

Here to present the award is Dr. Wen Wang's wife, Lei Zhang.

Presented by Lei Zhang
Remarks from the awardee
Yu Shi

Thank you, gang, for the kind introduction. And thank you, Lei, for being here and with us. I also want to thank China-America Association for Public Affairs (CAAPA) for sponsoring this award and choosing me to represent the important work that is performed by young scholars in the field of Public Administration especially public finance in the US and China. I am humbled by this award as the first recipient and appreciative of being recognized in this way.

The paper for this award is about special districts, entitled "The Rise of Specialized Governance in American Federalism: Testing Links Between Local Government Autonomy and Formation of Special District Governments"; it was published in *Publius; The Journal of Federalism* in 2017.

In this article, I investigate whether the growth of special districts in the fifty states from 1972 to 2002 can be explained by choices made by local general-purpose governments in response to different degrees of government autonomy—local government capacity, local government discretion, and local government importance—I find that the growth of certain types of special districts is in part a response to state laws constraining government autonomy of general-purpose governments. Recently, I published my second paper on special district finance at Local Government Studies. I am working on their paper about special district service function. This paper was presented this morning at ABFM.

An award like this is very meaningful to a young scholar like me. When I was 18 years old, I visited Denmark and a professor asked me "what do you want to be in the future?", my immediate answer was "a professor". When I wrote this article in 2016, I was on the job market and the future was full of uncertainty. However, I really like doing research and always want to pursue the academic job. Now the dream comes true.

This award is thus a reflection of many supportive people who have influenced me in pursuit of academic career. So, let me thank all scholars and teachers like Dr. Wen Wang who helped me get here-taught me, nurtured me and inspired me. The first time I met Dr. Wen Wang was during my first public budgeting and finance class for the MPA degree at the Maxwell School ten years ago. Ten years later, I was honored to be the first recipient of this award.

After accepting this award, I feel a very strong responsibility to live up to the prestige of this award and pledge to you that I will produce more excellent research work and make remarkable contributions to the field of public finance in the future.