

# Third Webinar on February 24

Happy President's Day!

The Third Webinar titled *Building Coalition Against “China Initiative” Discrimination: Fighting racial targeting of Asian Americans and communities of color, past & present* will be held on **Wednesday, February 24, 2021 starting at 8 pm ET/5 pm PT**. Please mark your calendar. Registration will be announced shortly.

The “China Initiative’s” racist targeting of Asian American and Asian immigrant scientists, researchers, and students - particularly those of Chinese descent - echoes past xenophobic national security initiatives that put immigrant communities and communities of color under unjust government scrutiny. This webinar, the third in a series, explores the civil society responses to Japanese incarceration and discrimination against Japanese Americans during World War II, and the targeting of Arab, Middle-Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) communities after 9/11, to inform how civil rights organizations and university leaders can more effectively challenge the new administration to end the “China Initiative” and the unfair scrutiny of Asian American and Asian immigrant scientists, researchers, and students.

Connecting current discrimination against Asian Americans and immigrants of Chinese descent within the historical framework of the treatment of Asian Americans, other immigrant communities, and communities of color in the U.S. is essential for building a broad coalition to support the legal and policy reforms necessary to protect the civil rights of all communities. (See [our coalition letter to the Biden transition team here](#)). Because academic and research institutions are the targets of “China Initiative” investigations, we must also understand the needs of university leaders and create a platform for allies and civil rights organizations to support the scientists, researchers, and students currently impacted by the latest wave of xenophobia. This webinar will focus on how to build these mechanisms for policy reform.

CAPAC Chair **Rep. Judy Chu** will open the webinar with three distinguished panelists:

- **Karen Korematsu**, Founder and Executive Director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute
- **Becky Monroe**, Director of Fighting Hate and Bias program at the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- **Leslie Wong**, President Emeritus, San Francisco State University

The webinar will be moderated by **Faiza Patel**, Director of Liberty & National Security Program, Brennan Center for Justice.

Read more about the webinar series here: [https://bit.ly/APAJ\\_Webinar\\_Series](https://bit.ly/APAJ_Webinar_Series)

## Powerful Presentation by Professor Xiaoxing Xi

Professor Xiaoxing Xi made a powerful presentation in an online event hosted by USC US-China Institute on February 11, 2021, comprehensively blending his personal experience with falsehoods from the government, scientific security, open exchange, and American competitiveness. Watch the video

here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apNUglq3A3U> (1:11:25)

## "We are all Gang Chen"

On February 11, 2021, a group of over 70 alumni and concerned colleagues of MIT Professor Gang Chen led by UC Berkeley Professor Chris Dames posted an open letter "[In defense of Gang Chen — in defense of academic freedom.](#)" In addition to the flaws in the criminal complaint identified in a letter co-signed by more than 200 MIT faculty members, these mentees, colleagues, and friends of Professor Chen highlight one more serious flaw with the charges, frame these events in the larger context of academic freedom, and share the human side of Professor Chen.

In particular, a key allegation is that Professor Chen deliberately misled the government by failing to list all of his professional and academic associations with China as well as all of his research co-authors from the last four years. Having collectively written and reviewed thousands of federal grant proposals themselves, the support group points out that the indictment fails to mention that the grant paperwork limits the biosketch appendix to two pages, while Prof. Chen's CV, which is publicly available, is 123 pages.

***"This begs an obvious question which is now terrifying researchers across the country: if our academic CV might be 100 pages long, how shall we now decide what to highlight in these two pages? If representatives of the Department of Justice are not satisfied with our choices, shall we too face arrest?"***

The post also describes Professor Chen's warmth and humanity as well as opines on the tension between academic freedom and national and economic security. "Thus we echo the calls to use this intense moment constructively, by igniting a national conversation among academics, policymakers, and security professionals to develop clear frameworks that work for all sides."

Meanwhile, about 870 persons have signed the "We are all Gang Chen" petition started by Northwestern University Professor Jeff Snyder. Please join by signing on here: <https://bit.ly/36A4kiw>

On February 11, 2021, the Department of Justice filed an opposition to Professor Chen's February 4 motion for sanctions. DOJ's "China Initiative" online report at <http://bit.ly/3jK3O6S> has been dormant since the election in November 2020, but it was reactivated on February 11. One case involving former University of Florida professor Lin Yang was added, but Professor Chen's case is noticeably missing. There are now about 62 cases identified in the DOJ report. They are described as "examples" which contain obvious selection bias.

Read more about Professor Chen's case at [https://bit.ly/APAJ\\_GangChen](https://bit.ly/APAJ_GangChen)

## Heart-Warming Fundraising Results

As of February 14, 2021, the [GoFundMe campaign](#) for the Franklin Tao Legal Defense Fund raised \$320,050 from 2,600 donors, thereby kicking in a generous matching fund and reached the goal of \$400,000. The campaign is now closed for donations, but will be maintained to provide updates on the status of Professor Tao's case. You can also follow his case at <http://justiceforfranklintao.com>. All donations will be managed by the trustee of the defense fund and used solely for paying legal defense fees.

The [fundraising effort for hate crime victim Bawi Cung and hero Zach Owen](#) came to a heart-warming conclusion after raising \$122,350 from 2,700 donors. Bawi Cung, a Burmese whose sons age 2 and 6 were slashed when they were mistaken to be Chinese and accused of spreading the coronavirus, has completed the training and received his commercial vehicle driver license. He is now driving a sanitary truck for the City of Midland, Texas to gain experience for future oil field work. Bawi is also expecting to become a naturalized American citizen this month.

Zach Owen lost 60% grip strength of his right hand from the incident, making him unsuitable for oil field jobs. He has recently moved to the border between Texas and Oklahoma to be closer to his daughters and grandfather. United Chinese Americans has been working with Sam's Club to transfer Zach to a new location close to where his grandfather lives.

## ACLU's Systematic Equality Agenda

ACLU has initiated a [Systemic Equality agenda](#) that seeks to address America's legacy of racism and oppression through legislative and administrative campaigns, as well as electoral work. A video of the February 11, 2021 Town Hall event on How to Advance Racial Justice is available at <https://bit.ly/3rNxFOJ> (1:05:08)

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