

Sanford C. “Sandy” Shugart, PhD, stumbled into senior leadership at a very early age and found himself “in the deep end, with sharks.” As vice president of a billion-dollar higher education system and twenty years the junior of any of his colleagues and staff, he was compelled to learn to lead in a hurry. What he discovered was a powerful interaction between the challenges of his work as a leader and the formation of his character.

Dr. Shugart’s leadership journey took him on to presidencies of two large colleges, an active life of speaking on these issues in the US and Europe, a visiting scholars chair at Oxford University, and various boards of directors. In all of these roles, he has been in the laboratory of leadership, in the crucible of pressure, heat, and reactivity that defines modern organizational life and acts powerfully to form or to deform the deep character of the leader and the led.

His reflections on these experiences have informed his own leadership roles, his poetry, and his music for many years. Most of all, he is a storyteller, sharing with good humor and humility the inner struggles he and many other leaders confront every day.