David W. Leebron

David W. Leebron became the seventh president of Rice University on July 1, 2004. A premier international research university, Rice is home to the James Baker III Institute for Public Policy and highly ranked music, architecture, natural sciences, social sciences, engineering, humanities and business schools.

Leebron is leading Rice through a period of growth based on the 10-point Vision for the Second Century he launched during his first three years in office. The wooded 285-acre campus in the heart of Houston is undergoing some $850 million in construction projects to add two new residential colleges to house a 30 percent growth in the undergraduate student body, a 10-story research center to deepen Rice’s collaboration with the Texas Medical Center, physics and sociology buildings, and new campus amenities including a library-based pavilion and recreation center. Leebron has emphasized building Rice’s international presence with active outreach to Asia and Latin America and, at the same time, has strengthened the university’s local impact with multiple programs that connect students and faculty with Houston.

A native of Philadelphia, Leebron is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. He began teaching in 1980 at the UCLA School of Law and in 1983 at the NYU law school. In 1989, Leebron joined the faculty of Columbia University School of Law where, in 1996, he was appointed dean. Currently part of the political science faculty at Rice, Leebron is an expert on international human rights, trade and corporate finance. Leebron is married to Y. Ping Sun and has two children, Daniel and Merissa.