



## MSPE Scholarships Support Engineering Education

This sentiment, expressed in MSPE's historic monthly publication, continues to be at the heart of MSPE's two charitable foundations: the MSPE Scholarship Fund and the Michigan Engineers Foundation.

*"We can all make a contribution to promote engineering as a profession, and it all starts with and involves our youth."*

*- The Michigan Professional Engineer (MPE), November 1970*

Following the lead of NSPE's creation of the National Society of Professional Engineers Scholarship program in 1960, MSPE filed Articles of Incorporation for the MSPE Scholarship Fund in January of 1968, formalizing a long-standing tradition of raising funds to support engineering education. The NSPE program provided scholarships to students selected from among all of the state societies. Harry R. Ball, PE, the founding chairman of the MSPE Scholarship Fund, wanted to increase the opportunities available to Michigan students. It wasn't until 1970 that the IRS recognized the

MSPE Scholarship Fund as a tax-exempt, public foundation, a status that it continues to hold today.

Initial member support for the program was varied. In a 1972 article in the MPE, Ball wrote "We have concluded a mailing to the membership and we have received a dozen favorable responses with contributions and a couple of comments about 'too many engineers now'." His rebuttal to the comments was direct. "Our program is based entirely on the future and it is our strong conviction, incidentally supported by many others, that the technical need of the future will require more and better engineers." Those words still ring true today.

Since the initial funding of \$648 in 1968, the fund has grown to an endowment of over \$215,000 today that is used to support up to 11 scholarships for Michigan high school graduates each year. A conservative estimate is that the MSPE Scholarship Fund and Program has provided over \$700,000 in scholarships at the state level since the first two scholarships totaling \$700 were awarded at the end of the 1967-68 fiscal year. Additional scholarships are provided by several chapters, independent of the state society, raising that number to nearly \$1 Million over the past 52 years.



The state of Michigan is fortunate to have 21 institutions with a combined total of 99 Bachelor's degree programs with an ABET Engineering accreditation. These programs range from Civil, Electrical, Environmental, and Mechanical Engineering to Aerospace, Biomedical, Geological, Paper, and Robotics & Mechatronic Systems Engineering. MSPE works with several of the colleges and universities to match funding of scholarships and we are grateful for their continued generous support.

Every February, 150 to 200 Michigan high school seniors who have been accepted in an ABET accredited engineering program in one of the 21 Michigan schools vie for scholarships based on their standardized test scores, grade point averages, extracurricular activities, community service, leadership, and character. All applicants also become a student member of MSPE/NSPE. This year, technology has indeed influenced the scholarship program. For the first time, all of the applications will be submitted through an online process. Scholarship Selection Committee members from each chapter then review and score the students residing in their area and report the scores back to the state for ranking and award selection.

As MSPE continues to look to the future of our profession, we are confident that our Scholarship Program will continue to be robust. Our members are dedicated to the program and to encouraging our youth to follow an engineering education and career path.

Know a Michigan high-school senior intending to study engineering at a Michigan college or university? Please pass along this link to the MSPE Scholarship Application. [Scholarships | MSPE \(michiganspe.org\)](#) Applications are due February 19, 2021.

**#MSPE75**