History of LEF

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation (LEF) was incorporated in 1978 by a group of Louisiana professional engineers, members of the Louisiana Engineering Society and other professional engineering groups. Its purpose was, and continues to be, the promotion of activities to support and strengthen the profession of engineering. The original officers were: Vincent A. Forte, P.E., President; A.J. Szabo, P.E., Vice President; Guy W. Miller, P.E., Secretary; James L. Meyer, P.E., Treasurer; Mr. R. Carlton "Doc" Spears was appointed Executive Secretary.

The stated objectives of the Louisiana Engineering Foundation are to promote charitable, educational and scientific objectives. More specifically, its goals are:

1. To grant scholarships and fellowships to students in support of engineering;

2. To provide guidance and information to high school and college students who are interested in engineering careers;

3. To disseminate engineering information beneficial to the interested public

The last goal was initially accomplished by purchasing a building and surrounding grounds at 1213 Nicholson Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a generous donation by Mr. and Mrs. Leo M. Odom, loans, and contributions of practicing engineers and corporations. The building housed the Louisiana Engineering Society and the American Council of Engineering Companies in Louisiana.

In 1996, the original building and location were found to be no longer adequate to fulfill the objectives of the Louisiana Engineering Foundation, and its Board of Directors made the decision to rent office space at One Calais Avenue in Baton Rouge until a new engineering center could be built. The building housed Louisiana Engineering Society, American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana, the Louisiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors and the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientist.

The Louisiana Engineering Center on Brookline Avenue was constructed in 1998-1999 with more than 350 donations totaling more than $6,000,000 from engineers, engineering firms, organizations and businesses dependent upon engineering. The current donors are honored by having their names displayed on plaques in the lobby of the building where all members of the engineering profession and visitors may see who supported the project.

The Foundation supports MATHCOUNTS, the program to encourage the knowledge of mathematics among junior high school students; gives Graduate School Fellowships to graduate students who express an intention of teaching at the

college level; and annually confers honors on an engineering faculty member selected by his peers in each of the accredited engineering schools in Louisiana and gives 31 scholarships to undergraduate engineering students throughout Louisiana. Since 1982, LEF has presented numerous Fellowships to graduate students at Tulane University, Louisiana State University, University of New Orleans, Louisiana Tech University, and University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In the annual Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award Program, various engineering faculty members from Louisiana State University, Tulane University, University of New Orleans, McNeese State University, Louisiana Tech University, Southern University and University of Louisiana Lafayette have been recognized and each honored with a plaque of recognition.

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation is supported in its endeavors by contributions of dues– paying members of the Louisiana Engineering Society and by donations in support of engineering education. Persons, companies, or foundations should communicate with the Executive Director at

Mary Claire Ruckert, Executive Director
Louisiana Engineering Society
1800 City Farm Dr.
Building 5, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Telephone: (225) 924-2021

If you practice engineering, employ engineers in your business, or use the benefits of engineering in your industry, the Directors invite you to consider donating funds, securities or property to the Louisiana Engineering Foundation.

Memorials

Special contributions may be made to the Foundation in memory of a deceased friend, relative or associate. The funds received are used to carry out the goals of LEF.

Timeline of the LEF

1978

- Founded and Incorporated
- Mr. R.C. “Doc” Spears was appointed first Executive Secretary. The original officers were:
    - Vincent A. Forte, P.E., President
    - A.J. Szabo, P.E., Vice President

  - Guy W. Miller, P.E., Secretary
  - James L. Meyer, P.E., Treasurer

- Mr. and Mrs. Leo M. Odom donated more than $100,000 and the first Louisiana Engineering Center was established at 1213 Nicholson Drive, Baton Rouge.

1982

- Vincent A. Forte Graduate School Fellowship was established.

1990

- Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award established.

1994

- Brenda W. Gajan was appointed as Executive Director.

1997

- Under the guidance and generous donations of Mr. Waldemar S. Nelson, land was purchased for a new Louisiana Engineering Center.

1998-1999

- Construction of Louisiana Engineering Center at 9643 Brookline Ave., Baton Rouge, LA February, 25, 1999.
- National Engineers' Week Dedication of Louisiana Engineering Center.

2006

- As director of LEF, Chris Richard recommended changes to the organizational structure of the Foundation into its current form to better align LEF with LES, increase attendance at meetings and allow LEF to better reach out to the engineering community.

2008

- As President of LEF, Chris Richard proposed and instituted the 5-Year Campaign to retire the $485,000 debt on the Louisiana Engineering Center.

2012

- The Engineering Center was paid off in November of 2012, on year early. Retiring the debt on the center frees up an income stream to fund future

scholarships for engineering students in Louisiana. To date, over $500,000 in scholarships have been endowed through these efforts.

- Chris Richard, President of LEF instituted the Investment Policy and Invest Committee of LEF to oversee the investments for the endowment.

2013

- Building was re-named the Louisiana Engineering and Surveying Center.
- Mortgage was retired.

2022

- Mary Claire Ruckert was appointed as Executive Director.

Louisiana Engineering and Surveying Center

Construction of a new Louisiana Engineering Center in Baton Rouge was completed in 1999. Dedication was conducted on February 25, 1999 during National Engineers Week.

The mortgage was retired in November 2012 through an aggressive fund-raising campaign headed by Chris Richard, P.E, LEF President from 2008- 2014. In 2013 the building was re-named the Louisiana Engineering and Surveying Center.

The Louisiana section of the American Society of Civil Engineers also stores records at the center.

The Waldemar S. Nelson Conference Room is available for meetings and seminars.

Funding

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c) (3) corporation, with TN 72-0868899. The Foundation is supported by the gracious donations of individuals, engineers, business and industry and grants from truly outstanding major benefactors. Organizations occupying the engineering center also pay rent.

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation operates with a President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Board of Directors, all on a volunteer non-paid basis. Contract labor is provided by the Louisiana Engineering Society.

The Foundation maintains two funds. One fund is the Education Fund, which funds the scholarship and educational activities of the Foundation. A long-term goal of

the Education Fund is to create a Permanent Endowment Fund sufficient to sustain annual scholarships on a continuing basis.

The *Education Fund Endowment* investment decisions are based on the "LEF Investment Policy Statement" adopted by the Board.

The other fund is the *Building and Operating Fund* which is used to maintain the Engineering Center and administer the operations of the Foundation.

Vincent A. Forte Graduate School Fellowship Award

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation awards a $2,000 graduate fellowship to a student enrolled in a graduate education program in engineering who expresses a sincere desire to enter the teaching profession at the University level upon completion of his/her graduate education.

Rules

1. A graduate shall be a full-time graduate student who is presently attending, or who is applying to enter, a graduate program in engineering at one of the recognized Colleges of Engineering in Louisiana, which has one or more ABET accredited engineering programs.

2. A candidate shall be a resident of the State of Louisiana and a U.S. citizen.

3. Preference will be given to a candidate who has two or more semesters of academic work remaining before the completion of the engineering graduate degree program.

Timetable

1. Applications will be available at all eligible Colleges of Engineering by September 1st.

2. Candidates shall file applications with their college deans by November 1st.

3. By November 30th, college deans shall submit final recommendations to:

   Louisiana Engineering Foundation
   1800 City Farm Drive
   Building 5, Suite B
   Baton Rouge, LA 70809

4. Fellowship announcement by the Louisiana Engineering Foundation not later than December 31st. Formal presentation of the Fellowship at an appropriate meeting of the Louisiana Engineering Society.

Award

A check will be issued and mailed to the recipient no later than February 28th.

Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation can award one Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award annually to an engineering faculty member in each engineering school in Louisiana with EAC/ABET accredited programs.

Objective

The objectives of this award are to bring to the attention of all faculties, those members who are registered professional engineers at their school; to present registration in a new light which should encourage faculty to work toward registration and professionalism; and to benefit the students and the profession with the promotion of professionalism in the universities.

Rules

1. Full time faculty who are registered professional engineers (P.E.) are eligible.

2. The Dean of Engineering at each school will coordinate the selection which will be by vote of all eligible engineering faculty members at each school.

3. There will be no repeats of the award for an individual within a three year period.

4. The selection should be based on NSPE's "Professionalism for the Engineer".

Timetable

1. Information and rules will be available at all eligible Colleges of Engineering by September 1.

2. Selection shall be made within each college by November 1.

3. By November 12th, college deans shall submit selections to:

Louisiana Engineering Foundation
1800 City Farm Drive,
Building 5, Suite B
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

4. Engineering Faculty Professionalism Award announcements will be made in February. Formal presentation of the award will be made at the Louisiana Engineering Society Honors & Awards Presentation.

About LEF Endowed Scholarships

The Scholarship provided by the foundation, through your donations, can help attract bright students to our rewarding field. All donations made to the Foundation are tax deductible and will result in the funding of scholarships for engineering students in Louisiana.

Donors that contribute $10,000 or more can endow a scholarship through the foundation. The scholarship will be given annually based on the criteria set by the donor in an amount equal to 5% of the endowment. Donations can be made toward building existing endowed scholarships:

- Albert “Al” Jerri H., David Scott Dunn Endowed Scholarship
- Albert “Al” Johnson Dunn P.E., PLS Scholarship
- Alexandria LES Chapter Scholarship
- ASCE Civil Engineering Scholarship
- Badeaux Engineers Civil Engineering Scholarship LSU
- Badeaux Engineers Civil Engineering Scholarship ULL
- Baton Rouge LEF Chapter Scholarship
- Bayou LES Chapter Scholarship
- Charles L. Eustis Scholarship
- CSRS Scholarship for Minority Student in Civil Engineering
- Dr. Bobby E. Price Memorial Civil Engineering Scholarship
- Dr. Thomas S. Leary Engineering Scholarship (Lake Charles)
- Domingue, Szabo & Associates, Inc. Scholarship
- Ernest P. Breaux Electrical Scholarship
- J Madison “JM” Drake Scholarship
- Jack P. MacEachern Memorial Scholarship
- James & Margaret Mohr Civil Engineering Scholarship #1
- James & Margaret Mohr Civil Engineering Scholarship #2
- Lafayette LES Chapter Scholarship

- Lazenby & Associates, Inc. Scholarship
- LEF – Civil Engineering Scholarship (Hummel donor)
- LES Scholarship
- Linda J. Daly Memorial Scholarship
- Mardia Family Foundation Scholarship
- Melissa Young Doucet, P.E. Memorial Scholarship
- Monroe LES Chapter Scholarship #1
- Monroe LES Chapter Scholarship #2
- Neil & Sarah Klock Scholarship
- New Orleans LES Chapter Scholarship
- NSPE Hurricane Relief Scholarship – Katrina
- NSPE Hurricane Relief Scholarship – Rita
- The Shaw Group, Inc. Scholarship
- Waldemar Nelson Scholarship

Please consider making a donation to the Foundation and the future engineers of Louisiana. Thank you for your consideration and support of the engineering Profession in Louisiana. Please visit the LES website for a copy of the donation form or contact LES office at (225) 924-2021.

Supporting the Louisiana Engineering Foundation

The Louisiana Engineering Foundation is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

LEF's tax identification number: 72-0868899

Gifts to the Foundation may be made in several ways and can be dedicated to the Education Fund.

LEF Presidents

Vincent A. Forte, P.E., President, 1979-84
A.J. Szabo, P.E., President, 1985-1987
James L. Meyer, P.E., President, 1988-1990
Robert P. Blanche, P.E. President, 1991-1993
Charles L. Eustis, P.E., President, 1993-1995
Waldemar S. Nelson, P.E., President, 1995-1999

Bobby Price, Ph.D., President, 1999-2001
James Bowie, Ph.D., President, 2001-2002
Ann Trappey, P.E., President, 2003-2005
Lloyd Hoover, P.E., President, 2006-2008
Chris Richard, P.E. President, 2008-2014
Alan Krouse, P.E., President, 2014- 2016
John Plaisance, P.E. President, 2016-2018
Susan Richard, P.E., President, 2018-2020
Byron Racca, P.E., President, 2020-2022
Jason Thornhill, P.E., President, 2022-2024
Chad Bacas, P.E., President, 2024-2026