

**Presentation by John McDonnell | Inaugural recipient of The Mark S. Wrighton Award for Academy Alumni, Dr. Chen Li, JD '16, JSD '15**

I have been asked tonight to present the inaugural Mark S. Wrighton Award for service and impact on behalf of the McDonnell International Scholars Academy and Washington University in St. Louis. Before we celebrate our first recipient, I wanted to tell you about the genesis of this award. The Mark S. Wrighton Award for McDonnell Academy Alumni was established this year in honor of Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton, founder of the McDonnell International Scholars Academy and the 14<sup>th</sup> Chancellor of Washington University. Chancellor Wrighton's vision was to educate future global leaders and foster collaborative research across borders. This award recognizes an alumni who has exemplified that vision in their career – an individual who is having success in their professional career, has demonstrated leadership through the impact they are having in their community or profession, and has advanced the mission of the Academy in some way. The award winner is an individual who both current and future scholars can look toward as an example of what the Academy expects of them in their career. This award is generously sponsored by Richard J. Mahoney, retired chairman and CEO of Monsanto Company, distinguished executive-in-residence at Olin Business School, and an emeritus trustee of Washington University.

To identify the award winner, the Academy solicited nominations from all of the McDonnell Academy alumni, the McDonnell Academy Ambassadors, as well as other people who have been associated with the Academy over the years. We received many nominations about alumni spread across several cohorts, all of whom were doing impressive things. The nominees represented a diverse set of fields including law, business, social work, anthropology, and biology.

The inaugural winner is Dr. Chen Li. Chen Li graduated from Washington University with both his Doctor of Juridical Science and his Juris Doctor in that unconventional order. Having received legal education in seven countries including: China, Singapore, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Belgium. His legal research interests include Legal History, Economic Law, Public International Law, Comparative Law, and Human Rights Law. He is a prolific scholar. Since 2016, he has published over 10 articles in high impact journals.

Chen Li received 6 separate nominations. To give you a sense Dr. Chen Li, let me share a few excerpts from the different nominations:

- “I’ve written hundreds of recommendations for students over the past 25 years, and I’ve never used the word ‘brilliant’ to describe a former student. Yet it is the right word to describe Chen Li.”
- Dr. Chen is a great example of the global leader Chancellor Wrighton aims to train, and has made significant accomplishments that contribute to the society as well as to the Academy’s core mission of addressing global issues.
- Chen Li’s contribution to the core mission of the McDonnell Academy has been extraordinary. He is certainly a “Scholar for Life.”
- His efforts on our behalf over the past couple years have intensified and culminated in the establishment of a joint degree program with Fudan Law School. This fall, we will welcome 22 students from Fudan, all choosing Washington University Law over other law schools because of Chen Li’s work.”

It is with great pleasure that I welcome Dr. Chen Li to the stage to receive this prestigious award. Please join me in congratulating, Dr. Li!