“The President and Board of Direction, Western Society of Engineers Gentlemen:

“It has long been my observation that there are numerous instances where the engineer serves the public amid many difficulties, and often in inconspicuous ways, but with such ability that he accomplishes some particularly valuable results for the benefit of the community. Such achievements are only known, and not always properly acknowledged even by the profession to which he belongs. And they not infrequently entirely escape public notice.
“Further, it is well known that great benefits often accrue to the public at large through valuable improvements in the arts and their adaptation to the public use and need, and that these improvements are at times given by engineers to the public use without personal reward or gain.
“Finally, there is a class of engineers who, although substantially rewarded in a material way by the success of their work, nevertheless have accomplished so much for the world about them in vitally important and far-reaching ways that they are deserving further of special honor for their accomplishments. It is not always clearly perceived that almost all engineers serve the public directly or indirectly, and the field for useful public service is therefore about as wide as the profession. And it would appear that it is one of the important duties of engineering societies to point out their membership and to the public such instances of engineering and administrative skill as seem to have unusual merit in order that honor may properly be accorded where it is due.
“Being desirous of promoting a better appreciation by the public of able work accomplished by engineers for the public welfare, and further, of encouraging among engineers themselves a broader understanding of their opportunities for public usefulness, I desire to see established by the Western Society of Engineers an honor award by medal or other tribute to be annually presented to that engineer whose particular work in some special instance, or whose services in general have been noteworthy for their merit in promoting the public good, I should be pleased if the recipient of this honor be not limited by Western Society membership, or, in fact, to be restricted by any society or locality requirements. The only qualifications suggested are that he be and engineer of some reasonable degree of professional skill or administrative attainment. It would appear that the award will serve its purpose wisely if at times it was worthily bestowed upon comparatively little-known instances of public and professional devotion, as well as at other times upon more conspicuous services.
“I trust, therefore, that the Western Society of Engineers through its Board of Direction, may be willing and enabled to administer some program of this kind in such manner and in such instances as from time to time may seem to the Board of Direction best and most fitting. And for the purpose of enabling the Society to have an income sufficient to at least make a beginning, I take pleasure in donating to it unreservedly the sum of one thousand dollars in securities.

“Respectfully submitted,
John W. Alvord”