

Dwight Albert (D. A.) Sharpe

Professional Occupational Experiences

My professional orientations have been in administration, particularly using technology in managing administration. My major at the University of Texas in Austin (BBA, June 1962) was in the School of Business Administration was in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations (labor union matters). The 1962 – 1969 years were in technology with IBM, and the remaining years of 1970 – 2004 were administrative management for non-profit Christian organizations.



Employment endeavors in my pre-adult life helped formed worth ethic values which served my later in professional life. My first work was self-employment, the mowing of lawns in my home neighborhood, as many young boys experienced.

My first employer was Sunset Markets, a small family-owned grocery store chain in Sweetwater, Texas. I was age 12 when hired in 1951 for weekend work, back in the days before child labor laws mandated age 16 as a minimum. I sacked groceries and took them out to customers' cars. This paid 25 cents/hour. This is back when a loaf of white bread cost 21 cents, that today costs \$2.50+.

My family moved to Dallas, Texas in 1954, my work was for Wyatt Food Stores, sacking groceries and stocking shelves initially, then promoted to cashier at the customer check-out stands. Proper handling and responsibility for cash was learned in that endeavor.

The beginning of meaningful work for me began in my freshman year at Austin College in Sherman, Texas, 1957. International Business Machines, Inc., the world leader in technology in those years. IBM opened a punch card manufacturing

plant at Sherman. My work was administrative, managing the taking of orders out to production areas which produced some 20 million cards per week! This opportunity for employment provided my first interface with computer technology. This was when computers took the space of whole rooms! The attractive aspect of was that the work paid \$1.25/hour, whereas all the standard part-time jobs on the college campus paid only 60 cents/hour! My experience working for IBM 20 hours/week 1957 – 1959 molded my interest in administration, technology and personnel, which later became my study at the University of Texas.

After resigning from IBM to focus more on studies, there was campus work at dormitory switchboard phone answering and working in the school cafeteria, serving food, bussing tables and washing dishes.

The only work during the school year at the University of Texas (1959-62) was washing dishes in a boarding house for my meals. However, the three summers consisted of full time work at Model Markets, a grocery chain in San Antonio, Texas, where my parents had moved, as well as two summers as a counselor at a boys' athletic camp, Camp Longhorn, Burnet, Texas. My time there included one camper attending named George W. Bush, destined later for political office.

International Business Machines, New Orleans, Louisiana 1962 - 1969

Graduating from the University of Texas at Austin, Texas in June 1962 with a BBA degree in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations introduced me to the first professional employment, which was with International Business Machines. My hiring took place in Austin, Texas, and my first assignment was as an Electric Typewriter Sales Representative in IBM's office at New Orleans, Louisiana. That position was from 1962 through 1966. From 1967 – 1969, my position was administration for the Data Processing Division in New Orleans, then later for the Office Products Division.

These were the years in which I met and married my wife, Suzanne Margaret Boggess. Our three of our children were born during our 10 years residing in New Orleans.

Trinity Christian Community, New Orleans, Louisiana 1970 - 1972

One of the pastors at Canal Street Presbyterian Church where we were members, the Rev. Mr. William J. Brown, started an inner-city ministry through our church. We were among the early volunteers of this work with Black teenagers and with White criminal adults in the decaying section of New Orleans called the Irish Channel. After a few years, I resigned my work at IBM and became the Administrator for the Trinity Christian Community, thus being the second “full time” employee! This enabled me the experience of a non-profit organization getting organized and on the road to functioning effectively in the community. Though Rev. Brown now (in 2017) is deceased, that ministry still operates.

Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians, St. Louis, Missouri, 1972-1981

Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians, a newly forming organization for advocacy in the Presbyterian denomination, recruited me to relocate in St. Louis County, Missouri. Besides the organization work needed, it involved working under the direction of a 60-member Board of Directors, mostly pastors from what one might term as tall steeple people among Presbyterians. The work included sponsoring and managing conferences, attending governing occasions of the denomination, mostly termed as presbyteries or the General Assembly (the national legislative and theological body of the denomination). The Board Chairman was Dr. William M. Elliott, long-term pastor at that time of the Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, then the largest membership church in the denomination. My immediate supervisor was Dr. Andrew A. Jumper (deceased in 1991), pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church of St. Louis. He also was my brother-in-law.

Missouri Encom, Inc., St. Louis, Missouri. 1981 - 1982

I was recruited by Mr. Robert (Bob) Denckhoff, President of Missouri Encom, an office marketing and printing business. It was a newly created position and division in the company, as an administrative consultant for business communications. Unfortunately, the economic recession transpiring then in St. Louis, with around a 15% unemployment rate in the area, resulted in the new division being discontinued, which meant an end to my employment there. I remember vividly as Bob cried in sharing with me this bad news.

Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, 1982 - 2004

I was recruited by the Rev. Dr. B. Clayton Bell, to become the Business Manager for him at the Highland Park Presbyterian Church where he was Senior Pastor. I was on a four-person team of Dr. Bell, his Administrator, Kyle Hobin, the Senior Associate Pastor supervising all the ministries. My responsibility was the operational administration of the church in all aspects to support the ministry. In the beginning, my supervision was over 35 staff members. As the church and staff numbers grew, supervision was turned to more and more people. The last five years, my assignment was Administrative Executive for the Senior Pastor, and no staff people were under my supervision. Dr. Bell, who was Billy Graham's brother-in-law, retired in 1999 and died in 2000. The last few years of my tenure, I reported to Dr. Ronald Scates, the subsequent Senior Pastor. My retirement was November 1, 2004.

Following my professional employed pursuits, from 2005 on, my schedule remained full, serving in various community, church and political activities, serving as various leadership or administrative roles on a volunteer basis. My hobby of history and genealogy manifested itself in memberships in the Sons of the Republic of Texas, the Sons of the American Revolution, the English Speaking Union, the Noxubee County Historical Society, and the Wise County Historical Society.

Political activity included being elected in Republican Primary Elections as Wise County Chairman for the years 2000 – 2008, serving as elected delegates in precinct conventions, in county conventions, and in state conventions (Texas and Missouri), as well as being a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 2012.

My service has been appointed on all four levels of government. Currently, I am Chairman of the Aurora City Council's Historical Preservation Commission, am Chairman of the Wise County Ballot Board (the citizen board that oversees the election process), and as a member of the North Texas Board of the United States Selective Service System. Until recently, I served a couple three-year terms on the State Texas Board of Examiners of Dietitians through October 2015, one of the professional licensing boards.

Various volunteer positions and activities are followed at our home church, Eagle Mountain International Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Should you want any specific name, address or contact information relating these occupation pursuits, please contact me. Quite a number of the principals involved now are deceased, but whatever I could provide, such is available.



Dwight Albert (D. A.) Sharpe
805 Derting Road East
Aurora, TX 76078-3712
da@dasharpe.com
www.dasharpe.com
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