director under President George W. Bush before becoming Bush’s White House Chief of Staff. In addition to assisting the president in preparing and implementing the federal budget, OMB reviews and coordinates legislative proposals, regulations, and testimony across executive agencies, ensuring they align with the president’s agenda.

Rachel Augustine Potter, associate professor of politics at the University of Virginia and a Miller Center faculty senior fellow, warned that the Trump administration’s effort to convert positions at OMB and other federal agencies—traditionally occupied by nonpartisan civil servants—into political appointments could undermine their effectiveness.

“If this is more of a political position, are you going to tell the boss what they don’t want to hear?” Potter asked. “Are you going to invest long term in the agency and in building institutions within it if you’re maybe not going to be there for a while?”

“So much expertise resides there,” added Bolten, “that politicizing those appointments undermines the president’s own ability to effectively control the government through OMB, because there’s a lot less capacity there.”

Several panelists noted that concerns surrounding OMB predate the Trump administration. As recent presidents have expanded executive power, the “power of the purse” has increasingly shifted from Congress to the White House, primarily through executive orders.

“If you do everything by fiat through executive order, the country has no continuity,” cautioned Shalanda Young, who served as OMB director under President Joe Biden.

SHARING POWERS

Some panelists urged Congress to take back its constitutional authority by making political compromises during the budgetary process and by passing individual appropriations bills promptly to avoid government shutdowns.

“It is hard to talk about the presidency and this consolidation without talking about a Congress that has refused to answer the moment,” said Young. “Congress has to decide on a bipartisan basis what they’re going to do about it.”

Discussing the controversy surrounding President Donald Trump’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), several speakers analyzed Trump’s concerns with bureaucracy and his drastic cuts to the federal workforce, as well as the difficulty in getting nominees through Congress.

“It has become incredibly burdensome to get nominees through the process and to get your policies in place,” said Everett Eissenstat, the Miller Center’s James R. Schlesinger Distinguished Professor, who served as deputy assistant to the president for international economic affairs in the first Trump administration. “[Trump’s] sense is that the bureaucracy or career officials are ‘holding me back from doing what I was elected to do,’” Eissenstat said.

“Many of the people who elected [Trump] were unemployed, felt unhappy with the way the economic system had served them since the early 2000s, and were looking, themselves, for a massive change in Washington, D.C.,” added Robert Blair, who served in the first Trump administration as special representative for international telecommunications policy.

Instead of trying to eliminate the bureaucracy and the accompanying checks on executive power, presidents should seek to reform the bureaucracy to better serve the country's needs, argued Alexander Bick, a Miller Center faculty senior fellow who served as director for strategic planning at the National Security Council in the Biden administration.

DOGE “is the theater of reform,” argued Bick. “The actual impact—budgetary, personnel, and organizational—has been minimal.”

Various speakers suggested Congress could counter-balance this growing increase in unilateral presidential authority, including by strengthening its resources to compete with the “expertise” within the executive branch, said Eissenstat.

But no change will occur without the public holding Congress accountable, some panelists stressed. Miller Center Practitioner Senior Fellow Mara Rudman, who held senior national security positions in the Obama and Clinton administrations and, before that, worked as chief counsel at the House Foreign Affairs Committee under chairman Lee Hamilton (D-IN), urged understanding of the powerful motivation of reelection, and the competing pulls of primary and general election processes.

“Until they are more worried about winning a general election than they are about being primaried or losing a primary, that balance isn't going to change,” Rudman said.

POLARIZATION AND PUBLIC TRUST

Further scrutinizing the growth in executive power, several panelists traced the birth of the modern presidency back to the New Deal, which created the network of executive departments and agencies that became the “administrative state.” However, the presidency did not become highly polarized until the 1960s, according to Sidney Milkis, the Miller Center's White Burkett Miller Professor of Governance and Foreign Affairs.

“Social issues coming from the culture wars of the 1960s—civil rights, sexual identity, immigration, law and order—[are] more polarizing and less subject to compromise,” said Milkis. “Both parties begin to look to the presidency [to] cut the Gordian knot of partisan gridlock and advance partisan causes.”

Polarization led to political parties being defined almost entirely by presidents—instead of by individual lawmakers connecting with their geographic constituencies, noted Philip Wallach, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Some speakers underscored the dangers of today's polarized environment in Congress. Power is no longer centered inside congressional committees but rather among party leaders, who do not encourage their members to negotiate. And many members prioritize social media over legislating.

“Both sides feel they have to demonstrate to their constituents, special interests, and their base that they are fighting really hard,” said Louisa Terrell, a Miller Center practitioner senior fellow who served as director of the White House Office of Legislative Affairs under President Biden.

Other panelists warned against relying on the judicial branch to check executive power. “Americans have to disenthral themselves from their dependence on the presidency” and not look to the president “to be their savior,” argued Milkis. Meanwhile, Congress needs legislators “who have

a different vision and are willing to stand up for it and make it appealing to the American people—apart from any ambitions on the presidency,” asserted Wallach. Generational change, Terrell hoped, could also help heal division across the government.

Closing out the conference, participants highlighted the dangers of unchecked emergency powers. As Congress has failed to challenge presidential emergency actions, the meaning of “emergency” has shifted from urgent national crisis to long-term political issues, including immigration, trade, and drug trafficking.

Pointing to more than 100 statutes that presidents of both parties have used to justify emergency actions, several speakers called on Congress to explicitly define what constitutes an emergency and to impose strict time limits for emergency declarations.

“We have emergencies [continuing] from 40 years ago,” said Saikrishna Prakash, a Miller Center faculty senior fellow and a professor in the UVA School of Law. “What Congress ought to do is say that all these emergency declarations last no more than six months. Then Congress can decide whether they ought to continue or not.”

“When there's a real emergency, Congress presumably will act,” Prakash continued. “And when there isn't, the policy will no longer apply.”



PARTICIPANTS FROM DAY 2 OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

THE PRESIDENCY PROJECT

Over the coming months, the Miller Center plans an ongoing initiative, “The Presidency Project: Toward a Responsible and Effective Executive,” focused on three issues that emerged from the conference.

Participants identified presidential emergency powers as a top priority for further research and convenings, to better define the proper balance between a president's constitutional responsibility to act on urgent challenges and the equally clear requirement for congressional support.

Most conference participants also felt that Congress was being reduced to a mere advisory council on a range of issues, meriting further investigation into potential reforms. And participants urged further exploration of the complex relationship between presidential performance and public trust.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 2025 PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE AT millercenter.org/2025conference

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRESIDENCY PROJECT AT presidencyproject.com

PEPFAR TO PAKISTAN

LESSONS IN PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

By Brielle Entzminger

In an era of partisan distrust and government upheaval, what does effective presidential leadership look like? Distinguished former government officials at the Miller Center's 2025 Conference on the American Presidency shared what drove the success of two defining moments of presidential leadership: President George W. Bush's President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and President Barack Obama's 2011 raid against Osama bin Laden.

PEPFAR: "SOMETHING BIGGER"

The first discussion explored how President Bush helped save an estimated 25 million lives. The global AIDS epidemic was not a priority on George W. Bush's 2000 campaign platform, admitted Joshua Bolten, Bush's chief of staff. But National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of State Colin Powell urged the president to take action against the terrifying disease ravaging Africa. Bush signed PEPFAR into law in 2003, committing \$15 billion over five years to 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

PEPFAR's first initiative focused on administering a pill to mothers during delivery to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission in African countries with the highest infection rates.

"There were districts in Botswana that had 75 percent of pregnant women who were HIV positive," explained Mark Dybul, one of the principal architects of PEPFAR. "They were all going to die, and most of their kids were going to die. Fifty percent of them were going to get HIV. This initiative, over five years, would reduce that transmission by another 50 percent."

But Bush, continued Dybul, "wanted something bigger."

Building on the efforts of a trial program in Uganda, PEPFAR delivered daily antiretroviral therapy via motor scooter to remote villages. Additionally, in partnership with local governments and organizations, PEPFAR supported prevention programs, built hospitals and clinics, and strengthened health care infrastructure.

Despite the challenges PEPFAR faced, Bush's persistent engagement, as well as his insistence on measurable results and accountability, were key to the program's success, Dybul said. "[Bush] sent the signals through the bureaucracy: [PEPFAR] is mine."

FINDING BIN LADEN: "THE MOST IMPORTANT MISSION"

Like Bush, President Obama was deeply involved in one of his administration's most consequential decisions: holding the al-Qaeda leader responsible for killing nearly 3,000 Americans in the September 11, 2001, terror attacks. Former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Leon Panetta recounted that during his first meeting with the president, Obama "immediately said that the most important mission I had was to go after Osama bin Laden."

The CIA tracked bin Laden's couriers to a fortified compound—surrounded by towering walls and barbed wire—in Abbottabad, Pakistan, home to "a mysterious family [that] never came out," said Panetta.



THOMAS DONILON, LEON PANETTA, AND ADMIRAL WILLIAM MCRAVEN DISCUSS THE OSAMA BIN LADEN RAID AT UVA'S ROTUNDA ON SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

In August 2010, Panetta briefed the president on the compound and launched an eight-month operation planning process. Obama met daily with a confidential group of senior officials, seeking diverse perspectives.

The operation was incredibly risky: "We never had 100 percent that Bin Laden was there," Panetta said. CIA surveillance could not get clear facial identification of the older man who regularly walked around the compound. However, Panetta suspected this man was bin Laden after a courier said, while on a tapped phone call, that he was "doing what he used to do"—which was being a courier for bin Laden.

When it finally came time to approve or call off the raid, "it was a split room," recounted Tom Donilon, Obama's national security advisor. The president's "faith in the process," as well as "the strategic value of taking out bin Laden" and "[Obama's] confidence in the special forces" compelled him to move forward with the operation, Donilon said.

On May 1, 2011, SEAL Team Six raided the Abbottabad compound. Despite a helicopter crash during the operation, the team killed bin Laden, escorted noncombatants to a safe location, and flew bin Laden's body to Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. To verify bin Laden's identity, Adm. William McRaven said, he instructed a Navy SEAL who was 6'2" tall to lie down beside the body, which was several inches taller—matching bin Laden's 6'4" height. DNA later indisputably verified bin Laden's identity.

"You had \$60 million for a helicopter, and you didn't have \$10 for a tape measure?" Obama asked McRaven, jokingly, over a video call, McRaven recounted. When McRaven returned to the White House, the president awarded him a plaque—featuring a Home Depot tape measure.

"For the president to make a very gutsy decision, based on everything that we had, to go [raid bin Laden]—that is leadership," said Panetta. "And that's what you need in a president."

WATCH THE PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP EVENT AT
millercenter.org/leadership

Presidents Revisited

ORAL HISTORY SCHOLARS REFLECT ON PRESIDENTIAL LEGACIES

By Brielle Entzminger

Since 1977, the Miller Center's Presidential Oral History Program has preserved the behind-the-scenes experiences of former presidents and their administrations, conducting hundreds of comprehensive interviews with White House officials spanning the Ford through Biden presidencies. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, the Center hosted a series of special events revisiting the presidential oral histories of Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush, featuring excerpts and insights from oral history interviews.

In fall 2024, the Center kicked off its anniversary celebration with a retrospective on Ford's presidency, tied to the 50th anniversary of Richard Nixon's historic resignation. Panelists scrutinized Ford's most consequential and controversial decision: pardoning Nixon.

Guian McKee, White Burkett Miller Professor of Public Affairs, described how Ford aimed to move the country "past Watergate."

Though backlash against the pardon—combined with Ford's ineffective economic policies—cost him reelection, historians now credit Ford with stabilizing the country following the political turmoil of the 1960s and '70s.

Throughout the event revisiting Jimmy Carter's time in office, speakers underscored Carter's leadership and achievements, including environmental reforms, the Camp David Accords, and the normalization of relations with China.

Carter's humility and transparency were double-edged swords, panelists noted. His willingness to openly discuss his shortcomings with the public, along with his failed efforts to combat inflation, created an image of weakness and contributed to his 1980 loss. Post-presidency, Carter dedicated his life to humanitarian causes and advancing human rights, public health, and democracy worldwide.

Speakers examining Ronald Reagan's presidency discussed how the actor transitioned into politics. After working as a spokesperson for General Electric in the 1950s, Reagan became a vocal critic of the Democratic Party. He gained the support of conservatives who pushed him to run for governor of California.

Despite his conservative rhetoric, Reagan often governed pragmatically from the center and compromised with Democrats, panelists emphasized. His presidential achievements included implementing significant tax cuts and reducing government regulation and spending, which helped end

stagflation. Reagan's relationship with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was pivotal to peacefully ending the Cold War. At the same time, Reagan failed to effectively address the AIDS epidemic and deepened the national debt and income inequality.

Examining George H. W. Bush's presidency, speakers highlighted his commitment to bipartisanship, which enabled him to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act, Clean Air Act amendments, and other domestic reforms. Bush's international coalition-building was critical to winning the Gulf War; by providing aid to Eastern European states that liberalized economically and politically, he set the stage for the collapse of the Soviet Union. But raising taxes to reduce the federal deficit—breaking his "no new taxes" campaign promise—contributed to Bush losing reelection.

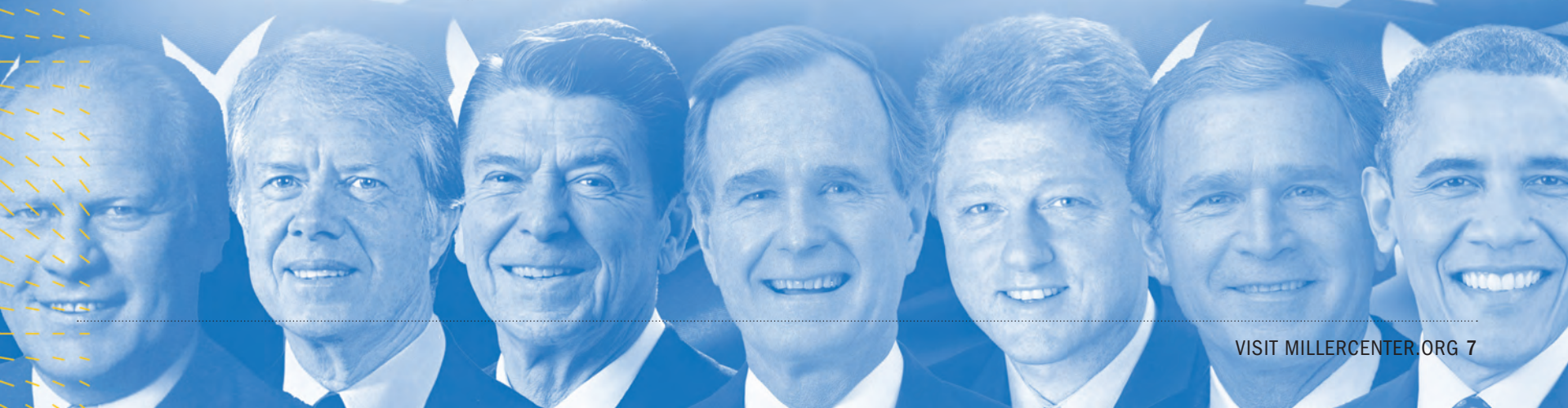
In reviewing Bill Clinton's presidency, speakers noted his success in passing the Family and Medical Leave Act and welfare reform and balancing the federal budget. By strengthening global alliances, Clinton solidified America's post-Cold War leadership. His impeachment, however, limited his ability to reform the Democratic Party and accelerated political polarization, speakers argued.

"Clintonism [didn't] survive the Clinton presidency," said Miller Center Governing Council member John Harris, global editor-in-chief of *Politico*. "If it had, I think the first decade or more of this century would have been quite different."

In a retrospective panel on the George W. Bush presidency, former administration officials Joshua Bolten, Stephen Hadley, and Margaret Spellings discussed the administration's strategic goals and crisis management. The conversation highlighted major challenges including the 9/11 attacks, the ensuing war on terror, and the 2008 financial crisis, alongside early domestic priorities such as the bipartisan No Child Left Behind education reform. The panelists also emphasized frequently overlooked achievements, particularly the PEPFAR initiative that saved millions of lives in Africa.

In March, 2026, the Center celebrated its newest oral history project, focused on the Barack Obama presidency, featuring an initial public release of comprehensive interviews with 37 senior Obama White House officials.

FIND VIDEOS OF THESE "REVISITING THE PRESIDENCY" EVENTS AT
millercenter.org/anniversary



A NOBLE PURPOSE IN AN

EMBARKING ON THE MILLER CENTER'S NEXT HALF CENTURY

By Hallie Richmond

Fifty years ago, the Miller Center was founded at a time of national crisis.

After decades of expanding presidential authority—from Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal to Dwight Eisenhower's national security buildout, Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, and the turmoil of the Nixon years—the nation was facing a painful reckoning over the limits, responsibilities, and risks of presidential power. Since the beginning, the Miller Center has studied these challenges and served as a forum where scholars, government officials, and citizens can grapple with problems to find solutions.

Leading up to our 50th anniversary in September 2025, the Center's leaders launched an updated strategic plan to guide work through 2030. The plan's priorities are anchored in a new articulation of the Center's founding mission: "The Miller Center is a nonpartisan institution at the University of Virginia that explores how the American presidency meets national priorities and engages scholars with leading citizens to help solve major problems."

In short, the Center has a plan for exploring and engaging over the next five years. But what about the next 50 years?

"Scoping our work that far into the future means staying true to what has made us so effective, which is listening to both scholars and practitioners," said Miller Center Director and CEO William Antholis. "From economics to geopolitics, from technological transformations to new civic activism, our scholars must focus on emerging priorities and work with others to help find solutions."

Professor Marc Selverstone, director of presidential studies, noted that the Center will "continue to document the American presidency through conducting oral histories and transcribing presidential recordings and will share that knowledge and our analyses widely." He added, "Our core work is to illuminate and improve the presidency and to advance policy solutions. We've set goals through 2030, but they have a much longer tail."

Selverstone also noted that the Center is devoting resources to harness the emerging powers of artificial intelligence to expand and accelerate the work of the Center's scholars. These intellectual investments are already bearing fruit and will underpin future advances.

Lyndsay Alexander, the Miller Center's chief operating officer, emphasized the enduring wisdom of the Center's founders—UVA Law School alumnus Burkett Miller, UVA President Edgar Shannon, and Virginia Governor Linwood Holton.

"They envisioned a 'nonpolitical forum'—just outside the orbit of government life in Washington, D.C.—for scholars, senior officials, and leading

citizens to share ideas and solve problems," Alexander said. "At the Miller Center, we remain committed to reaching across political divides to solve problems together. It's in our DNA."

The Center's programs are built on decades of hard work and philanthropic investment, noted Andrew Chancey, director of administration and finance. "By carefully stewarding and reinvesting these resources, we are committed to letting the next generation of scholars and practitioners continue this great work."

ILLUMINATING THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Former White House Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten, cochair of the Miller Center's 2025 Conference on the American Presidency, praised the Center's nonpartisan oral history program for bringing presidencies to life and informing future leaders.



"Just as rigorous questions, metrics, and empirical data lead to better decisions than 'happy talk' in the Oval Office," Bolten said, "the Miller Center can continue to play a valuable role by asking hard questions and providing reliable, unbiased information about presidential decisions."

Thomas Donilon, former national security advisor and conference cochair, echoed that view.

"The Miller Center's philosophy is that understanding past presidents' successes and failures is key to preparing effective leaders," Donilon said. "Honest debate—guarding against groupthink—can help prevent presidential mistakes. Fostering civil debate, and actually listening to

ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

different perspectives, are great institutional strengths that the Miller Center can bring into the next 50 years.”

The Center’s second presidency conference, in September 2025, brought together dozens of leading Democrats and Republicans, former White House officials, presidency scholars, and journalists for two days of discussions about building a more responsible and effective American presidency. In the near term, as part of a new initiative, “The Presidency Project: Toward a Responsible and Effective Executive,” the Center will focus research and public events on three policy areas that emerged from the conference: presidential emergency powers, congressional dysfunction, and government performance.

“There is an emphasis on not simply going back to the way things have been,” said Kelsey Millay, the Center’s associate director of

presidential studies. “Rather, how should we envision the future of the American presidency? How could we make government more effective in the modern world? The Center’s ability to convene different viewpoints across the political spectrum will be essential as we embark on our next 50 years.”

ADVANCING POLICY SOLUTIONS

Debates concerning presidential power are front and center in American politics. Both parties decry executive overreach but rely on the presidency to break stalemates and deliver results. In coming years, Miller Center leaders foresee helping to clarify the issues through tools that the Center has used effectively in its first five decades: rigorous analysis, public events, and bipartisan commissions and working groups. Experts will consider how to ensure both accountability and effectiveness in passing budgets, responding to emergencies, and managing the federal government.

The executive branch is often overstretched, with turbulent transitions and vacant key positions. The Center might help modernize governance, for example, by producing best-practice guides on crisis management and decision-making, offering nonpartisan training for incoming White House staff, or publishing case studies of presidential successes and failures. By promoting professionalism and ethical leadership, the Center can help ensure that the presidency operates with transparency and competence.

THE MILLER CENTER IS ONE OF AMERICA’S BEST HOPES FOR THE FUTURE.

**Kay Coles James,
Miller Center Governing Council member**

“A responsible presidency requires a public that understands both the powers and the limitations of the office,” observed Professor David Leblang, the Center’s director of policy research. The Miller Center’s scholarship, oral histories, and archives offer rich material for engaging citizens. Through case studies, public events, and expanded outreach to teachers and students, the Center can help demystify presidential decision-making and humanize those who serve.

Future presidents will face challenges that we cannot yet imagine. Today’s Miller Center undergraduate and graduate interns are preparing by engaging with the Center’s programming and presidential resources. Alfred Reaves IV, faculty and program coordinator, calls them “some of the brightest people I’ve had the pleasure of working with.”

Millay said that in the coming decades, “the Miller Center will continue to expand opportunities for students to learn, train, network, and make important contributions.”

Over the next 50 years, the Miller Center expects to help guide the nation toward a presidency that works better.

“When I first came to the Miller Center, I thought, ‘I found my people’—people who really want to solve the most difficult issues facing our country today, regardless of party affiliation, and working across party lines,” said Miller Center Governing Council member Kay Coles James, who served in the administrations of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush and was president of the conservative Heritage Foundation. “The Miller Center is one of America’s best hopes for the future.”





THE MILLER CENTER STORY

> > > > > IN FIVE VIDEOS

NEW WAYS TO DISCOVER THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE KNOWN ABOUT THE CENTER

By Brielle Entzminger

Five videos prepared for the Miller Center's 50th anniversary in September 2025 highlight 50 years of exploring and engaging with presidential politics, history, and the people who lived it.

PRESIDENTIAL ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

The Center's presidential oral history archive is strategically vital in an age when officials of both parties can be reluctant to create written records. The oral histories preserve nuanced factors and capture lessons learned, such as how President George H. W. Bush's team helped bring the Cold War to a peaceful end. The interviews also capture emotion, like Max Friedersdorf's poignant memory of political rival Tip O'Neill kneeling to pray at Ronald Reagan's bedside after the 1981 assassination attempt. President Jimmy Carter remarked that his former White House colleagues made "unanimously favorable recommendations to me to participate freely and without restraint" in the Center's first comprehensive project on his administration. "I think they all enjoyed it," Carter added.

PRESIDENTIAL RECORDINGS PROGRAM

Former Miller Center Director Philip Zelikow established the Presidential Recordings Program. According to Zelikow, when White House tapes capturing Oval Office discussions were released to the American people in the mid-1990s, it was "akin to the discovery of the ruins of Pompeii" being offered in "a wondrous time machine." The recordings place the listener directly in the room during pivotal moments, such as when President John F. Kennedy deliberated with former President Dwight D. Eisenhower during the Cuban Missile Crisis and when President Lyndon Johnson called Rose Kennedy after John F. Kennedy's assassination.

POLICY RESEARCH PROGRAM

Policy research at the Miller Center builds on "big questions grounded in history and shaped by serious scholarship," said Professor David Leblang, director of policy research. And in the words of Miller Center Director and CEO William Antholis, "For 50 years we've helped leaders govern better." The Center's many national bipartisan commissions have focused on solving problems. Following the contested 2000 election, the bipartisan National Commission on Federal Election Reform, cochaired by Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, made recommendations that were adopted in the 2002 Help America Vote Act. U.S. Representative John Lewis described

that act as "the most important voting rights bill since the passage of the Voting Rights Act." Recent initiatives include regular convenings on global conflicts and the Miller Center's Conference on the American Presidency.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Free public programming is a cornerstone of the Center's mission. Dynamic public events held in the Miller Center's Forum Room connect world-class scholars and government leaders with the American public. Director of Public Programming Cristina Lopez-Gottardi Chao explained that the space was designed to "encourage open, democratic conversation," and now, through webinars and distribution on social media channels, the Center's reach extends even further. Theory meets practice in Miller Center public events, and when the ideas are good enough, Antholis noted, "they don't stay in this room. They move. They set agendas, they shape debates, and they help design policies."

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Miller Center was founded in 1975 through the philanthropy of Burkett Miller. He was concerned, as then-Virginia Governor Linwood Holton recalled, "that the decision-making process in the Office of the President of the United States was not suitable." The Center's founders intended to draw from the talented faculty and students of an iconic public university. But rather than create just a think tank, they envisioned a unique forum where scholars could meet with government and business leaders to exchange ideas about national priorities, especially the American presidency. This vision still guides the Center's governance, where an independent Governing Council provides oversight and sustains a distinctively nonpartisan culture. Representing varied political perspectives and backgrounds, the Council embodies Governor Holton's personal mantra, "Opportunity Time"—an ethos of exploring and engaging at the Miller Center to help solve major national problems.

WATCH THE VIDEOS AT millercenter.org/videos

TO GIVE A GIFT TO THE MILLER CENTER, VISIT
millercenter.org/donate



THANK YOU,

50TH ANNIVERSARY DONORS

FIFTY



YEARS

1975-2025

FOR 50 YEARS, LOCAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNITIES HAVE HELPED THE MILLER CENTER FLOURISH

We thank the following major contributors to the Miller Center's Presidential Oral History Endowment and current oral history projects:

Anne & Gene Worrell Foundation
The Boysie Bollinger Fund,
Greater New Orleans Foundation
Mary Anne Burns and Stephen M. Burns
Mary V. Connell
Katie Eggemeier and Thomas Eggemeier
Barbara J. Fried

Dathel C. Georges and John D. Georges
Anita L. Martin and George K. Martin
Millette and A. Haag Sherman
Alice Handy* and Peter A. Stoudt
The Joseph and Robert Cornell
Memorial Foundation
Anne R. Worrell*

*deceased

We are especially grateful to Brown Advisory, whose generous support made possible "Presidential Leadership: Two Case Studies," a special 50th anniversary community event in UVA's historic Rotunda on September 24, 2025.

We also warmly thank the generous donors who made possible the Miller Center's 2025 Conference on the American Presidency on September 24-25, 2025; the 50th anniversary celebration at the Miller Center on September 25, 2025; our special 50th anniversary public programming in 2025-26; and The Presidency Project: Toward a Responsible and Effective Executive

Mary Anne Burns and Stephen M. Burns
Elizabeth Carr and Christopher Acheson
Ann W. Compton
Mary V. Connell
Terry and Courtney Daniels
The Egnog Latte Foundation
Anne L. and Eugene V. Fife
Jennie J. and Matthew W. Hantzmon

Tricia A. Hoefling and Timothy Billings
Richard Mayo
The George & Judy Marcus
Democracy Praxis Fund
The Office of the President of the
University of Virginia
The Smyth Fund at the Charlottesville Area
Community Foundation

Miller Center partners and supporters include former presidents, cabinet officials, senior White House staff, other leading scholars and citizens, and you! For five decades, the Center has been sustained by generous philanthropic support. Supporters are an integral part of our living history, and all of us who work at the Center owe you the deepest thanks. We look forward to seeing you at the Miller Center soon.



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

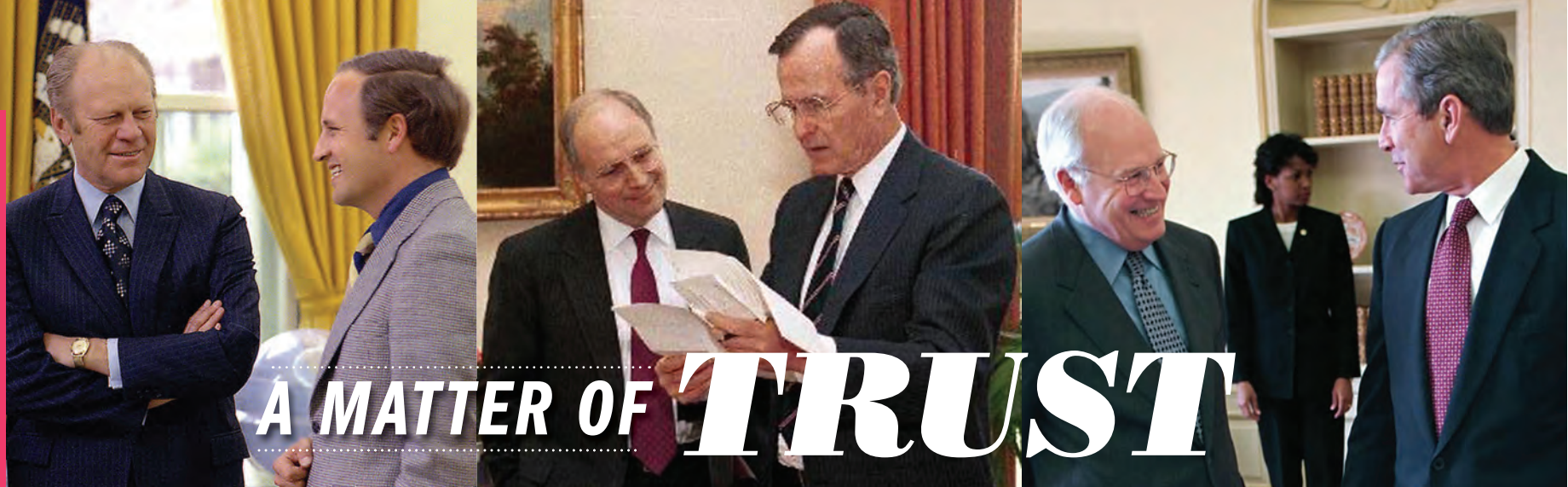
PHOTO KEY ON PAGE 17



The Miller Center celebrated its 50th anniversary with a gala event on September 25, 2025. Donors, patrons, current and former government officials, faculty, and staff watched the premiere of five new commemorative videos telling the Center's story and toasted the accomplishments of the Presidential Oral History Program, the Presidential Recordings Program, the Policy Research Program, the Center's public programs, and the Governing Council.

FIND MORE PHOTOS FROM THE CELEBRATION AT millercenter.org/anniversaryphotos





A MATTER OF TRUST

STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY, A HALLMARK OF MILLER CENTER ORAL HISTORIES, INSPIRED DICK CHENEY'S CANDOR

By Hallie Richmond

A former White House chief of staff once observed that because of increasing demands for information from Congress, he stopped writing things down—meaning that valuable insights were omitted from the official record.

Careful readers of the Miller Center's oral history interviews will recognize this official as Richard B. "Dick" Cheney, who left a limited paper trail despite four decades of government service. Cheney served as White House chief of staff under President Gerald Ford, secretary of defense under President George H. W. Bush, and vice president under President George W. Bush.

When the Miller Center interviewed Cheney in 2000, a few months before he left his role as Haliburton CEO to join George W. Bush's presidential ticket, he commented that "I was very leery about putting anything down on paper." Cheney explained that having spent his early days in the Nixon administration, "I watched the absolute destruction of a number of colleagues."

Cheney held an expansive view of executive privilege, that indirect power rooted in the Constitution's separation of the branches doctrine. In this view, presidents and their advisors can withhold confidential communications to ensure candid advice and efficient executive branch functioning. Throughout his career, Cheney resisted reforms that he perceived as infringing on the president's authority, and he tended to avoid documenting any decision-making process that might later be subject to congressional subpoenas or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

But despite his mum's-the-word reputation, Cheney trusted the Miller Center's team of scholars, expert researchers, and professional oral historians to commit his memories and stories to the historical record on three different occasions. He was interviewed in 1975 for the Miller Center's first oral history with Gerald Ford's senior leadership team and again in 2000 for the George H. W. Bush Oral History Project. Those interviews are available on the millercenter.org website. Cheney's third oral history interview, held in 2014 for the George W. Bush Oral History Project, has not yet been released to the public.

Shortly after Cheney's death on November 3, 2025, the cochairs of the Center's Presidential Oral History Program, Russell Riley and Barbara Perry, reflected on Cheney's life, political legacy, and remembrances in



THE MILLER CENTER'S 2014 ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH DICK CHENEY (CENTER) IN JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING, INCLUDED (L TO R) RUSSELL RILEY, MIKE NELSON, BARBARA PERRY, AND STEPHEN KNOTT

his Miller Center oral history interviews. In an article titled "By No Means the Malevolent Force He Was Painted Out to Be"—published in *Notes from the Miller Center*, the Center's new Substack newsletter—Riley compiled quotations about Cheney from senior officials interviewed for the George W. Bush Oral History Project.

"The exact extent of Cheney's influence in this administration is still a contested question for history, unresolved in these interviews," Riley wrote. "Yet his association with the core issues of the War on Terror—what Cheney himself once called the 'dark side' of American security policy—made him one of history's most influential vice presidents."

In "Dick Cheney and the U.S. Supreme Court," also published in *Notes from the Miller Center*, Perry assessed Cheney's role in shaping the Supreme Court's current conservative composition. In a more personal remembrance titled "I Knew Dick Cheney. I Worked with Dick Cheney. He Was No Darth Vader"—available on UVA's *Thoughts from the Lawn* blog—Perry recalled that "he welcomed us, an interview team of four political scientists, to his Jackson, Wyoming, home in June 2014. He was still recovering from his heart transplant, so his daughter, Liz, alerted us to arrive at 9 AM and leave by noon each day. But when the clock struck 12 PM and we started to depart, the vice president called out for sandwiches and we continued chatting for another two hours."

READ THE MILLER CENTER'S SUBSTACK CHANNEL AT
uvmillercenter.substack.com

DIVING INTO THE TRUMP 45 AND BIDEN YEARS

CHRONICLING AMERICA'S TWO MOST RECENT PRESIDENTS

By Hallie Richmond

The Miller Center's Presidential Oral History Program is navigating a rare challenge, and opportunity: conducting two simultaneous presidential oral history projects, one focused on senior White House officials who served in President Donald Trump's first term and the other documenting the single-term administration of President Joseph Biden.

Three successive one-term presidencies—a reality not seen since the days of William McKinley at the turn of the last century—means that the oral history team has far more work to do in a shorter time frame than in recent decades, when two-term presidencies were the norm.

Moreover, in the case of the Trump 45 oral history, interviewees are reflecting on the first term of a president who is currently holding office. This situation is uncommon in that only Grover Cleveland preceded Trump in having nonconsecutive terms.

Generally, officials wait until their president has left office before participating in oral history interviews. But doing that for Trump would mean losing valuable years of work.

"Normally the president they served isn't still in the White House," pointed out Russell Riley, cochair of the Center's Presidential Oral History Program and director of the Trump 45 project. "But we are always mindful of the costs of delay in recording any interview. People's memories fade. And for us, nothing is more discouraging than finding an obituary in the morning news of a former White House official we intended to schedule but did not. That means history lost."

Riley added of Trump's nonconsecutive terms, "It's an unusual situation, but we haven't seen any tangible dampening effect on scheduling the interviews. To date, people are agreeing at the same pace as usual."

Riley attributed that continuity to the Center's reputation.

"The Miller Center is held in high esteem," he said. It is known to be genuinely committed to nonpartisan inquiry, to getting history right, and most importantly for being a trusted repository of people's candid recollections.

"If former officials ask us to keep an interview confidential for a certain amount of time, they know that we will honor that decision," Riley explained. "We have an unblemished record of maintaining confidences going back almost half a century now."

The Center plans to extend its work on the Trump oral history after his current term ends. And that is part of the current opportunity for the Center: building relationships now that will help us when returning to study the 47th presidency in 2029 and beyond.

Similarly, while the Center was completing interviews for the Barack Obama Oral History Project, many individuals who served in the Obama White House moved into senior roles in the Biden administration.

"Serving in the White House is all-hands-on-deck, nearly 24/7," said Barbara Perry, cochair of the Center's Presidential Oral History Program and director of the Obama and Biden projects. "People simply could not speak with us about their government service until their time in the White House was complete."

Although this delayed their participation until the end of Biden's presidency, when those interviewees became available, the Center took the opportunity to debrief them about their service under both Obama and Biden.

"Interviewees know we won't be adjudicating partisan disputes during the interview," Perry noted. "The Center provides a trusted, nonpartisan space for honest reflection so future generations can understand how and why decisions were made during a consequential period."

The Miller Center is working to fully fund a presidential studies endowment to allow future oral history projects to proceed without delay immediately after a president leaves office, ensuring documentation of administrations while memories remain fresh. The oral history program is funded entirely by private philanthropy, and donors have no influence over who is interviewed or how interviews are conducted.

"The challenges of conducting simultaneous Trump 45 and Biden oral histories have been well worth the effort," noted Miller Center Director and CEO William Antholis. "This work underscores that the Miller Center's mission is fundamentally nonpartisan: We document every presidency with rigor, independence, and a commitment to understanding how leaders govern. By approaching these histories in parallel, we help build the historical record. And we take advantage of those relationships to bring people together across party lines, to make a positive difference."

FIND PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEWS AT millercenter.org/oralhistory



WELCOME TO THE MILLER CENTER

MEET THE NEW CLASS OF SENIOR FELLOWS AND BOARD MEMBERS

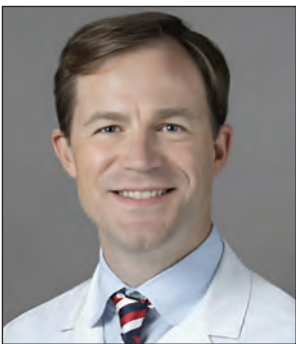
SENIOR FELLOWS

These scholars and practitioners contribute to the Center's research, engage with UVA students and faculty, and help design and deliver public discussions on the challenges facing our nation.



Payvand Ahdout, faculty senior fellow, is an associate professor of law at the University of Virginia School of Law. Her scholarship centers on structural constitutional law and modern uses of judicial power, with a focus on how litigation encounters, constrains, and counters uses of executive power. Her current projects study litigation of federal powers disputes and judicial agenda-setting outside of the federal courts. After graduating from

Columbia Law School, Ahdout served as a law clerk to Associate Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and to Debra Ann Livingston on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. She was also a Bristow Fellow in the Office of the Solicitor General.



Jonathan Crowe, MD is a faculty senior fellow and an assistant professor of neurology and public health sciences at the University of Virginia. He joins the Center's growing Health Care Policy Project team. A practicing neurologist, Crowe treats patients with strokes and other neurological disorders at the UVA Health University Medical Center and across Virginia. He also lectures on health policy across Grounds, including

at the Darden School of Business and the School of Medicine. His current research includes the impact of stroke, dementia, and other neurological diseases on the U.S. health care system; health care prices; digital health; and the intersection of democracy, capitalism, and health care. Crowe regularly collaborates with federal and state policymakers on health policy.



Bonnie Jenkins, practitioner senior fellow, served as the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security from 2021 to 2024. The first African American to serve as an undersecretary of state, Jenkins oversaw three bureaus: Arms Control, Deterrence, and Stability; International Security and Non-proliferation (ISN); and Political-Military Affairs. She led the State Department's

implementation of AUKUS—the trilateral security partnership among Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Jenkins previously served as special envoy for cooperative threat reduction programs in the ISN bureau with the rank of ambassador, program officer for U.S. foreign and security policy at the Ford Foundation, counsel on the 9/11 Commission, and a legal adviser to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.



Sarada Peri, practitioner senior fellow, is the founder of Peri Communications, where she partners with C-suite executives, nonprofit leaders, philanthropists, politicians, and celebrities for speechwriting, speech delivery, and strategic communications. Peri served as special assistant to the president and senior speechwriter for President Barack Obama. She was a speechwriter at three Democratic National Conventions; in 2024,

she comanaged the convention writers room, shepherding 200 speeches from conception to delivery. Before joining the White House, Peri was a principal at West Wing Writers and a legislative assistant to former Senator Mary Landrieu. She participated in the Miller Center's 2025 Conference on the American Presidency.



Louisa Terrell, practitioner senior fellow, served as assistant to the president and director of the White House Office of Legislative Affairs under President Joe Biden from 2021 to 2023. She played a key role in debt ceiling negotiations and in the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. Terrell also helped to secure the confirmation of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, as well as hundreds of judicial and

executive nominees. Her distinguished career in government includes serving as chief of staff to Senator Cory Booker and special assistant to President Barack Obama. In 2024, Terrell was a senior advisor to the Harris-Walz campaign and the Democratic National Convention. She currently provides strategic counsel to nonprofits and businesses and is a key member of the Miller Center's presidency conference team.

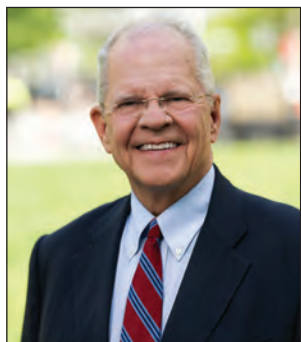
MILLER CENTER GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council exercises oversight of the Center's work and mission.



Don Baer's career has spanned leadership roles in business, media, government, politics, and the nonprofit sector. Following work in law and journalism, he served under President Bill Clinton as assistant to the president and White House director of communications and strategic planning. He was also chief White House speechwriter and director of speechwriting and research and worked across major domestic and foreign policy initiatives

and in Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign. Since leaving the White House, he has served as chair of the board of directors of PBS, CEO of strategic communications firm Burson-Marsteller, and senior executive vice president for strategy and development at Discovery Communications. Baer is currently a senior partner at Brunswick Group.



Timothy Broas, a diplomat and attorney, is senior of counsel in the Washington, D.C., office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich and Rosati. In 2023, he was appointed by President Joe Biden to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations. Nominated by President Barack Obama, Broas served on the Board of Trustees for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, before serving as the U.S. ambassador

to the Netherlands from 2014 to 2016. As a white-collar criminal defense attorney, Broas has represented individuals, domestic and foreign corporations, sovereign governments, and other clients in a wide range of civil and criminal matters for more than 30 years.



David Gregory, *ex officio*, representing the UVA Board of Visitors, comes from a distinguished career in journalism spanning more than three decades. He spent more than 20 years with NBC News, serving as the moderator of *Meet the Press* and as the chief White House correspondent during George W. Bush's presidency. He also worked as a political analyst for CNN. He has taught courses at Tufts University and Georgetown

University about the changing media landscape and its impact on knowledge and citizenship. He is the author of *How's Your Faith?*



Kay Coles James served as secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia from January 2022 to August 2023, appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin. From 2018 to 2021, she was president of the Heritage Foundation, the first African American and the first woman to hold this position. Her extensive career in government service included roles in the administrations of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush.

James is currently a member of the James Madison University Board of Visitors and the founder and president of the Gloucester Institute, a leadership training center for young African American innovators and leaders.



Dan Meyer served as chief of staff to Kevin McCarthy from 2019 to 2023 during McCarthy's tenure as House Republican minority leader and then as House Speaker. Meyer also served in the George W. Bush administration as assistant to the president for legislative affairs from 2007 to 2009. From 1989 to 1996, he served as chief of staff to Newt Gingrich during his tenure as House Republican whip and then as House Speaker.

In addition to his government service, Meyer has served as vice president and president of the Duberstein Group, a bipartisan lobbying firm. Meyer currently serves on the board of the Congressional Institute.

MILLER CENTER FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

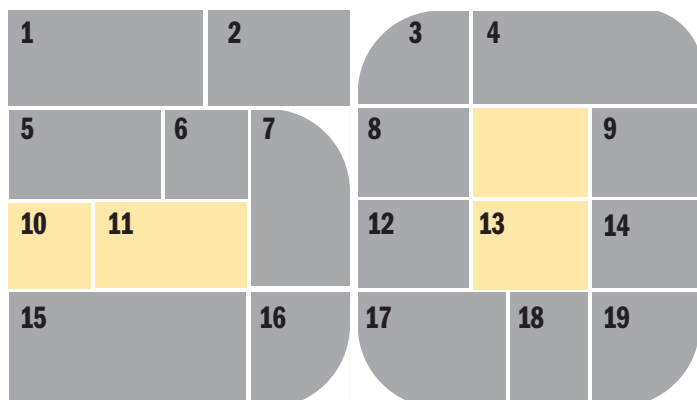
The Miller Center Foundation was established in 1987 to support the work of the Center and to function as an ambassador to the public on behalf of its initiatives and programs.



Jeffrey Rogatz, a managing director in Baird's Real Estate Investment Banking Group, has more than 30 years of experience in office, industrial, and health care-related real estate. He has served as founder and president of Ridgeway Capital LLC, chief financial officer of Brandywine Realty Trust, and head of the REIT practice at Legg Mason Wood Walker. He is a board member of CubeSmart and Autism Delaware and an emeritus board

member of the William and Mary Business School Foundation.

PHOTO KEY (Pg 12-13)



- 1:** Sen. Tim Kaine, Gene Fife, Mary Anne Burns **2:** Tricia Hoefling, George Martin **3:** Kate Bedingfield
4: Jacki Abbey, Ashley Waters Gundersen, Tanya Rivero Warren **5:** Dan Meyer, Mike Emmanuel, Kevin Fromer
6: Marc Selverstone (center) **7:** Bill Antholis **8:** Peter Stoudt, David Crowe **9:** L.F. and Susan Payne
10: ice sculpture **11:** Part of the Miller Center Team **12:** John Jeffries, Leonard Sandridge **13:** David Gregory, Jeff Polet **14:** Chris Lu **15:** Andriy Vretsona, George Martin, Tricia Hoefling, Tim Kaine, Bill Antholis, Ann Compton, Brie Gertler, Kate Bedingfield, Macy O'Reilly **16:** Jody and Bob Smith **17:** Tricia Hoefling, George Martin, Gene Fife, Peter Stoudt, Bill Antholis, Dan Frierson, Steve Burns **18:** Elizabeth Carr and Kip Acheson
19: Rich Schragger, Wistar Morris, Karen Moran, Risa Goluboff



FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AND ASSETS

FISCAL YEAR 2025

The Miller Center, as a unit of the University of Virginia, operates on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. The Miller Center Foundation, a section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a supporting University-associated organization, follows the same fiscal year. The Center has financial assets held by the University, including endowment and operating funds, and follows University policies and procedures for its fiscal operations. The Foundation receives and holds funds on behalf of the Center and transfers those funds to the Center for use as needed. The Foundation also holds endowments in support of the Center. The Foundation follows standard policies and procedures for nonprofit organizations.

Generous funding from donors and vital support from the University of Virginia bolster the Miller Center's programs and operations. Funding received in one fiscal year but intended for use in another fiscal year is deferred until the year of its use and is recognized as revenue in that year. Beginning and ending cash balances, therefore, include funds that are restricted by program or time and are not necessarily available for use in a given fiscal year. In fiscal year 2025, the Center recognized \$2.5 million of revenue secured in previous years and secured \$1.2 million in revenue to be recognized in future years.

Endowments comprise the largest financial asset for both the Miller Center and the Miller Center Foundation. For fiscal year 2025, endowment distributions constituted 47.7 percent of total income for programs and operations. All endowments are managed by the University of Virginia

Investment Management Company (UVIMCO) in its long-term pool. Endowment distribution rates follow those set by the University's Board of Visitors; the rate for fiscal year 2025 was 4.38 percent.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, UVIMCO realized an overall rate of return of 12.4 percent, a three-year annualized rate of return of 7.2 percent, and a five-year annualized rate of return of 11.8 percent. Total market value for Center and Foundation endowments increased to \$115.2 million as of June 30, 2025, from \$107.2 million as of June 30, 2024. This increase includes new contributions of \$779,000 and market performance, less distributions and other expenses.

Effective July 1, 2022, the University implemented a new financial model in which it imposes a tax on each school or unit on its direct expenses, charges each school or unit a facilities fee, and partially offsets those costs with operating support. The University tax and facilities fee totaled \$1.9 million for the Miller Center in fiscal year 2025. The operating support totaled \$1.3 million.

The Miller Center and Miller Center Foundation ended fiscal year 2025 with net income for programs and operations of \$347,000, total net income of -\$202,000, and cash balances exceeding \$3.7 million.

The reporting of financial activities is derived from preaudit statements and internal working papers.

FISCAL YEAR 2025

MILLER CENTER AND MILLER CENTER FOUNDATION SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOME FOR PROGRAMS/OPERATIONS	FY2025	FY2024
Distributions from Endowment	\$ 4,386,323	\$ 4,498,774
Endowment Assessment Fee Rebate	521,590	415,054
Gifts & Grants	2,327,995	3,194,154
University of Virginia	513,135	392,578
Other	160,413	159,302
Deferred Revenue, Recognized	2,462,173	1,642,182
Deferred Revenue, Unrecognized	(1,180,492)	(1,707,687)
TOTAL	\$ 9,191,136	\$ 8,594,358

EXPENSE FOR PROGRAMS/OPERATIONS	FY2025	FY2024
Presidential Studies	\$ 2,414,728	\$ 2,342,877
Policy Research	2,205,502	1,649,492
Executive Office & Governing Council	1,101,706	984,996
Marketing & Communications	1,169,880	1,230,261
Administration & Operations	931,188	852,020
Advancement	614,169	571,233
Library & Information Services	309,495	259,157
Miller Center Foundation	97,484	87,856
TOTAL	\$ 8,844,151	\$ 7,977,893

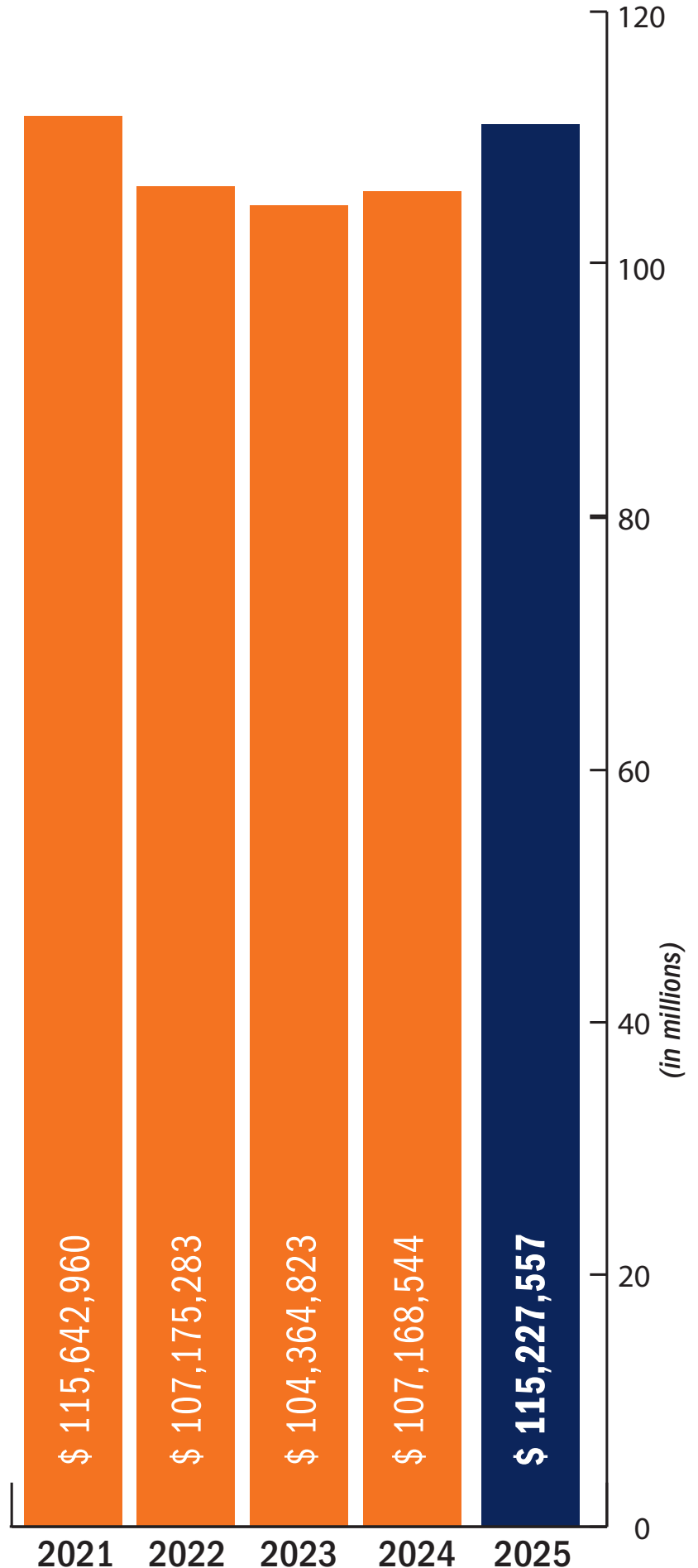
NET INCOME FOR PROGRAMS/OPERATIONS	FY2025	FY2024
	\$ 346,986	\$ 616,466

UVA Operating Support	\$ 1,288,811	\$ 1,269,765
UVA University Tax & Facilities Fee	(1,878,292)	(1,862,359)
New Contributions Designated for Endowment	778,952	812,829
Transfers of Contributions Designated for Endowment	(738,135)	(812,331)
TOTAL NET INCOME	\$ (201,678)	\$ 24,370

Cash Balance, Beginning	\$ 5,231,020	\$ 5,141,146
Deferred Revenue, Recognized	(2,462,173)	(1,642,182)
Deferred Revenue, Unrecognized	1,180,492	1,707,687
CASH BALANCE, ENDING	\$ 3,747,662	\$ 5,231,020

MILLER CENTER AND MILLER CENTER FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT AND QUASI-ENDOWMENT MARKET VALUE

As of June 30 each year



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENCY

On April 2, 1865, as Union forces were capturing the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, President Abraham Lincoln wrote to his wife Mary Todd Lincoln in what would become the last known letter between them.

Writing from Union headquarters in City Point, Virginia, Lincoln's letter reads like a military dispatch, updating Mrs. Lincoln on the latest battlefield developments. The next day, April 3, Richmond fell under Union control.

Within two weeks, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee would surrender to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, on April 9, and Lincoln himself would be shot at Ford's Theatre on the night of April 14, dying the next morning.



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Head Quarters Armies of the United States,
City Point, April 2. 7⁽⁴⁵⁾ 1865

Mr. A. Lincoln,
Washington, D.C.

Last night Gen. Grant telegraphed that Sherman with his Cavalry and the 5th Corps has captured three brigades of Infantry, a train of wagons, and several batteries, prisoners amounting to several thousands. This morning Gen. Grant's telegraph is follows:

"Both Wright and Parks got through the enemy's lines. The battle now rages furiously. Sherman with his Cavalry, the 5th Corps, & Miles Division of the 2nd Corps, which was sent to him since the Army is now sweeping down from the West. All now looks highly favorable. One is engaged, but I have not yet heard the result on his front."

Robert yesterday wrote a letter ^{change} now to Capt. Brown, which is all I have heard of him since you left. Copy to Secretary of War

A. Lincoln