“We Are All Gang Chen”

Gang Chen

Department of Mechanical Engineering
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Key Timeline of My Ordeal

• January 22, 2020, Logan Airport interrogation
• December, 2020, prosecutor informed MIT and my layers no eminent indictment
• January 14, 2021, arrested at home
• January 20, 2022, all charges dropped
Absurdity of Prosecution

• On the day of my arrest, chief prosecutor Stephanie Siegmann indicated to my lawyers that they rushed the case.
• She said among all accusations, she was most angry that I served as a reviewer ("review expert") for the China’s Natural Science Foundation.
• In a news conference on the same day, the outgoing US Attorney Andrew Lelling questioned my loyalty to US.
• In the same news conference, FBI Special Agent in Charge Joseph Bonavolonta said “we found Chen has accepted approximately $29 million in foreign funding”.
• While at my house an agent told my wife that “he took $19 million dollars.” When she asked, “where is the money?” He said, “the money is at MIT”.
Seven Patterns of Misconducts

1. They knowingly distort facts
2. They criminalize normal scientific activities
3. They use emails I did not reply as criminal evidence
4. Following the law and rules is also a crime
5. They rushed the case; they did not do their job
6. They hide the truths
7. They never apologize

https://aasforum.org/2022/01/24/upcoming-webinar-professor-gang-chens-case/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RAaEqUaHqo
MIT Saved Me!

I am the luckiest among the unlucky ones!
MIT President Rafael Reif wrote on 1/14/2021 to MIT community: “For all of us who know Gang, this news is surprising, deeply distressing and hard to understand.”

Professor Yoel Fink: “When the lightening stroke, I acted on it.”

MIT Faculty Spoke Out! “We are all Gang Chen”
#WeAreAllGangChen

Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Member of the US National Academy of Engineering

Department Head, Mechanical Engineering MIT

MIT Capers and Marion McDonald Award for Excellence in Mentoring and Advising

MIT Professor Arrested and Charged with Grant Fraud

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MIT Professor Gang Chen Charged With Millions In Grant Fraud, Hiding China Ties

January 14, 2021 at 12:07 PM

NATIONAL REVIEW
MIT Professor Who Received $19M in Federal Grants Arrested for Concealing Ties to China

January 14, 2021 2:18 PM

10 BOSTON
MIT Professor Charged With Fraud for Failing to Disclose Work for Chinese Gov't

Gang Chen, 56, of Cambridge was arrested Thursday morning
January 14, 2021 at 4:39 PM

The Boston Globe
MIT professor indicted by federal grand jury for allegedly failing to disclose ties to China and wire fraud
January 20, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

MIT Faculty Newsletter
Faculty Letter to President Reif in Support of Professor Gang Chen
January 21, 2021

Letter to the community re. SUSTECH Relationship and Professor Chen
January 22, 2021

Slide From Yoel Fink
Community Support

- Professor Jeff Snyder (Northwestern University) online petition to legislatures “We are all Gang Chen” received 1483 signatures.

- Karen Chen launched “Gofundme” on Jan. 22 and reached its goal in first day. The effort raised awareness of people in similar plights. I am working on donating the raised funds to a nonprofit organization to support people in similar plights.

- Professor Chris Dames (UC Berkeley), “In Defense of Gang Chen, in Defense of Academy freedom”

- Regular gifts and messages from former group members, colleagues

- Open letter to DOJ on 3/17/21, signed by APS leadership team, and APS webinars

- Civil rights groups: APA Justice, AASF, AAJC, C100, etc.

- Congressional roundtable, congressional inquiries to DoJ

- “Winds of freedom” letters from ~200 US Universities to DoJ calling for an end of China Initiative

- ...
The Justice Department’s effort to prosecute cases of economic espionage had drifted from its stated mission and drawn fierce criticism for appearing to target researchers because of their ethnicity.

By Jess Aloe & Eileen Guo

February 23, 2022

“But by grouping cases under the China Initiative rubric, we helped give rise to a harmful perception that the department applies a lower standard to investigate and prosecute criminal conduct related to that country or that we in some way view people with racial, ethnic or familial ties to China differently.”

Matthew Olsen (Assistant Attorney General)
The Damage Already Done!

- I had 15 students/postdocs, now I have one post-doc and two students
- We cannot get rid of the nightmares and are constantly fearful
- A colleague is leaving, and three of his faculty friends already left US, citing my arrest was the last straw

Survey of Asian American Scholar Forum of 1354 US faculty members, mostly of Chinese heritage

- 64% is fearful of US government
- 67% is considering leaving the country
- 90% thinks it is more difficult to recruit international talents than five years ago

“I have told my kids, be prepared to take care of their mom when they take me away” (a faculty friend)

“Everything they accused of you can be said of me. FBI director Christopher Wray said that they open a China related case every 10 hours. It won’t take long before they come to me.” (another faculty friend)
And the Witch Hunt is Still Going On!

• FBI’s recent visit of a colleague’s home
• Another professor stopped at airport a few weeks ago

“There is a lot of commonality between that case and this one, factually”

(Judge Robinson)

Mingqing Xiao
Mathematician
SIU Carbondale
Trial starts 4/25/22

https://www.gofundme.com/f/Legal-Defense-Fund-for-Franklin-Tao

https://www.apajustice.org/mingqing-xiao.html
Five Lessons Learnt

1. We are all losers, US is the biggest loser.
2. Leaders from universities, professional societies, and industry should stand out and protect their researchers.
3. The funding agencies need to learn lessons.
4. Know our rights: do not talk to FBI without lawyers.
5. Politics impacts everyone, we must speak out.
“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr