

Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy announces distinguished MU alumna Jean Becker to serve on advisory board.

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For more information on the Kinder Institute see democracy.missouri.edu

COLUMBIA, Mo. – Today, the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy at the University of Missouri announced that alumna Jean Becker, former chief of staff for George H. W. Bush, will serve on the institute’s advisory board, beginning July 1.

“Jean Becker has had a remarkable career in journalism, government and public service,” said Justin Dyer, professor of political science and director of the Kinder Institute. “We look forward to working with her to advance the Kinder Institute’s mission of promoting teaching and scholarship on America’s founding principles and history.”

Becker served as chief of staff for George H.W. Bush from March 1, 1994, until his death on Nov. 30, 2018. She supervised his office operations in both Houston, Texas, and Kennebunkport, Maine, overseeing such events as the opening of the George Bush Presidential Library Center in 1997, the commissioning of the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier in January 2009, and coordinating special projects such as the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. She took a leave of absence in 1999 to edit and research *All the Best, George Bush; My Life in Letters and Other Writings*.

Previously, Becker served as deputy press secretary to First Lady Barbara Bush from 1989 to 1992. After the 1992 election, she moved to Houston to help Mrs. Bush with the editing and research of her autobiography, *Barbara Bush, A Memoir*. She later assisted Mrs. Bush with a follow-up book, *Reflections*, published in 2003.

Before joining the Bush White House staff in 1989, Becker was a newspaper reporter for 10 years, including a four-year stint at *USA TODAY*, where her duties included covering the 1988 presidential election and serving as a Page One editor.

Becker grew up on a family farm in Martinsburg, Missouri, and was valedictorian of her country high school. She graduated from the University of Missouri in 1978 with a bachelor’s in journalism and a bachelor’s in arts with a major in political science. She was recognized as an outstanding alumnus by the University of Missouri in 2017.

“As our country navigates a rather bumpy 2020, I cannot think of a better time to join the board of the Kinder Institute,” Becker said. “The Founding Fathers left us a blueprint to lead us through good times and bad, and if we listen, we can still hear their voices. Thanks to Rich and Nancy Kinder’s vision for this

Institute, this board has the perfect tools to help all Americans to do just that: Listen and learn. Especially as a Mizzou graduate, I'm so proud to be a member of this impressive team."

She is a member of the board of directors for Points of Light, the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. She also is a member of the advisory board of the George Bush Presidential Library Center and the George Bush School of Government and Public Service. Her book about Mrs. Bush, *Pearls of Wisdom*, was a *New York Times* best-seller when it was released on March 3, 2020. She is working on a second book about President Bush's post presidency, to be published in 2021.

The Kinder Institute was created in 2015 by a generous gift from the Kinder Foundation, a family philanthropic foundation started by Rich and Nancy Kinder of Houston, Texas.