Scientist called a 'hero'

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The chairman of the Committee of 100, Frank Wu, said on Thursday that Chinese-American scientist Sherry Chen is a "hero", after a US judge ruled that she was wrongfully arrested and fired due to baseless spying claims several years ago.  
Chief Administrative Judge Michele Schroeder of the Merit Systems Protection Board said on Tuesday that Chen was the "victim of a gross injustice" and the US Commerce Department had no cause to fire her.  
Schroeder ordered the department to reinstate her employment at the department's National Weather Service (NWS) and pay her back pay plus benefits.  
Wu, a professor at the University of California's Hastings College of Law, said the Committee of 100 - a non-profit organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, and the arts - supported Chen "because her case is so important. The whole community rallied. That deserves to be noticed. Chinese in America are stereotyped as passive and quiet - no more!"  
He said that Chen has shown that Chinese Americans, including immigrants, can win by standing up and speaking out for their rights.  
"This case will be a landmark - it sets a precedent. Her case is one of many. There are others who are innocent but who also have been wrongly accused. They can have hope now," Wu said.  
He said that Chen will continue to need help because the government might appeal the judge's decision. "That means Sherry has won this battle, a major battle, but she has not yet won the war," he added.  
In a more than 130-page detailed decision, the judge completely rejected the Commerce Department's allegations that Chen attempted to obtain secret information from a restricted government database, according to the Sherry Chen Legal Defense Fund.  
"We hope this decision sends a strong message to the federal government: stop targeting innocent Chinese Americans," the fund said in a statement after the judge's decision.  
"Three and a half years after her wrongful arrest in October 2014 and two years after her termination in March 2016, Sherry Chen finally has received justice," the statement read.  
Chen, an employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under the NWS, was accused in 2014 of stealing sensitive information from a database for the nation's dams and lying about the breach. In March 2015, US federal prosecutors dropped the charges against Chen.

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