

2023

# AEI Executive Council Spring Summit

Cosponsored with the Civitas Institute at the University of Texas at Austin



Austin, Texas | February 16–18, 2023



# Welcome!

On behalf of the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC, and the Civitas Institute at the University of Texas at Austin, welcome to the 2023 AEI Executive Council Spring Summit!

This partnership between AEI and the Civitas Institute stems from our shared interest in exploring the ideas and institutions that sustain a free society and connecting thoughtful student leaders with leading scholars.

This year's summit in Texas gathers both students from the AEI Executive Council program from campuses across the country and students from the great universities in this city and state. Throughout the weekend, scholars and leaders from both organizations and networks will discuss what's next for American politics, foreign policy, and the global economy.

This year is likely to be one of momentous challenges that will require the best of civic leadership to preserve our free society for future generations. In 2023, a new and divided Congress begins its work as the next presidential campaign starts up, Russia's war in Ukraine will enter its second year as challenges in the Indo-Pacific are likely to raise global tensions, and the strength of the US and global economies will be tested by pandemic recovery and disruptions of new technologies affecting where and how people live.

We hope the summit inspires you to think deeply about civic virtue and your own role in our society as a student and a rising leader.

Thank you for investing your time with AEI and traveling to Austin, Texas, for this gathering. We look forward to a weekend of thoughtful conversation and new friendships!

Sincerely,

**Jeff Pickering**

Director, Academic Programs  
American Enterprise Institute

**Justin Dyer**

Executive Director, Civitas Institute  
University of Texas at Austin

# Agenda

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

- 4:00–6:00 p.m. **Optional Self-Guided Tours of the Texas State Capitol**
- 5:00–6:30 p.m. **Registration**  
AT&T Hotel and Conference Center
- 7:00–9:00 p.m. **Dinner and Opening Conversation: What's Next for American Politics?**  
Thompson Conference Center  
  
A. B. Stoddard, RealClearPolitics  
Kevin D. Williamson, Dispatch  
Jeff Pickering, AEI (*Moderator*)

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

- 8:15–9:00 a.m. **Breakfast**  
Lavaca
- 9:15–10:15 a.m. **Cryptocurrencies and All That: Technology and the Economy**  
Guadalupe  
  
Jesús Fernández-Villaverde, University of Pennsylvania  
Shane Tews, AEI  
Camille Messer, AEI (*Moderator*)
- 10:30–11:30 a.m. **The China Challenge**  
Guadalupe  
  
Sheena Chestnut Greitens, University of Texas at Austin  
Christopher Healey, AEI (*Moderator*)
- 11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. **Lunch**  
Lavaca
- 1:00–2:15 p.m. **Breakout Session I**  
**What's Up with Congress?**  
Lavaca  
  
Kevin R. Kosar, AEI  
Lauren Collins, AEI (*Moderator*)
- The Economics of Shark Tank**  
Classroom 201  
  
Charity-Joy Acchiardo, University of Texas at Austin  
Emma Brock, AEI (*Moderator*)

***The Classical and Christian Origins of American Politics***

Guadalupe

Justin Dyer, University of Texas at Austin  
Devin Stauffer, University of Texas at Austin  
Cate Gangemi, AEI (*Moderator*)

2:30–4:00 p.m.

**Breakout Session II**  
**AEI Executive Council Program Training**

Guadalupe

AEI Academic Programs Team

**College to Career: A Session for Graduating Seniors**

Lavaca

Haley Robison Dake, East of Weird & Company

4:00–5:30 p.m.

**Break**

5:30–6:30 p.m.

**Networking Reception**

Thompson Conference Center

6:30–8:30 p.m.

**Dinner and Keynote: US Grand Strategy and the Liberal International Order**

Thompson Conference Center

Kori Schake, AEI

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18**

9:30–10:00 a.m.

**Breakfast**

Lavaca

10:00–10:45 a.m.

**Student Panel**

Guadalupe

Jeff Pickering, AEI (*Moderator*)

11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Closing Keynote: Dynamism and the Future**

Guadalupe

Ryan Streeeter, AEI

12:00–1:00 p.m.

**Lunch**

Lavaca

# Speaker Biographies

**Charity-Joy Acchiardo** is faculty fellow of the Civitas Institute and associate professor of instruction in the Department of Economics at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the faculty lead for the OnRamps microeconomics course for high school students and director of the Economic Education and Financial Literacy Program, both joint projects of the Civitas Institute and the Department of Economics. She is an economic educator fellow at the Fraser Institute, Canada's top-ranked think tank, and has served as the executive director of the *Journal of Economics Teaching*. Her websites econkahoots.com and econshark.com are dedicated to making the economics classroom more engaging. Dr. Acchiardo's passion is sharing her joy about economics with others, and she is a frequent speaker, both domestically and internationally, at workshops for educators and students. She completed her PhD in economics at George Mason University.

**Haley Robison Dake** is the founder of East of Weird & Company, where her project work and coaching support early-stage businesses and entrepreneurs in strategy, product development, team building, and personal growth. Recent roles include adviser at Ceresa, senior adviser at Openfields, venture partner at Praxis, guest speaker at AEI, and lecturer at the University of Texas. Ms. Robison Dake's passion for entrepreneurship developed during her time as the CEO of Kammok, an outdoor gear company. In her current work, she enjoys approaching problems from multiple perspectives and draws from varied experiences, including time at IDEO, Bain & Company, Trinity Forum Academy, and National Outdoor Leadership School. Ms. Robison Dake holds a BA in business and finance from the University of Texas at Austin and a joint MBA and MEd from Stanford University.

**Jesús Fernández-Villaverde** is the John H. Makin Visiting Scholar at AEI. He is also a professor of economics at the University of Pennsylvania, where he directs the Penn Initiative for the Study of Markets, a program to help students better understand the historical and philosophical underpinnings of markets. He is also codirector of the Business, Economic, and Financial History Project, which brings together scholars from across the university to explore the deep and growing ties among various methodologies and disciplines of economic history. Dr. Fernández-Villaverde's broad areas of research include macroeconomics, econometrics, and economic history. He has been a visiting professor at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Oxford, and Cambridge and a visiting scholar at several Federal Reserve Banks, the European Central Bank, and the Bank of Spain.

**Sheena Chestnut Greitens** is faculty fellow of the Civitas Institute and associate professor of public affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. She also directs the Asia Policy Program, a joint initiative of the Clements Center for National Security and the Strauss Center for International Security and Law. She is concurrently a Jeane Kirkpatrick Visiting Fellow at AEI. Dr. Greitens's teaching and research focus on American national security, East Asia, and the politics of democracy and dictatorship. She is the author of *Dictators and Their Secret Police: Coercive Institutions and State Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), which won several academic awards. Her current book projects focus on authoritarianism and diaspora politics in North Korea and on internal security as a driver of Chinese grand strategy. She completed her PhD in government at Harvard University.

**Kevin R. Kosar** is a senior fellow at AEI, where he studies Congress, the administrative state, American politics, election reform, and the US Postal Service. Before joining AEI, Dr. Kosar was at the R Street Institute, where he served as vice president of policy, vice president of research partnerships, and senior fellow and director of the Governance Project. He also cofounded the Legislative Branch Capacity Working Group, a trans-partisan project to strengthen the legislative branch. Earlier, Dr. Kosar spent more than a decade working for the Congressional Research Service, where he focused on a wide range of public administration issues. He has taught public policy at New York University and lectured on public administration at Metropolitan College of New York.

**Kori Schake** is a senior fellow and the director of Foreign and Defense Policy Studies at AEI. Before joining AEI, Dr. Schake was the deputy director-general of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. She has had a distinguished career in government, working at the US State Department, the US Department of Defense, and the National Security Council at the White House. She has also taught at Stanford, West Point, Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, National Defense University, and the University of Maryland. Dr. Schake is the author of five books and the coeditor, along with former Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, of *Warriors & Citizens: American Views of Our Military* (Hoover Institution Press, 2016). She has been widely published in policy journals and the popular press, including in CNN.com, *Foreign Affairs*, *Politico*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*. She is a contributing writer at the *Atlantic* and *War on the Rocks*.

**Devin Stauffer** is faculty fellow of the Civitas Institute and professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin. He specializes in classical and early modern political philosophy. Before coming to the University of Texas in 2004, Dr. Stauffer taught at Kenyon College and St. John's College in Annapolis. During his time at Kenyon College, he received two awards for teaching excellence, and he has since received two more teaching awards at the University of Texas. In 2013–14, he was a fellow of the Carl Friedrich von Siemens Foundation in Munich. In the spring of 2018, he was a visiting associate professor at Harvard University. Dr. Stauffer is the author of *Hobbes's Kingdom of Light* (University of Chicago Press, 2018), *The Unity of Plato's "Gorgias"* (Cambridge, 2006), and *Plato's Introduction to the Question of Justice* (SUNY Press, 2001). His articles have appeared in various journals, including the *Review of Politics*, the *Journal of Politics*, and the *American Political Science Review*.

**A. B. Stoddard** is an associate editor and columnist with the political news site and polling data aggregator RealClearPolitics and a contributor and guest host for SiriusXM's POTUS channel. Since 2006, she has appeared as a nonpartisan political commentator on CNN, CNBC, MSNBC, Fox News Channel, Fox Business Channel, and BBC. Ms. Stoddard began covering Congress in 1994 as a regional newspaper reporter, then covered the House of Representatives for the *Hill* and the Senate for ABC News. Her column with the *Hill* won first place in the Dateline Awards from the Society of Professional Journalists' Washington, DC, chapter in 2010 and 2011. A nonpartisan analyst, Ms. Stoddard addresses elections and the political landscape of the day.

**Ryan Streeter** is the State Farm James Q. Wilson Scholar and director of Domestic Policy Studies at AEI, where he oversees research in education, technology, housing, urban policy, poverty studies, workforce development, and public opinion. Before joining AEI, he was executive director of the Center for Politics and Governance at the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Streeter has had a distinguished career in government

service, which includes being deputy chief of staff for policy for Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, special assistant for domestic policy to President George W. Bush at the White House, and policy adviser to Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith. Outside of government, Dr. Streeter has served as a senior fellow at the Legatum Institute and a research fellow at the Hudson Institute. In addition to his many television and radio appearances, which include BBC News, CNBC, Fox News, and MSNBC, Dr. Streeter has published articles in outlets including the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, *USA Today*, the *Hill*, *City Journal*, and *National Review*.

**Shane Tews** is a nonresident senior fellow at AEI, where she focuses on cybersecurity issues, including privacy and data protection, next-generation networking (5G), the Internet of Things, international internet governance, digital economic policy, information and communications technology, artificial intelligence and the metaverse, cryptocurrency and non-fungible tokens, and emerging technologies. She is also president of Logan Circle Strategies, a strategic advisory firm. She is vice chair of the board of directors of the Internet Education Foundation; chair of the Internet Society's Washington, DC, chapter; member of the board of SeedAI; chair of the board of directors at TechFreedom; and chair of the Dynamic Coalition on the Internet of Things of the Internet Governance Forum. She began her career in the George H. W. Bush White House as a deputy associate director in the Office of Cabinet Affairs and later moved to Capitol Hill as a legislative director for Rep. Gary Franks (R-CT).

**Kevin D. Williamson** is a national correspondent for the Dispatch and writer in residence at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. He is a renowned author, and his most recent books include *Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dank Woolly Wilds of the "Real America"* (Regnery, 2020) and *The Smallest Minority: Independent Thinking in the Age of Mob Politics* (Regnery, 2019). Before writing for the Dispatch, he was the longtime roving correspondent for *National Review*. He began his career in journalism at the Indian Express Newspaper Group, based in Bombay, India, and worked in the newspaper business in Texas, Pennsylvania, and Colorado. In addition to *National Review*, Mr. Williamson's work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, and other national publications.

# AEI Staff Biographies

**Emma Brock** is a student programs assistant at AEI. She is a 2020 graduate of Furman University, originally hailing from Chattanooga, Tennessee. She joined AEI to engage with policy issues thoughtfully and foster such engagement among young people. Previously, Ms. Brock was a Capital Fellow and worked for international nonprofits such as the International Justice Mission and the Chalmers Center. She also worked for a juvenile prison and a racial reconciliation coalition she founded in college.

**Lauren Collins** is a student programs assistant at AEI. She is a 2022 graduate of Biola University, where she was part of the Torrey Honors College great books program. As an undergraduate, she was an AEI Executive Council member and a participant in the 2021 Summer Honors Program. Before joining AEI, she completed a four-month fellowship at the John Jay Institute.

**Cate Gangemi** is a student programs assistant at AEI. She is an alumna of the AEI Executive Council and Summer Honors programs and the Hertog Political Studies Program. Ms. Gangemi received her BA in political science from Clemson University, where she was a Lyceum Scholar.

**Christopher Healey** is a student programs associate at AEI. He studied at Kenyon College in Ohio and is an alumnus of the AEI Executive Council and Summer Honors programs. He also interned with AEI's Critical Threats Project. Mr. Healey hails from Boston, Massachusetts, and Evanston, Illinois.

**Camille Messer** is a student programs associate at AEI. Before joining AEI, she worked on the Government Relations team at the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities and participated in a nine-month post-graduate program in theology and culture through the Falls Church Fellows. Ms. Messer is a graduate of Covenant College, where she studied economics, with a particular interest in poverty alleviation and rural development.

**Jeff Pickering** is the director of Academic Programs at AEI. Before AEI, he worked for Russell Moore at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, where he hosted the weekly *Capitol Conversations* podcast. He previously worked in local church ministry and government affairs in Texas. He is a graduate of Texas A&M University.



# Civitas Institute Staff Biographies

**Justin Dyer** is the executive director of the Civitas Institute, a professor of government, and the Jack G. Taylor Regents Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. He also is professor (by courtesy) of business, government, and society in the McCombs School of Business. Dr. Dyer writes and teaches about American political thought, jurisprudence, and constitutionalism, with an emphasis on the perennial philosophical tradition of natural law. He is the author or editor of eight books and numerous articles, essays, and book reviews. He also is coeditor of the two-volume constitutional law casebook *American Constitutional Law: Governmental Powers and Democracy* (West Academic Publishing, 2018), which has been adopted at leading universities across the country. Previously, he was a professor of political science at the University of Missouri, where he served as the founding director of the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy, a signature academic center for the study of American political thought and history. An award-winning teacher, Dr. Dyer is a frequent speaker for business, civic, and university groups.

**Sarah Beth V. Kitch** is associate director for the Civitas Institute. An award-winning teacher, she invites students to intentional opportunities to reflect on the task of being human. Dr. Kitch's teaching and research interests are in American political thought, African American political thought, political theology, and ethics. She has written for the *Journal of Church & State*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Law & Liberty*, and *Starting Points*. In a recent contribution to *Liberal Education and Citizenship in a Free Society* (University of Missouri Press, June 2023), she reflects on the kinds of ethical formation that prepare students to meet suffering in their own lives and in society. In the past decade, Dr. Kitch taught at St. Agnes Academy in Houston, Texas, and was assistant professor at the University of Missouri, visiting assistant professor at Northern Illinois University, the Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate in Religion & Public Life at Princeton University, and instructor of political science at Louisiana State University. Dr. Kitch earned an MA and PhD in political theory at Louisiana State University. She holds a BA in mass communication and journalism from Southeastern Louisiana University.

**Allison Smythe** is the senior project manager for the Civitas Institute. In this capacity, she oversees academic and community events; branding, marketing, and communications; and alumni engagement. Before joining the Civitas Institute, Ms. Smythe was senior program coordinator at the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy at the University of Missouri, where she developed strategic marketing campaigns for undergraduate and graduate student recruitment, designed an alumni engagement program, and promoted and coordinated academic and community events and conferences, locally and internationally. In addition, she continues to direct the award-winning boutique graphic design firm *Ars Graphica* on a limited basis. She graduated from Texas Tech with a BFA in design communication and studied creative writing as an MFA student at the University of Houston. Her essays and poetry have been published in various literary journals and magazines.

**Antonio Sosa** is associate director for the Civitas Institute. In this capacity, he oversees the development of fellowships, conferences, and courses that invite students to reflect on the principles of a free society. Before joining the Civitas Institute, Mr. Sosa was an adjunct professor at the University of Dallas, where he taught classes on classical political philosophy, the American founding, modern European history, and the history of liberal arts education. He is primarily interested in the defense of liberal democracy found in the thoughts of Alexis de Tocqueville, José Ortega y Gasset, and Leo Strauss. His writing has appeared in journals such as *Interpretation* and *Perspectives on Political Science* and in online magazines such as Public Discourse and Law & Liberty. He graduated with BAs in English and film from Pennsylvania State University and earned his MA in international relations from the New School. He is also a doctoral candidate in political philosophy at the University of Dallas. His dissertation focuses on Tocqueville’s solution to what he called “the fate of civilized man”—that is, that advances in equality and material well-being are necessarily accompanied by a loss of depth and vigor in the human soul.

# Participating Students

**Eden Babovec**

Abilene Christian University, 2023

**Erin Hodgson**

Abilene Christian University, 2024

**Emma Jaax**

Abilene Christian University, 2023

**Hannah Maniscalco**

Abilene Christian University, 2024

**Oscar Ortiz III**

Abilene Christian University, 2023

**Aley Oliver**

Anderson University (South Carolina), 2024

**Ethan Synsteliën**

Anderson University (South Carolina), 2024

**Zane Wallace**

Anderson University (South Carolina), 2024

**Isaac Humrich**

Arizona State University, 2024

**Clay Robinson**

Arizona State University, 2023

**Arjun Rondla**

Arizona State University, 2023

**Olivia Szewczyk**

Arizona State University, 2024

**Stone Fritz**

Ave Maria University, 2023

**Thomas Gilmore**

Ave Maria University, 2023

**Blaise Ebner**

Azusa Pacific University, 2023

**Margot Graves**

Azusa Pacific University, 2024

**Bruce Lakin**

Azusa Pacific University, 2023

**Izaack Ryder**

Azusa Pacific University, 2024

**Sarah Tang**

Azusa Pacific University, 2024

**McKenzie Arata**

Baylor University, 2024

**Spencer Burress**

Baylor University, 2023

**Danica Barwell**

Biola University, 2025

**Tessa Brubaker**

Biola University, 2026

**Elijah Chen**

Biola University, 2026

**Sierra Christensen**

Biola University, 2024

**Isahi Minero**

Biola University, 2025

**Annette Molina**

Biola University, 2025

**Kiara Rascon**

Biola University, 2025

**Jared Richerson**

Biola University, 2024

**Rudy Torres**

Biola University, 2023

**Lydia Toshimasa**  
Biola University, 2025

**Selia Jindal**  
Brown University, 2023

**Sophia Cardia**  
Bryan College, 2024

**Masen Cheeks**  
Bryan College, 2025

**Wesley Self**  
Bryan College, 2025

**Ellie Tremblay-Garrant**  
Bryan College, 2025

**Thomas Avery**  
Cedarville University, 2025

**Sarah Colgan**  
Cedarville University, 2023

**Isaac Dykstra**  
Cedarville University, 2024

**Jonny Gartner**  
Cedarville University, 2023

**Benjamin Mays**  
Cedarville University, 2023

**Taylor Scherck**  
Colorado Christian University, 2023

**David Gust**  
Duke University, 2024

**Brooks Robinson**  
Duke University, 2024

**Thomas Ross**  
Duke University, 2023

**Isabel Gouveia**  
Elon University, 2024

**Chad Stephens**  
Florida State University, 2023

**Dillon Prochnicki**  
Georgetown University, 2024

**Amber Flynn**  
Grove City College, 2024

**Corey Kendig**  
Grove City College, 2024

**Jonathan McGee**  
Grove City College, 2024

**Isaac Willour**  
Grove City College, 2024

**Kody Richards**  
Hillsdale College, 2025

**Lindsey Stevens**  
Hillsdale College, 2025

**Natalie Leon**  
Hope College, 2024

**Juliana Struyk**  
Hope College, 2023

**Cody Johnson**  
Houghton University, 2024

**David Wolfe Bender**  
Indiana University Bloomington, 2024

**Arunabh Sinha**  
Indiana University Bloomington, 2023

**Garrett Wright**  
Indiana University Bloomington, 2023

**Caleb Hall**  
John Brown University, 2024

**Ben Martin**  
John Brown University, 2023

**Yamil Tenorio**  
John Brown University, 2025

**Hunter Corzine**  
North Greenville University, 2023

**James Ferro**

North Greenville University, 2024

**Ciara Mace**

North Greenville University, 2023

**Rio Garvin**

Northwest University, 2023

**Grace Seyoum**

Northwest University, 2023

**Stephanie Machovina**

Ohio State University, 2025

**Jayden Hanson**

Pepperdine University, 2025

**Emma Limor**

Princeton University, 2025

**Jared Stone**

Princeton University, 2024

**Benjamin Woodard**

Princeton University, 2025

**Luke Bice**

Samford University, 2023

**Tatum Foreman**

Samford University, 2024

**Christianna Hornigold**

Samford University, 2025

**Cole Powers**

Samford University, 2023

**Cooper Shull**

Samford University, 2023

**Jensen Sutton**

Samford University, 2024

**Ajay Patel**

Seattle Pacific University, 2023

**Donya Sarrafian**

Stanford University, 2023

**Vipul Periwal**

Swarthmore College, 2023

**Hutson Hohlbein**

Taylor University, 2024

**Shiloh McFarland**

Taylor University, 2025

**Elisabeth Nieshalla**

Taylor University, 2024

**David VanDyke**

Taylor University, 2024

**David Voss**

Taylor University, 2026

**Ben Crockett**

Texas A&M University, 2023

**Greyson Gee**

Texas A&M University, 2023

**Merry Ashlyn Gatewood**

Union University, 2023

**Danielle Popson**

Union University, 2023

**Madeline Blahnik**

University of Alabama, 2024

**Nick Tolbert**

University of Alabama, 2024

**Kate Whitaker**

University of Chicago, 2023

**Grace Messemer**

University of Florida, 2023

**Emily Prosser**

University of Georgia, 2023

**Niral Bangha**

University of Pittsburgh, 2025

**Liam Horan**

University of Pittsburgh, 2025

**Jake Lorenz**

University of Pittsburgh, 2025

**Bryce Mitchell**

University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2023

**Collins Agyeman**

Vanderbilt University, 2024

**Nidhi Kirshnan**

Washington University in St. Louis, 2023

# Notes

# Notes



# Notes

# Notes

# Notes



The American Enterprise Institute is a community of scholars and supporters committed to expanding liberty, increasing individual opportunity, and strengthening free enterprise. AEI pursues these unchanging ideals through independent thinking, open debate, reasoned argument, facts, and the highest standards of research and exposition. Without regard for politics or prevailing fashion, we dedicate our work to a more prosperous, safer, and more democratic nation and world.

**Connect with Us**

[www.aei.org/academic-programs](http://www.aei.org/academic-programs)

