

Bradley Foundation: Prominent human rights activist and scholar Chen Guangcheng a 2022 Bradley Prize winner

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Milwaukee, WI - [The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation](#) announced today that Chen Guangcheng, a renowned human rights activist, scholar, and outspoken critic of the Chinese Communist Party, has been named a 2022 Bradley Prize winner. The honor recognizes individuals whose outstanding achievements reflect The Bradley Foundation's mission to restore, strengthen, and protect the principles and institutions of freedom and American exceptionalism. Chen will receive the award at the 18th annual Bradley Prizes ceremony on Tuesday, May 17th at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

“At a time when citizens are questioning American exceptionalism, Chen’s remarkable life story reminds us that our country must continue to be a beacon of hope and freedom around the world,” said Rick Graber, president and CEO of The Bradley Foundation. “As a Chinese dissident, Guangcheng has shown remarkable resilience and heroic courage in the face of persecution. The Bradley Foundation is proud to honor him for his fight to advance freedom.”

This year’s award winners were chosen by the Bradley Prizes Selection Committee, which included notable leaders in various fields, after careful review of over 100 distinguished nominations. Each award carries a stipend of \$250,000.

“I thank the Bradley Foundation for this wonderful award. I accept it on behalf of the Chinese people who are denied their freedom and human rights by the Chinese Communist Party. I thank America for being a model for the whole world of a

society under the rule of law. I am certain that one day the Chinese people will throw off the rule of the CCP and become a constitutional democracy like America,” Chen said.

The son of a poor farmer in a remote village in Shandong, China, Chen was left permanently blind by illness as an infant, and his family had few resources to support him. Despite his disability, he was determined to educate himself, eventually learning to read and write at age 18 when he began attending a school for the blind. Over time, with the help of his close family, he taught himself law and began working on legal cases related to issues of civil rights and disability.

Living at home in his village, his legal work eventually led to his investigation into the violent campaign carried out to enforce the so-called One Child Policy. He came under a period of harassment and detention that would last over seven years, including repeated house arrests, unofficial “black jails,” and a four-year prison sentence. According to Chinese authorities, the lives of more 90,000 children were saved as a result of his resistance to the One Child Policy at the time.

After his prison sentence, he was held under guard with his family for months in their home. His treatment inspired pilgrims from around the country and from abroad to travel to his village where they themselves were often beaten and harassed. Their online revelations led to an awakening among the Chinese people about the cruelty of the Communist Party regime.

After nearly two years of brutal detention in his own home, Chen escaped his village, later seeking safety at the American embassy in Beijing. High-level diplomatic negotiations secured his travel to the US, where he became a scholar at New York University Law School in 2012. In 2013, he left NYU to join the Catholic University of America.

In the years since Chen left China for America, he has been ceaseless in his efforts to alert the world to the dangers of the Chinese Communist Party, speaking to audiences from Japan to Norway, writing for both English and Chinese news outlets, and giving interviews and analysis on the political situation in China and on the US-CCP relationship. His memoir, *The Barefoot Lawyer: A Blind Man's Fight for Justice and Freedom in China*, was published in 2015 and has been translated into more than 10 languages worldwide.

Since beginning his advocacy work, Chen has been the recipient of numerous

awards including Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential List (2006), The Ramon Magsaysay Award (2007), The Lantos Human Rights Prize (2012), the UK Parliament's Westminster Award (2013), the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy Courage Award (2014), and the Leopoldo Lopez Freedom and Democracy Award from Kenyon College (2021).