A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CHICAGO ENGINEER'S FOUNDATION

The Chicago Engineers' Foundation of the Union League Club was organized in 1963 by the Chicago Engineers Club, which was an organization of engineers that had been founded in 1903. The Foundation's original name was Chicago Engineers Club Foundation. The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Engineers Club Foundation was held on October 4, 1963 at 314 S. Federal Street. At that meeting it was reported that on June 26, 1963 the State of Illinois had issued the certificate of incorporation for the Foundation. Said certificate was filed in the office of the Recorder of Deeds for Cook County on June 28, 1963. The Board officers present were Robert H. Bacon, President; David W. Jasper, Vice President; and Douglas Flood, Secretary and Treasurer.

The initial objectives of the Foundation included the award of engineering scholarships to outstanding high school students in the Chicago area. The officers and directors of the Foundation solicited contributions from the members of the Chicago Engineers Club to fund the activities of the new Foundation.

As early as 1969, the Foundation began its current practice of making incentive awards to students to encourage them to study engineering at the college level. From 1969 to 1973, the Foundation granted ten $100.00 awards each year to Chicago high school graduating seniors who had been admitted to college engineering programs. The number of awards was increased to 15 each year in 1974.

In 1975, the Chicago Engineers Club merged with the Union League Club of Chicago, and the name of the Foundation changed to its current name: Chicago Engineers' Foundation of the Union League Club of Chicago. The Foundation continued its practice of awarding 15 scholarships of $100.00 each to high school graduates accepted for college engineering programs. Over time, the number of students and the scholarship amounts increased. Thanks to the generosity of the members of the Union League Club of Chicago and other donors, the Foundation has increased the number and amounts of awards to the level that in 2013 the Foundation awarded over $91,000 in awards to over 100 students, including students about to begin their sophomore, junior, and senior years in college as well as high school seniors entering their freshman year, the minimum award being $800.00.

In June 1995, Foundation President Stewart Karge, announced that the program had been expanded to include Chicago area private schools. And, in the annual report for June 1999, Foundation President George Sinka, announced that the program had been expanded to include college students already in the program who would like to reapply for further scholarship money.

Before merging with the Union League Club, the Chicago Engineers Club had a long and distinguished history. It was organized in 1903 by fifteen engineers lead by Ralph Modjeski and Louis E. Ritter, both civil engineers, and was incorporated in 1906. The articles of incorporation were signed by the Secretary of State of the State of Illinois on December 24, 1906. The application for incorporation was signed by J. W. Schaub, Andrews Allen, William Love, Walter Angier, and Charles Strobel. The corporate objective of the Engineers' Club was "to promote the interests of the engineering profession in all its branches, to

secure and disseminate engineering knowledge, and to promote sociability and acquaintance among members of the engineering profession."

Initially the Engineers Club met in a restaurant or a hotel in downtown Chicago, but in 1911, the club acquired a building at 314 S, Federal Street, immediately south of the present Union League Clubhouse at 65 W. Jackson Boulevard. This building was remodeled so as to increase its height from three to seven stories. It served as the home of the Engineers Club until 1975, when that club merged with the Union League Club. The building at 314 S. Federal Street continues to be owned by the Union League Club.

The Chicago Tribune reported on the Engineers Club's 50th anniversary in its May 28, 1953 edition. At that time the Club had about 500 members. The article noted that the founding members had included Ralph Modjeski, an international builder of bridges, and Isham Randolph, builder of the Chicago Drainage Canal. By 1953, only one founding member remained alive. He was Theodore Condron, who had designed 27 buildings for Henry Ford, and had constructed Thomas Edison's factory building in West Orange, New Jersey. The club president at the time was George Salter, who was in charge of the new city filtration plant to be built in Lake Michigan just north of Navy Pier. Many of the earlier members had become members without the benefit of a formal engineering education. As reported by the Tribune, the Engineers Club's motto, which was on the mantle of the fireplace in the building at 314 S. Federal Street, stated:

Men our Brothers, men the builders,
Come you from afar, or near,
Welcome to our home and fireside,
Welcome! Brother Engineer

Today the Chicago Engineers' Foundation of the Union League Club is built on the proud tradition of the Chicago Engineers Club, but has changed with the times to remain relevant in today's world. Whereas the Chicago Engineers Club was all male, the Chicago Engineers' Foundation equally encourages all students, both male and female, and of every race and ethnicity, to study engineering, and make its awards accordingly. And whereas many early 20th century engineers were able to practice their profession without formal engineering educations, the Chicago Engineers' Foundation believes that formal engineering education is vital for a 21st century engineer, and the Foundation's mission is to encourage students to obtain that education.

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