



## Our Founding

This weekend, we commemorate the 245<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This is a chance to celebrate our heritage and look back on the progression of our culture in the nearly two and a half centuries since the 56 representatives of the 13 colonies stood together and mutually pledged “our *lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor*” to the creation of free and independent states, known as the United States of America.

In 1946, 45 Michigan licensed professional engineers petitioned the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) for a charter, becoming the 24<sup>th</sup> state society of the national organization. The impetus behind the petition to NSPE was not one to separate, but to join together. In 1934, David B. Steinman, PE, called together the state societies for Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania to initiate a new organization of State Engineering Societies that would be a non-technical society for professional engineers. Their goal was to address concerns regarding unqualified practitioners, unethical practices, and unfair compensation as well as to build public appreciation and recognition of the practice of professional engineering.

These same issues also concerned the founders of MSPE. In 1937, the Michigan Legislature passed a revision to the registration act, providing for registration of all engineers who could qualify, and included a “grandfather clause,” waiving the requirement of a written exam for a period of five years. This change saw a large increase in the registration of professional engineers. During the early 1940’s, the labor unions in Detroit wanted industrial plant engineers to join the labor unions. Many of the plant engineers saw this as contrary to the ethical practice of engineering, and some sought a new organization that could serve as the voice of licensed professional engineers, no matter their specialization, industry, or employer.

NPSE granted the requested charter to the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE) in 1946. The objectives stated in the first MSPE Constitution, adopted on June 19, 1946, were as follows:

*“The objects of the Society shall be the advancement of the public welfare and the promotion of the professional, social and economic interests of the Professional Engineer and Engineer-in Training.”*

These objectives are still uppermost in the current bylaws and operating procedures of MSPE and have been echoed across the last 75<sup>th</sup> years, evidenced by the recitation of the Engineers Creed during every installation ceremony for incoming officers of MSPE:

*As a Professional Engineer, I dedicate my professional knowledge to the advancement and betterment of human welfare.*

*I pledge to give the utmost of performance; to participate in none but honest enterprise; to live and work according to the laws of man and the highest standards of professional conduct; to place service before profit; the honor and standing of my profession before personal advantage; and the public welfare above all other considerations.*

*I pledge to uphold the Bylaws of the National Society of Professional Engineers and Michigan Society of Professional Engineers.*

*In humility and with the need for divine guidance, I make this pledge.*

This year we celebrate 75 years of MSPE, the forward vision of the founders of MSPE, who endeavored to protect and promote the practice of professional engineering, and the actions of our present leaders and members that continue to safeguard and strengthen our profession.