

Graduate Program in Public Administration  
Wayne State University

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**“The Pursuit of Success and Satisfaction  
in Public Administration:  
A Matter of Grasping Opportunities”**

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## INTRODUCTION

I want to start my presentation by expressing my thanks to Earl Ryan, President of the Citizens Research Council, and Professor John Strate, Director of the Graduate Program in Public Administration at Wayne State University for the invitation to share my career experiences here today. I believe that it is through mentoring relationships, role modeling, and experience sharing that we all can increase our confidence for practice in the field of public administration. Such legacies might serve to encourage others to venture into a calling of service to the public interest that is as clearly needed today as it has been at any time in the history of this country.

### With Gratitude to Lent D. Upson

Lent D. Upson was a giant among the practitioners and academics of public administration. He was a student and early practitioner during the time of the founding of public administration as a leadership profession in the management of governmental operations. Woodrow Wilson's call for professionalization in public service came to fruition as Upson was spending his early career around the Bureau of Municipal Research in New York City. The Bureau was very much the forerunner of organizations like the Citizens Research Council of Michigan. It ~~was~~ was the leading voice for reform of the municipal government in New York City after the Tammany Hall days at the turn of the last century. As Director of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research from 1916 to 1944, and Dean of the School of Public Affairs and Social Work at Wayne University from 1935 to 1949, Upson left an indelible mark on this community. For this mark, we should be eternally grateful.

I came along about nine years after Upson's death in 1949. I was able to achieve my MPA through an Upson Fellowship sponsored by the Citizens Research Council of

Michigan and the Volker Foundation of Kansas City. I am pleased that the tradition of supporting Upson Fellows continues.

## **RETROSPECTIVE OF EXPERIENCES**

I would like to position my perspectives about my career on a retrospective examination of my journey through the private, state government, and higher education domains of my career.

### **The Early Days at the Citizens Research Council**

After floundering about for several years thinking I would first be a dentist and then an engineer, I finally succumbed to the reality that my science and math skills were never going to allow me to pursue these professions. I turned to a major in political science, economics, and business during my junior year at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. During my senior year at Wittenberg, I decided that I would like to be a city manager rather than being a lawyer. When I came to Detroit in the Spring of 1958 for my interview at the Research Council, I told “Red” Miller its director and a protégé of Upson, that I was seeking a masters degree in public administration and a career in city management. He thought that was reasonable as several of the Council’s earlier fellows were thriving in local governments in the Detroit area. I consider this to have been the first opportunity that I grasped in my satisfying career in public administration.

There were six of us Upson Fellows in the Class of 1958. We arrived in late May and immediately enrolled in our summer experience. We took two courses in Summer School and spent roughly 12 weeks working at the Research Council before Fall term. The work at the Council consisted mostly of sitting in on City Council and County

Commission meetings. This was my first exposure to the working of big government and was an extraordinary opportunity to see the actors and characters of that day, as they conducted the people's business.

The learning in those summer months was at the foot of Nathan Grundstein. Grundy, as he was called, was a professor here at Wayne who held court on Friday afternoons in the Research Council Library with good cigars and brandy. He grilled us on our impressions and lectured us on the principles of effective government. That summer cemented my resolve to be a public administrator! I would be remiss if I neglected to note that professors Palmer Pilcher, Louis Freidman, Robert Mowitz, Maurice Masters, Deil Wright - who had this lecturer role three years ago, and Grundy were especially important in my academic achievements and educational progress in 1958 and 1959. Bob Mowitz expertly guided me through my master's thesis which was a case study of the Port of Detroit Commission, created in 1935 to enable the Detroit Metropolitan area to prepare for the impact of the St. Lawrence Seaway project.

After completing my class work and the fellowship in 1959, I was offered a position as a research assistant in the Lansing Office of the Research Council. Why did I abandon my city manager quest? Largely because Bob Mowitz, my thesis advisor, was a state government-oriented advisor. I have never regretted this choice - my second career opportunity. I worked as a researcher in Lansing for five years. This was my apprenticeship period. I was engaged in numerous activities that laid the foundation for my entire professional career. I was involved in a study of the facility and equipment maintenance operations of the Lansing School district. Later in my 28 year higher education career, these very same functional activities were in my domain of responsibility. I was involved in a study of the time usage by the professional cadre of psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, etc, of two state mental facilities: the Pontiac

State Hospital for the Mentally Ill and the Kalamazoo State Home and Training School for the Mentally Retarded. I can still recall the agonies of patients as I tracked the work activity of the many professionals that were subjects of the study. Both of these studies involved improving the efficiency of government operations long before the technologies of today were available for capturing, measuring and evaluating performance. As we will see, many times in the years after this assignment, I worked to improve the efficiency of public sector operations.

During these years I also gained my first working experience with state government, particularly the Legislature. One of the tasks assigned to the Lansing Office was to track policy and financial activities of the executive and legislative branches for the dues paying supporters of the Research Council. A few staff persons, only one who supported both appropriations committees, were available in the legislative reference office. The Lansing Office of the Research Council committed staff support to summer study committees to support legislative committees. Three in particular consumed a lot of my time in 1962-64. They involved the study of ways to improve the school aid formula, study of ways to reduce unfunded accrued liabilities of the state sponsored retirement systems, and study of alternative ways to finance highway construction. I became something of an expert in all three of these program areas. I was able to cut my teeth on issues of equity in school aid funding, on the actuarial analysis of retirement funding, and on the use of debt financing for highway projects borne of the funding requirements to construct the recently enacted federal Interstate Highway System. In those days, Michigan also suffered from cyclical four-year deficit /surplus patterns in state finances and it did not use debt financing for capital improvements.

After returning from military service as a draftee in 1962, I became engaged in the process to promote the provisions of the proposed new state constitution. The staff of the

Constitutional Convention contracted with the Research Council to provide substantial staffing support to explain - not advocate - the provisions of the proposed constitution across the state. I remember best our experience with a full house of the opposed at the Opera House in Houghton in the midst of a big snow storm in March 1963. The local political establishment was opposed to the new charter because the constitution took away their justices of the peace. We survived the rigors of this wintry tour as did the new constitution in its April 1963 vote. But those UP politicians: Dom Jacobetti, Joe Mack, and Rusty Hellman were never my good friends! This was also my first introduction to George Romney, often referred to as a founder of the 1963 Constitution.

In sum, these first five years enabled me to broaden my base of knowledge, earn the proper credential in my MPA, be a disciplined learner and develop an interest in my profession, to engage with others in work processes, to seek new opportunities, and to join others in community work as I became involved in a taskforce to propose ways and means to improve the Lansing Schools. Bob Pickup, Bob Queller, Til Mason, and Fran Wheeler mentored my development over these years.

I believe these early experiences and learning were of foundational importance to my future work and understanding of how to have a successful career in public administration.

### **Focusing My Career**

The next 11+ years of my work life were spent in the state budget shop of the Romney and Milliken administrations. In 1964 at age 28, I found myself with an increasingly leading role in this new environment. I was a careerist new to budget making which is a function central to the political environment. Early on, we were implementing

the re-organization provisions of the new Constitution. This meant moving the budget shop from the Department of Administration to the Office of the Governor, among other major changes. In the budget shop, I was “Mr. School Aid” and “Mr. Capital Outlay” - the latter because most of the capital budget was expended in the higher education budget area. I earned my first management level experience with my appointment as chief of the Education Unit in 1966.

From these experiences, I gained my understanding that a commitment to achieving goals was the most important element in the effective use of public resources. Several times Romney and Milliken sent me off to discover whether Michigan was supporting public higher education better than any other Great Lakes state - a Romney interest - and whether we were providing the University of Michigan enough resources to continue its flagship role - a Milliken interest. I learned from these assignments that you never ask a university president whether the state is providing enough money! I cherish to this day the opportunity to sit with these governors in budget and program legislation battles with the Legislature. There was nothing like the confrontations between Bill Ryan as the Democratic Speaker of the House and Governor Romney. They were more serious, but less entertaining, than the Orville Hubbard and Billy Rogell matches of the Summer of 1958! A particular learning experience came when I was asked in 1968 to draft the first executive order required under the new constitution to balance the state budget. This first exercise of the constitutional power was traumatic for many in state government. Numerous career bureau chiefs in state agencies elected to retire, rather than cut their staff and budgets in mid-year, just to balance the budget. A way of life changed! This re-balancing act was to recur often in the next 14 years of my career in Michigan.

I came to appreciate the progressive values that Romney and Milliken gave to social and human welfare programs. My personal biases favored education programs.

From the many tangles with legislative committees over those years, I quickly learned the value of trust, honesty, and integrity when you are in a leadership role in public service. It is always better to admit that you don't know something than it is to make up an answer. I also had very positive experiences staffing development of the Joint Capital Outlay process between the executive and legislative branches in 1965 and in staffing development of financing provisions of Governor Milliken's Commission on School Finance in 1969. The capital outlay process led to an extraordinary infusion of cash, and later debt, over the next ten years to renew and expand the capital infrastructure of state agencies, particularly higher education plant.

At the end of these creative ventures in 1969, I experienced a major failure in suasion. After President Johnson launched the Program-Planning-Budget-System (PPBS) concept in 1968 at Robert McNamara's behest, we decided to try a similar approach to budgeting in Michigan. With help from old friend Professor Mowitz who was by now at Penn State and advising Charlie MacIntosh budget secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a similar scheme, we presented our Program-Budget-Evaluation-System (PBES) plan in February 1971. The budget plan eschewed the old line item by organization layout for a full program structure carried to some 700 sub-programs, with organizational crosswalk appended. While we knew the legislature was skeptical, we did not anticipate the abject dismissal our proposal received. I was ordered by Senator Lane and Representative Copeland, who were the Appropriations chairs, to return in a few weeks with a standard line-item budget. This was not hard to do but it was indeed humbling! We expected better treatment because we had involved legislative staff in the exercise and we had briefed the committees on our work at regular intervals over two years. This was a real-life exposure to what Aaron Wildavsky called the "politics of the budgetary process".

I had used this period of my career to learn the “rules” of organizational leadership; I learned how to maximize my basic skills; I had developed new areas of expertise; I had developed better listening skills although there are those who might rightly say I never developed them well; and, I accepted new leadership roles including community service. These junior and early journeyman stages of career development were mind stretching and challenging. I thoroughly enjoyed them and I became a golfer to help with stress management!

### **The Next Twenty Eight Years - My Higher Education Management Experience**

My third career opportunity came around in the summer of 1975. I succumbed to the siren calls I had been receiving for several years from colleges and universities to leave the state bureaucracy and join the world of public higher education management. One of the early-on rationales I had in mind for going into public administration was that there were many different directions and venues one could pursue for success and satisfaction. With five children growing towards college age, I needed to make more money to achieve family goals. I had reached the next to last pay grade in state government - the last was a one-person grade for the state personnel director. So, I saw greener pastures in higher education.

I returned to Wayne State University as business and finance vice president with the treasurership added in 1977, senior vice president for administration and finance became the title in 1979, and finally, executive vice president and treasurer in 1981. This was both a major opportunity for professional growth and development and a major challenge because of the breadth of responsibility that was presented. Working state government from the pleaders angle would be challenging, overseeing 12 union contracts would be difficult, becoming enmeshed in health and medical affairs would be

energizing, and providing leadership and direction for 1,200 employees arrayed in many departments new to my experience base would be daunting. I knew rather immediately that all of my state government experiences would be put to good use at Wayne!

This McGregor Center holds memories of more than 100 Board of Governors executive committee, finance committee, and full board meetings over my seven years as an officer here. It is here that state government friends and mentors George Romney and Dick VanDusen served on the Board of Governors and it is here that Millie Jeffrey encouraged me to switch my drink preference from gin and tonic to vodka and tonic, to live a longer life! Here, too, was my first experience working through the real effects of executive order budget cuts as eight were issued over two years, wrought by the mechanisms of that Constitution I helped explain in 1963.

Wayne was a university without fund balances in financial resources. We always lived close to the edge of fiscal disaster! The skills and abilities I developed to survive these hard times served me well at Maryland when that state had a similar financial crisis in 1990-92 that cost the University \$42 million through seven executive orders.

There are several experiences that I would like to lift up from my Wayne days. We were able to establish a program of employee recognitions that was well received and that I persuaded my Maryland colleagues to launch in a similar format years later. We were able to launch the transformation of the campus from a place of streets to a place of street scapes and malls that created a much more pleasant environment in the heart of the city. We were able to lift the University's national ranking in investment results from #118 to #3 in the first year after my taking over as Treasurer. We were able to implement the first creative financing mechanism in Michigan, using variable rate demand notes (VRDNs) issued by a Chicago bank, when the State lost its credit rating and the creditworthiness of

our city banks declined below acceptable investment grades.

My first privatization of operations occurred during my Wayne State time. I believe this one anecdote captures well the essence of my Wayne experiences. Late one rainy afternoon after the secretaries had departed for the day, I was finishing work in my 11th floor Mackenzie Hall office. This fellow ambles into my office, throws his Jonesy roll-up hat and trenchcoat on my sofa and sits down. He looks me in the eye and says “They tell me that you are the one who can put this deal together.” I knew not the person who was sitting before me and I knew not what deal he was talking about. We were getting ready to build the University Clinics Facility and relocated Detroit Receiving Hospital which was the first 150 million dollar - one million gross square foot capital project in my experience. We were forecasting a \$7 million annual operating deficit for the Clinics and the City of Detroit was losing \$30 million annually on its antiquated trauma receiving hospital. My visitor, John Danielson, had the idea to merge these two facilities into one corporate entity. John was the new chief executive of the Detroit Medical Center Corporation (DMCC). His entity would be a public-private partnership corporation with the DMCC, the University, and the City as partners. My job would be to sell the Board of Governors and the Legislature on the idea and his job was to sell the six DMCC hospitals and his Board. In the end, we both did our jobs and we celebrated the venture when, after it opened on time and within the construction budget, it turned a \$12 million fund balance in its’ first year. The public law enabling the merger and public-private partnership passed the Legislature with one very loud “NO” vote. That one no vote came from one of my Upper Peninsula House of Representatives antagonists, who loudly questioned my ancestry in the Committee action session.

From this phase of my career, I became known as a problem solver with particular abilities to assess, evaluate, and create workable solutions. I also learned skills <sup>to</sup> deal with

conflict borne of labor issues. I also became comfortable working with a board in control that was responsible for the effective management of a large enterprise. My golf handicap rose about five strokes due to infrequent play!

After the state and university budget agonies of 1980-82, I felt that my work life was becoming too routine and repetitive and that it was time for a change. I liked the higher education world. In 1982, I accepted appointment as the chief finance and administrative officer at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). UMCP was and is the flagship university in Maryland.

The move to Maryland was <sup>intentional</sup> in the sense that I was determined to experience the other mode of organizational configuration that is prevalent in public higher education: system governance rather than institutional. More than three-quarters of the states use the system approach which gathers multiple institutions under one governing board. I discovered that the State of Maryland was a control orientation model of public corporation management. Students of Professor Allen Schick know that this means the discretion of public administrators is very much controlled by state government budget and finance, procurement, construction and personnel agency bureaucrats. Michigan would be characterized as a planning orientation model since institutional management controls are vested in the University's board in control. There were 4 principal goals that I pursued during my 20+ years at the University of Maryland. They were:

First, I wanted to overcome the vestiges of a lethargic state bureaucracy and its impact on service operations.

Shortly after I arrived at College Park, I received a self-study report for and then from our Middle States Accreditation Agency that presented a very negative picture of the

services provided by the organization for which I was now in charge. This unacceptable organizational behavior was blamed by my staff on stifling state bureaucratic controls. I have always been a service oriented leader interested in providing the best possible support to the primary missions of a university. To overcome this staff perception, I quickly established a very management-by-objectives oriented service program. The essence of my approach was to emphasize agency performance through enumerated unit service goals and outcomes with a healthy dose of annual planning aimed at continuously improving performance. This approach was also carried through staff performance evaluations. The subsequent two Middle States evaluations during my leadership were very commendatory of the turn-around we had achieved and sustained; and, the community rallied to our support when budget cuts came in the early 1990s.

Second, I wanted to strengthen the fiscal capacity of the University.

Maryland was rather like Wayne State in the sense that it was an old institution without accumulated financial strength. I could find no pots of money - the available fund balance was less than \$100,000 in operations and capital funds combined. In order of magnitude, Wayne and Maryland were comparable in most quantitative measures. Over the 20 years from 1982 to 2002, it is fair to say that we created, filled, spent, and refilled numerous money pots other than the annual budget. Such reserves were created by paying attention to revenue streams and controlling the uses of such funds for institution mission purposes, rather than individual director purposes. We were very disciplined in the commitment of resources and the senior management team of the University fully supported our initiatives. I believed that the use of funds must be targeted to gain the greatest return from the investment and that the investment must primarily be in education programs, not administrative activities. When I retired, the University had in reserve more than \$200 million dollars which supported a AA+ credit rating from Standard and

Poors - the highest rating S&P gives to an institution if its state government is triple A rated, as is Maryland.

Third, I wanted to find ways to address the facility needs of all program segments of the campus.

As a result of numerous initiatives, more than 5.4 million square feet of space was created or renewed in my days as chief financial and administrative officer. The University had roughly 8 million gross square feet in its inventory in 1982 and over 12.5 million gross square feet when I retired in 2002. While the results are staggering in terms of dollars invested and square feet, they started with a couple of rather simple requests. The Chancellor of the System asked me to work with his executive vice president to modernize the debt authority of the System; and, the deans of the campus asked me to develop a facilities expansion and renewal plan contending that the scarcity of facility space was the single most limiting factor in growth of their academic and research enterprises. These officials thought that I could apply my Michigan experiences in capital planning and creative financing to the Maryland situation. The University of Maryland had no debt outstanding in 1982 having paid off its previous debt in 1971, and, had no staff person other than myself who had debt issuance and creative financing experience. This was an unusual opportunity. I grasped it and it had a most satisfying career impact as I leveraged more than 20+ years of Michigan debt management and financing experiences for great benefit during my 20+ years in Maryland.

Fourth, I wanted to overcome the statutory limits upon our ability to manage the university as a modern academic enterprise.

As I have noted earlier, my Michigan experience was gained under a constitution

that accorded constitutional corporation status to the universities - no state agency could tell us how to do anything. In Maryland, I discovered that a state agency could tell us that we had to measure the lineal footage of filing cabinet storage every year, such was the pervasiveness of their control. This nonsense permeated every aspect of administrative life - even the purchase of a \$20 piece of computing software had to be approved by a state agent. It took the efforts of three Governor's commissions over 15 years to finally shed the last vestiges of this control apparatus. As a part of this effort, I was asked to write a critique of the Maryland controls. My paper turned out to be an important piece in the strategy of the political leadership to overturn the control of the state agency bureaucrats. The transformation to institutional control was enhanced through my five-year plan established in 1995 to re-design all our business processes. This re-engineering or BPR activity typically resulted in the elimination of 70-75% of the process steps in our business functions. Coupled with our new internet-based transaction processing system, these initiatives were cheered on campus.

I had managed to make the senior stage of my career very rewarding. I was able to mentor many junior staff in our orientation to successful provision of cost efficient services to the academic community. I was able to stay current with the innovations in our industry and made more than 25 presentations over the last ten years of my career to professional associations on the topics of creative financing for capital formation, cost efficient and customer-oriented business process reform, and facilities master planning and management. I believe that I led initiatives that have made a pronounced impact on the University. I worked for three presidents who, together with my Cabinet colleagues, established a vastly improved image of the University in American higher education.

All in all, a very rewarding time in my overall career - truly an opportunity maximized. The campus recognized my contributions in 2002 by conferring on me the

President's Medal, the highest award of the University. I retired a happy man! By the way, my golf handicap has dropped about five strokes back to the 12 I enjoyed when I left Lansing in 1975!

Some might say I was lucky, that I was at the right spot at the right time throughout my career. There is surely some truth to that opinion but I also believe my success and satisfaction came because of strategies I used throughout my career to improve the likelihood that opportunity would materialize. I would like to turn now to nine such strategies.

## STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES

I believe that certain knowledge, skills, and abilities (the famous KSAs of human resource development) can be developed and employed by practitioners to produce satisfying results from career opportunities. The nine strategies are as follows:

**First strategy: Always be a student:** Throughout my career I have sought creative solutions to recurring issues or problems; such as, new financing mechanisms that usually evolve from limitations of previous means of capital formation. I have been open to test emerging theories of practice such as program budgeting or business process re-engineering. When the notion of "service without turnaway" was gaining hold in the early 1990s, we in the administration at the University of Maryland saw this idea as a way to help students and staff by focusing on our service mission. With the help of a Vice Presidents Executive Steering Team (VPEST), under my leadership, that marshaled staff across the campus, our BPR was hugely successful. While PBES in the State of Michigan was a failure in form, it was successful as a means of focusing resource allocation decisions on goals and outcomes instead of line items objects of expense. I was at home

so to speak in Maryland when I discovered that its budget process focused on achievement of program goals, impact indicators, and outcomes.

As is apparent from my resume, I was a student of formal education and training during my professional working life. In 1967, I was privileged to partake in a year-long management training program organized by the Civil Service Commission and presented by Wayne State University's Department of Political Science, under the direction of Professor Mowitz. This course of study was oriented toward functional areas such as budgeting, communications, employee relations, organizational structure, program planning, performance assessments, etc. Finally, having passed on pursuing my PhD in 1969 when my GI Bill benefits expired, I achieved that goal in 1990 at Maryland. I added teaching to my workload by teaching a public budgeting course at MSU in 1969 and by conducting a course in public finance administration for ten years at Maryland, after gaining my PhD.

**Second strategy: Take on uncertain projects:** I encourage you to be a risk taker when it comes to taking on new ventures, concepts or ideas that might reshape current practice. I have seen many public administrators curl up in a rug, so to speak, and become averse to risk taking when it comes to testing new directions. The rewards for achieving a successful new venture are many. Our failure to achieve a program budget in Michigan led us by that experience to focus more on the management aspects of organizational performance to achieve program goals and outcomes. This was a successful transition that would probably not have happened as quickly as it did had we not ventured forth with the PBES approach. Our willingness to pursue creative financing mechanisms yielded great results here at Wayne State and at the University of Maryland. We were widely recognized for these initiatives and my PhD dissertation was an easier task because it focused on the policy implications for the use of such mechanisms.

**Third strategy: Become an expert in several areas:** Policy leaders in the public sector come to rely upon and respect those persons who achieve expertise in content areas. The five years I spent with the Research Council were foundational in the sense that they gave me the opportunity to get into factual analysis of several content areas that were important elements later in my career. Being “Mr. School Aid” or “Mr. Capital Outlay” or “Mr. Creative Financing” are shorthand recognitions of expertise that is valued by policy level leaders and politicians. This base of knowledge almost assures that you will be in the room when important decisions are made. That access leads inevitably to opportunities for career advancement.

**Fourth strategy: Become a leader:** In 1965, six years after beginning my full-time career, I became Chief of the Education Unit in the Bureau of the Budget in Lansing. The Unit was created as an experimental way to aggregate budget analysts within the Bureau. It contained 3 professionals and a secretary, but it was my first management position. All 28 of my years in higher education were spent as a vice president. So in one sense, I held leadership positions for 37 of the 43 years of my career. I always enjoyed being in a leadership position. It is important to develop skills and abilities beyond formal knowledge as early as possible in your career. In my experience, my willingness to become more risk averse paid significant dividends. When I became director of the Bureau of the Budget in 1970, I left the security of civil service protection. I believe that I was able to maximize my career potential by grasping the opportunity to become a leader at an early time

**Fifth strategy: Press for advantage:** Grasping for and making the most of our opportunities in life come from pressing for advantage. Pressing for advantage comes from being a lifetime learner; taking on new ideas, concepts and projects; from becoming recognized as an expert in relevant areas; from being a leader; and, from playing at the

heart of one's expertise rather than at the perimeter of activity. I always enjoyed being known as a problem solver. I possessed no knowledge in the privatization of public operations when John Danielson walked into my office to present his idea for the merger Receiving Hospital-University Clinics. I possessed no knowledge of variable rate demand notes until the folks at First of Michigan suggested use of VRDNs. I possessed no knowledge of the privatization of student housing until the idea was presented by the folks at Privatization America. I did possess a willingness to explore all these ideas and concepts. We came to implement all these creative ways to solve pressing problems and then shared our knowledge broadly throughout the higher education profession.

**Sixth strategy: Be willing to move or change venues:** While there really is no place like home, I believe that we can maximize our potential by being open to opportunities that cause us to relocate the place in which we practice our trade. Some movement is to gain better pay for work and some is to gain broader experience within the focus of our profession. The field of higher education is particularly suited to relocation because of the industry wide retirement system sponsored by the Teachers Insurance Annuity Association. Being open to relocation will make geographic or organizational mobility more possible, which only enhances your ability to move to improve career performance and compensation.

As a final note on this strategy, I changed employers three times in my career at a net compensation gain of about \$1,500; but, at a career salary gain after 43 years of 45 times my first year salary.

**Seventh strategy: Develop longstanding personal/profession relationships:** I have always valued the network of professional associates acquired over the years. I will not make a lot about this point except to say that I have social relationships from each of my career stops. Many are growing dimmer now that I have concluded my career but these

friends were always available for consultation on any issue or problem I was addressing. I found the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) a useful organization, particularly when we were pursuing the program budget scenario. Many of my other state budget director colleagues became university chief finance officers. In higher education, I have been a regular presenter at regional and national meetings and contributor to publications of at least four national associations. All of these opportunities generate professional colleagues of worth to my career.

**Eighth strategy: Be committed to the vanguard of change to improve performance:**

I do not advocate change just for the sake of doing something different! I advocate change for the purpose of improving operational performance or for problem solving that seems a challenge to conventional practice. This means change should be purpose driven. State governments and colleges and universities have spent fortunes chasing better computing systems and upgrades rather than just focusing on cost efficient output in the production of pay checks, accounting statements, construction projects accounting, accounts payable administration, student record keeping, etc. In my opinion, this is a classic example of wasting public resources simply to “keep up with the Jones”!

The use of capital debt is something that should not be feared or arbitrarily prohibited but should be used prudently. Lennox Moak and Arthur Hillhouse, who I met in 1964 at an International Research Association conference, developed the standards of practice for debt administration in the mid-1960s. By being committed to effective and appropriate policies for debt management at the University of Maryland, we were able to dramatically turn around an “avoid at all costs - let the state provide” attitude about the use of debt for capital formation. This stable and effective practice subsequently enabled the Regents of the System to support truly creative financing for bookstore, student center, athletic, research, utility systems, and student housing projects. I believe effective public administration requires keeping our eyes focused on achieving mission with the

most effective means possible and that periodic change of the means yields improvement in the ends of our program endeavors.

**Ninth strategy: Be a team player and supporter of colleagues:** It is easy to become reclusive and individualistic or secretive as an employee in the public sector. It is challenging to commit to being a team player who also is a strong supporter of individual colleagues who compete with you for resources, attention, and affection. While here at Wayne State, I organized an Administrative Council comprised of the finance and administrative officers of each division and school or college. This was a successful venture to break down the silo walls typical of de-centralized operations.

When you are an officer of the enterprise, you are in a staff orientation while also being a line boss. My associate vice president for about 20 years at Maryland had two sayings that seem to fit at this point: first, some days are diamonds and some days are stones; and , second, we all have a boss! How we get along with colleagues has a very significant impact on the institutional judgment of how effective the organization's management is. All days are not good and all bosses are not benevolent, consistent, and predictable! You have to go with the flow to achieve the balance necessary for success in all kinds of conditions. Having confidence that your judgment is solid is an important asset that you accrue by making decisions and being held accountable for their consequences. To illustrate: my experience here at Wayne State was more fractious than the fruitful experience I enjoyed at Maryland. At Wayne, I worked with 8 persons serving as Provost in 7 years. I also worked with 8 persons in that position at Maryland but over 21 years. The turnover here greatly reduced the trust and collegueship while the stability at Maryland fostered these attributes of relationships. The difference in overall performance of the management team was dramatic as a result.

While these nine strategies tend to flow together, I think they introduce and reinforce elements that contribute to success for a public administrator.

## **THE ENDING**

I am a firm believer that now is a good time to be entering into a career in public administration. Every time has its own conditions that influence success and satisfaction with work in this field. It has been my purpose to share with you the influences that have been present in my time and some of the strategies that I used to achieve professional accomplishment and personal satisfaction. To the students, I say get in the game, discover its rules, keep an eye to opportunities that arise and grasp them as part of an intentional plan for your professional life. To the faculty, I say stay engaged with these students as your predecessors did for me and encourage them through their rough periods of uncertainty and doubt. For the practitioners here, I thank you for staying committed to public sector management, I wish you continuing success, and I encourage you to reach out to these students to provide them the opportunity for service that we have been privileged to receive from our predecessors.

Thank you for listening to this story. I have truly enjoyed being a practitioner in Woodrow Wilson's "honorable field of public administration".