



## Ceremony

The Pledge Ceremony is a voluntary activity on the part of students about to graduate from a program in the computing sciences (such as, but not limited to, computer science, computer engineering, and information technology). The ceremony is conducted by a master of ceremonies who first reads the history and the purpose of the Pledge to those who are assembled, after which the student initiates recite The Pledge of the Computing Professional as a group. Those taking the Pledge then sign a personalized certificate containing the Pledge in the presence of their peers, and are also each presented with an artifact, such as a lapel pin, containing the symbol of the organization that serves as an additional reminder of their commitment to ethical and moral behavior in the profession.

## Articles about the Pledge

Articles about The Pledge of the Computing Professional can be found in the following publications:

- *Communications of the ACM* (February 2011)  
<http://tinyurl.com/pledge-cacm>
- *Order of the Engineer Newsletter* (March 2012)  
<http://tinyurl.com/pledge-engr>
- *SIGCAS Newsletter* (August 2012)  
<http://tinyurl.com/pledge-sigcas>

**The Pledge of the Computing Professional**  
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# The Pledge of the Computing Professional

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

Promoting  
Professional  
Responsibility



## Purpose

Given society's ever-increasing reliance upon technology, educating students about their professional and ethical responsibilities is an important part of all computing curricula. The Pledge of the Computing Professional is an organization founded to promote awareness of such responsibilities through the establishment of an oath – The Pledge of the Computing Professional – and a voluntary rite of passage ceremony that features this oath as its centerpiece. The purpose of the Pledge is to serve as both a personal affirmation and a public reminder of the need for computing professionals to act responsibly. The public rite of passage ceremony is also meant to direct the new computing professional towards a consciousness of his or her profession and its significance, and to remind the established professional of one's responsibilities in receiving, welcoming, and supporting new professionals in their beginning endeavors.

## History

In many professions, the act of joining the profession is accompanied by a voluntary rite of passage ceremony, symbolizing the entry of the initiate into a position of responsibility. The initiate often takes an oath, pledging to act both ethically and morally as a member of the profession. Initiates are also typically presented with an artifact representing that profession which serves as a tangible reminder of one's obligation. In 2007, inspired by the example of the Order of the Engineer, individuals at Ohio Northern University and the University of South Florida created similar organizations for graduates of their respective computing programs. After interest in such an organization grew at other institutions, The Pledge of the Computing Professional was formed in 2009 by an international team of 17 computing professionals. The first Pledge Ceremonies were held in 2011; by 2013, these ceremonies had spread to over 25 institutions.

Two videos of conducted ceremonies, plus a script for one of the ceremonies, are available at our website.



## Symbol

The symbol of the Pledge is a matrix with the key word “Honor” encoded using both the ASCII character set and the ones and zeros of the binary digit set that are central to computing.

### The Pledge of the Computing Professional

*I am a Computing Professional.*

*My work as a Computing Professional affects people's lives, both now and into the future.*

*As a result, I bear moral and ethical responsibilities to society.*

*As a Computing Professional, I pledge to practice my profession with the highest level of integrity and competence.*

*I shall always use my skills for the public good.*

*I shall be honest about my limitations, continuously seeking to improve my skills through life-long learning.*

*I shall engage only in honorable and upstanding endeavors.*

*By my actions, I pledge to honor my chosen profession.*

## Becoming a Node

Nodes (that is, chapters) are granted all the rights and privileges for conducting the established rite of passage ceremony, the use of the phrase “The Pledge of the Computing Professional”, and the use of the Pledge Symbol and Certificate. The cost to establish a Node at an institution is US\$50. The application for becoming a Node can be found at our website:

<http://computing-professional.org>

### The Pledge of the Computing Professional

I am a Computing Professional.

My work as a Computing Professional affects people's lives, both now and into the future.  
As a result, I bear moral and ethical responsibilities to society.

As a Computing Professional, I

Firstname Lastname

pledge to practice my profession with the highest level of integrity and competence. I shall always use my skills for the public good.  
I shall be honest about my limitations, continuously seeking to improve my skills through lifelong learning. I shall engage only in honorable and upstanding endeavors.  
By my actions, I pledge to honor my chosen profession.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of inductee  
Month, Day, Year



The Pledge is endorsed by the ACM Committee on Professional Ethics, ACM SIGCAS (Computers and Society), and the Order of the Engineer. The Pledge of the Computing Professional is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.