



Civil Courage News

Journal of the Civil Courage Prize

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For Steadfast Resistance to Evil at Great Personal Risk

2022 Civil Courage Prize Winner Russian Opposition Leader Alexei Navalny Continues His Fight From Prison

On October 24th, 2022, The Train Foundation, partnered with NYU's Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia and Columbia's Harriman Institute, held a Symposium at NYU's Kimmel Center to honor Alexei Navalny with the 2022 Civil Courage Prize. The lawyer, opposition leader and anticorruption activist is the first person to win the prize while in prison.

Navalny is the founder of the Anti-Corruption Foundation, which has successfully investigated Russian state corporations, oligarchs, and senior government officials. He also entered politics as the leader of the "Russia of the Future Party" in 2018 when he ran for mayor of Moscow.

After an assassination attempt in August of 2020, which Navalny believes was orchestrated by the Kremlin, he received emergency treatment in Germany. In spite of the risks, he returned to Russia in January 2021, and was arrested. He was given a two-and-a-half-year sentence based on fabricated charges, which was later increased by 9 years for fraud and contempt of court. The following June, he was moved to the notorious IK-6 prison, known for claims of widespread torture and abuse. Frequently placed in a "punishment cell" for small infractions, his ability to communicate with the outside world was further limited by Russian authorities. In August of 2023, he received another 19 years for inciting and financing extremist activity and creating an extremist organization.

Although his Foundation's activities in Russia have been shut down by the government, it continues to operate from Latvia, coordinating with members throughout Russia. They expose corruption, disseminate information and fight to keep Navalny's name and causes in the public domain.

In a ceremony prior to the symposium, the award was presented on Navalny's behalf to Foundation leaders Leonid Volkov and Maria Pevchikh, after which the event took place with a live audience.



Alexei Navalny



Mikhail Baryshnikov

George Biddle, the Train Foundation Chairman, opened the Symposium with a tribute to the Civil Courage Prize founder and Chairman, John Train, who passed away in August of 2022. "He was our leader, our guide, our colleague...a man of remarkably wide-ranging talents and interests and, at his core, John was truly an intellectual, a deep thinker and a concerned global citizen." Referring to the prize, he went on to say that with regard to the prize, "John had an extraordinary vision."

Biddle then spoke about the "incredible laureate." A common thread of the evening was praise for Navalny's extraordinary courage. Biddle added his praise, "it is hard to imagine an individual who epitomizes the qualities of the Civil Courage Prize more than Alexei Navalny. He has single-handedly stood up to his government and challenged it to be less corrupt, less violent, and more open." Biddle continued, "In doing so he has inspired so many but he has also done so at unimaginable personal risk. I honestly don't think many of us in this room can fathom the exceptional bravery that he honestly possesses for his actions."

The next speaker, Joshua Tucker, professor of politics at NYU and the director of the Jordan Center, found it "deeply troubling" that Navalny could not be there to receive the award but also "deeply encouraging and uplifting that people here today have gathered to keep his struggle alive...to not let him be silenced despite the efforts of the Russian regime to do exactly that."

Tucker was followed by Mikhail Baryshnikov, co-founder of True Russia. He began by saying that he was "in awe of Navalny's courage. His efforts to champion a more democratic vision for Russia are selfless and shocking. And insanely brave." Baryshnikov continued, "He believes in Russia when nearly nobody else does...he loves Russia and its people more than anything else. It's a love that demands selfless courage, and I think only a truly extraordinary individual can hold such a love." He contin-

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Recent News About Past Winners



Nataša Kandić

In September 2022, the **2000 Civil Courage Prize winner, Nataša Kandić**, filed a lawsuit against the mayor of Belgrade, Aleksandar Šapić, for making "untrue claims" that she was a person "who accuses the Serbian people of genocide on all grounds and who insists that we be declared a genocidal nation."

The lawsuit sprang from an incident in February 2020, at an event promoting books that deny genocide and crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia. When Kandić, and other activists, tried to distribute a report detailing war crimes committed against Croats, members of the far-right Serbian Radical Party, on orders of its president, convicted war criminal Vojislav Šešelj, physically assaulted them, forcing them out of a public space in Belgrade. Neither the staff nor security personnel tried to prevent the confrontation.

Kandić, founder of the Humanitarian Law Center (HLC) in Belgrade in 1992, created the Center to document human rights violations committed during the conflicts associated with the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. It researched killings, disappearances, the torture of prisoners of war, and the patterns of ethnic cleansing in times of armed conflict. They provided The Hague and prosecutor's offices in the former Yugoslavia with information and expert assistance with regard to war crimes trials.

More than 30 years later, Kandić and the Center still advocate for justice for war crimes victims and work to counter the extreme nationalism and strained ethnic tensions that remain in the Western Balkans. The Center also

works towards "regional reconciliation, the taking of responsibility for the crimes committed in the recent past, and restoring the human dignity of victims whatever their ethnicity."



Dr. Denis Mukwege

For 30 years, 2013 Prize winner, and Nobel Peace laureate, gynecologist Dr. Denis Mukwege has been at the forefront of helping victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and speaking out about their circumstances.

During the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative Conference in London (November, 2022), he spoke to the House of Lords about the need to ensure justice and accountability for conflict-related sexual violence in the DRC. After almost 30 years of repeated wars of aggression and cycles of conflict, it is "one of the most dramatic humanitarian crises in the world, where the numbers of those killed, raped women and the displaced are in the millions."

Mukwege emphasized that "the culture of impunity" is one of the main obstacles to the establishment of lasting peace in the Congo. He pointed out the judicial system has been "undermined by corruption, political interference and a lack of independence." He laid out a blueprint for a remedy that included the establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal for the Congo, ongoing engagement of the International Criminal Court, making full use of the principle of universal jurisdiction to prosecute the perpetrators for their involvement, and the establishment of a National Reparations Fund for victims and survivors. "One of the main demands of victims and

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The Story of The Civil Courage Prize

Many years ago, John Train became concerned with the situation of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the great Russian hero and author, whose works helped destroy the prestige of Stalinism. After being exiled, he had moved to rural Vermont, but was living in poverty. Train was able to obtain substantial private support for him, and accompanied him to London, where Prince Philip handed him a check in a Buckingham Palace ceremony.

Train, who delivered the English-language response at the ceremony, realized that there was no word in English for the virtue that Solzhenitsyn so nobly exemplified, but that there should be, perhaps "civil courage," as distinct from valor in war. He resolved to create a prize for this virtue, and asked if Solzhenitsyn would like to receive it, or have it named after him, or be a judge. He chose the last, and acted in that role for the rest of his life. His son has followed him.

The prize, a substantial honorarium and a medal, is "for steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk." It was first awarded, in London, to Nataša Kandić, sometimes called the Serbian Schindler. Subsequent laureates have come from most parts of the world. One, Anna Politkovskaya, reporting on atrocities in Chechnya, was assassinated in the course of the very work for which she was honored, as were several others who were recognized posthumously, notably Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Giovanni Falcone and Raoul Wallenberg."

Civil courage is essential for a good society. Some few must step forward to challenge iniquity. Our hope is that by introducing the expression "civil courage" into the English language, and by holding up for general admiration heroes of conscience who exemplify it, we can encourage the good side of human nature.

To select the prizewinner, we invite nominations from an international list of distinguished organizations and persons. Our administrative office then checks to see if the nominee truly fills our qualifications. Once the nominations have been researched, they are reviewed by the Trustees and a short list is created, which is then sent on to our Advisors for ranking. Their choices are in turn considered by the Trustees, who make the final decision.

When the laureate has come to New York to receive the medal and the stipend, we introduce him to the press and to other organizations with similar objectives here and in Washington. He will probably make contact with twenty or thirty groups and hundreds of individuals. These encounters will fortify his resolve to continue on his difficult course and will help develop useful allies. It adds prestige to a good person pursuing a difficult goal to be able to invoke such connections. We have found that winning the prize confers a measure of protection to a laureate's life at home.

The hero of conscience is usually solitary: his companions are found in history books. He battles for a cause that even his friends may not understand or believe in, or dare to espouse. The noblest causes may be those that seem hopeless at the time. Civil courage empowers us to face the world alone.

For further information and updates on current and previous prizewinners, please go to:

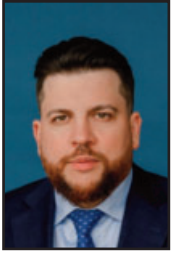
www.civildcourageprize.org

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CCP HONORS ALEXEI NAVALNY

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Leonid Volkov

ued, Navalny's "optimism...inspires us...compels us...to embrace his daring idea that Russians themselves can choose a different path if they are truly given the chance to do so." His courage is "a beacon [that] can light the way to the idea of a 'beautiful Russia of the future.'"



Maria Pevchikh

After highlights from the Academy Award-winning CNN documentary "Navalny," board member Musa Klebnikov spoke by video with Michael McFaul, former ambassador to Russia, currently a Stanford professor focusing on the region and public commentator. Klebnikov commented that Navalny "seems to have an unstoppable drive to keep fighting for change no matter what the personal cost."

McFaul agreed, characterizing Navalny as "adept and smart and creative" in exposing corruption, with "a drive to save his country; to serve his country, that is something unique and something that should be admired and acknowledged." Navalny spoke to him about his decision to return to Russia. "It's my country. I'm not going to be chased out of my own country...I don't really have a choice here, Mike. There would not be a way for me to live with myself had I left my country to re-mobilize opposition." McFaul continued, "By going back he has defied his critics and his jailers...they didn't expect him to come."

He also pointed out that Navalny is "not a saint; he's said some things that he regrets in the past; [but] there's nobody else like him in terms of a single opposition leader that people focus on." McFaul's final point was about the Russian people, "I would distinguish between Putin and his regime and Russians. Whenever I hear on TV people talking about Russia thinks this, Russia wants that, Russia believes this, I want to ask who is this Russia that you've met?" He thinks that "helping to remind people that there are many Russians with different points of view is also a way to help."



Gillian Tett

The event ended with a lively discussion moderated by Gillian Tett, Chair, Editorial Board and US Editor-at-Large for *The Financial Times* with Leonid Volkov and Maria Pevchikh from the Anti-Corruption Foundation. They explored the Foundation's ongoing work, Navalny's day-to-day life in prison and how they keep his name in the public domain. After a Q & A, the evening ended with a small reception.

The event can be viewed on the Civil Courage Prize website at www.civildcouragprize.org.

RECENT NEWS ABOUT PAST WINNERS

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survivors is restorative justice. Reparation is a right and represents a measure of justice... provides support to the victim to enable them to complete their healing process and rebuild their lives with dignity."



Vladimir Kara-Murza

In April of 2022, **Vladimir Kara-Murza, 2018 Prize-winner**, was arrested as he returned home to his Moscow apartment. The arrest came after he criticized the Kremlin for the war in the Ukraine in a CNN interview. At first, he was sentenced to 15 days in jail for "active resistance" to his

arrest even though he went with the police, peacefully. During his 15-day detention, the charges were increased and he remained in detention until his trial, which was postponed until April of 2023. The sentence handed down, 25 years in prison, was the longest sentence for an opposition politician. The bulk of the sentence was for treason – for the speeches he gave in the U.S. and other countries outside of Russia against Russia's actions in Ukraine. He was portrayed by the prosecution as a threat to Russia's safety. He appealed the sentence and lost.

At the 4th Summit of the Council of Europe, in Reykjavik, Iceland, there was a joint declaration from its leaders, "The charges against Mr. Kara-Murza are unfounded, and together with a sham trial, constitute a clear violation of his human rights." In brief, the declaration went on to say that he is "a longstanding proponent of democratic values. His bravery in speaking out against the current government of the Russian Federation and the Russian aggression against Ukraine in a country where opposition is silenced by death, imprisonment or exile, commands our respect. The Council of Europe strongly condemns the Russian Federation's escalating repression of those expressing dissent and criticism. It...calls for [his] immediate release as well as the release of all other peaceful civic and political activists arbitrarily deprived of liberty in Russia."

* * * * *

Update on Alexei Navalny...According to the *New York Times*, in January 2023, based on Navalny's "detention conditions and appearance" in prison, over 200 Russian doctors signed a petition sent to Putin "imploping him to stop abusing Navalny "as they could not "stand aside and watch how Mr. Navalny's health is being deliberately harmed." This public criticism of the Kremlin in the wake of the Ukraine invasion put the doctors at risk of being fired or facing criminal and/or administrative charges. At the end of May 2023, Navalny's appeal of his sentence was rejected.

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Past Honorees

2022 Alexei Navalny
Russian opposition leader and anti-corruption activist

2021 Eric K. Ward
Challenger of extremism and bigotry in the U.S.

2019 Gonzalo Himiob Santomé
Defender of persecuted Venezuelans

2018 Vladimir Kara-Murza
Heroic Russian opposition leader

2017 Pierre Claver Mbonimpa
Campaigner for social justice in Burundi

2016 RBSS
(Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently) Journalists revealing ISIS atrocities from inside Syria

Thuli Madonsela
(Honorable Mention)
Anti-corruption crusader, South Africa

2015 Claudia Paz y Paz
Prosecutor of human rights abuses, Guatemala

Yassmín Barrios
Presiding judge in Rios Montt genocide trial, Guatemala

2014 Nicola Gratteri
Relentless prosecutor of the Italian mafia

2013 Dr. Denis Mukwege
Physician and advocate for victims of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

2012 Yu Jie
Author and advocate for reform in China

2011 Triveni Acharya
Defender of victims of human trafficking in India

Lydia Cacho Ribeiro
Champion of abused women and children in Mexico

2010 Andrew White
Steadfast advocate for peace in the Middle East

2009 Aminatou Haidar
Champion of the non-violent campaign for self-determination in Western Sahara

2008 Ali Salem
Egyptian author and journalist; voice for peace and reason in the Middle East

2007 Phillip Buck
Imprisoned in China for guiding North Korean refugees in their escape to freedom

2006 Rafael Marques de Morais
Journalist who exposed the slaughter of Angolans and the plundering of national assets

2005 Min Ko Naing
Long-imprisoned campaigner for democracy in Burma

Anna Politkovskaya
Fearless reporter on atrocities in Chechnya, assassinated 2006

Munir Said Thalib†
Exposed disappearances and corruption in Indonesia, assassinated

2004 Emadeddin Baghi
Imprisoned for exposing assassinations of Iranian intellectuals

Lovemore Madhuku
Lawyer persecuted for demanding constitutional reform in Zimbabwe

Abdul al-Latif al-Mayah†
Iraqi political scientist and human rights advocate, assassinated

2003 Shahnaz Bukhari
Battler against the burning and other abuse of Pakistani women

2002 Vladimiro Roca Antunez
Champion of freedom, Cuba

Gustavo Arcos Bergnes
(Honorable Mention)
Early democracy activist, Cuba

2001 Paul Kamara
Editor and journalist fighting tyranny in Sierra Leone

2000 Nataša Kandić
Persecuted journalist and activist, Belgrade

Sergei Khodorovich
(Honorable Mention)
Solzhenitsyn collaborator exiled to hard labor in Siberia

Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer†
Anti-Nazi martyr

Judge Giovanni Falcone†
Assassinated while prosecuting the Sicilian mafia

Rosemary Nelson†
Civil rights lawyer, assassinated while defending accused persons in Northern Ireland

Neelan Tiruchelvam†
Lawyer and educator, killed by a suicide bomber while working for solutions to Tamil-Sri Lankan conflict

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Raoul Wallenberg†
Saved thousands of Jews from extermination

† = posthumous

The Civil Courage Prize honors civil courage – steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk – rather than military valor. The acts so recognized should have taken place deliberately, over time. Nominations for the Prize are solicited primarily from non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and individuals worldwide. Further information and a nomination form may be obtained from our website: www.civildcouragprize.org.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

—Edmund Burke



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