

**Chen Guangcheng**, known to many as "the barefoot lawyer," was born and raised in a poor village in Shandong, China. Blind since infancy, illiterate until his late teens, he nonetheless taught himself law and became a fiery advocate for tens of thousands of Chinese who had no voice. His work to bring justice to those facing persecution drew the notice of the authorities, leading to a period of harassment and detention that would last over seven years, including repeated house arrests, black jails, and a four-year prison sentence. After twenty months of brutal detention in his own home, he 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 student at New York University Law School.

Now living in the DC area, Mr. Chen continues his human rights work. He has established a foundation to support human rights in China, and currently holds positions as Visiting Fellow at the Catholic University of America, Distinguished Senior Fellow in Human Rights at the Witherspoon Institute, and Senior Distinguished Advisor to the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice. Mr. Chen's memoir, "The Barefoot Lawyer: A Blind Man's Fight for Justice and Freedom in China," was released by Henry Holt Publishers on March 10, 2015.