



Vice President, Data and Analytics

Leadership Profile

September 2024

Prepared by Zachary J Durst & Scott Dethloff

A decorative graphic of overlapping, light blue, curved lines that flow from the left side of the page towards the right, creating a sense of movement and depth. These lines are layered over a dark teal rectangular area at the bottom of the page.

WittKieffer

Contents

The Opportunity	01
Organization Overview	02
Position Summary	07
Goals and Objectives	09
Candidate Qualifications	10
The Community	11
Procedure for Candidacy	12

The Opportunity

Avera Health (Avera) seeks a dynamic, distinguished executive to serve as its next Vice President, Data and Analytics (VP). This VP is a critical hire as it will be a highly visible role across the organization and will have a significant impact on the future growth and success of Avera.

Avera, a large health system based in Sioux Falls, SD, employs 20,500 at 315 locations across the region. Facilities include 37 hospitals, 200 primary and specialty care clinics, and 40 senior living facilities in addition to home care and hospice, sports and wellness facilities, home medical equipment outlets and more. As a Catholic health care ministry, Avera carries on the legacy of the Benedictine Sisters of Yankton, SD, and Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen, SD, delivering care in an environment guided by values of compassion, hospitality, and stewardship.

Reporting to the Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Bruk Kammerman, the VP will collaborate with a broad group of stakeholders to set the strategic direction for data, analytics, and AI functions for the enterprise. The VP will ensure the data strategy aligns to and enables the mission and strategic plan of Avera. The VP will oversee the continued team development and implementation of solutions that enables the access of insights to drive decision-making across leaders and staff of the health system. VP and their team will be responsible for the creation of a unified data ecosystem, ensuring data management and governance, promoting data literacy, integrity, access and overseeing the data platforms. The VP will provide the leadership to move Avera further along its journey as a data-driven culture. As the senior leaders in this space, the VP must develop strong, strategic relationships with a wide variety of key leaders and other stakeholders. They must be seen as a trusted advisor and partner.

The ideal candidate will be a visionary leader with a proven track-record leading enterprise analytics in a complex organization, preferably in healthcare. The VP will bring strong strategic and operational management, developing, mentoring and growing the team into a cohesive and highly productive data group to improve business, clinical and research operations. The VP will be a highly collaborative leader who possesses exceptional communication, relationship and team building skills, as well as the ability to lead change effectively and bring a systems approach to problem-solving, consensus-building and process improvement.

Organization Overview

Avera Health is a large rural health system based in Sioux Falls, SD, serving South Dakota and the surrounding areas of Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska and North Dakota. Avera's 545-bed tertiary hospital, Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center, is located in Sioux Falls. Five other regional centers are located in Aberdeen, Mitchell, Pierre and Yankton, SD, and Marshall, MN. Avera employs 20,500 at 315 locations. These include 37 hospitals, 200 primary and specialty care clinics, and 40 senior living facilities in addition to home care and hospice, sports and wellness facilities, home medical equipment outlets and more.

Avera's 1,230 providers offer 60 medical specialties with signature patient care programs including oncology, cardiology, orthopedics, and gastroenterology as well as solid organ transplant, bone marrow transplant and cellular therapies, behavioral health and addiction care, women's and children's services, emergency medicine and robust primary care.

As a Catholic health care ministry, Avera carries on the legacy of the Benedictine Sisters of Yankton, SD, and Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen, SD, delivering care in an environment guided by values of compassion, hospitality, and stewardship.

Mission Statement

Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Our mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.

Avera is the health ministry of the Benedictine Sisters of Yankton, SD, and the Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen, SD. In the 1880s, courageous Sisters from both orders came to Dakota Territory from Switzerland, Ireland and elsewhere in the United States to minister to settlers and American Indians on the Plains. They came on a mission of education which soon expanded to include health care, in the face of epidemics that included diphtheria and influenza.

Sharing in the ministry of Jesus, the Presentation Sisters proclaim the Good News with missionary zeal in a spirit of love and joy. They share a common spirit, mission, commitment to the poor, and dedication to building a just world for all. In 1775, Nano Nagle founded the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ireland. Nano is known for educating the poor and caring for the sick and aged. In 1901, 1906 and 1911 respectively, the Presentation Sisters founded St. Luke's Hospital in Aberdeen, SD, St. Joseph Hospital in Mitchell, SD, and McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls. As their health ministry expanded, Presentation Health System was established.

The Benedictine Sisters trace their roots back to St. Benedict, a fifth-century Italian monastic whose rule included a commitment to stability, hospitality and prayer. Knowing that the divine presence is everywhere, they listen attentively in all circumstances for sounds of the Lord guiding them as a community and as individuals to actions on the Lord's behalf. Over the centuries, the Benedictine men and women have established schools, hospitals and orphanages; given spiritual counsel; taught agricultural methods; copied sacred and secular texts; and carried the Gospel to mission lands. The Benedictines founded Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton and formed the Benedictine Health System.

In 2000, the Benedictine and Presentation Sisters merged their health ministries in a co-sponsorship model under the name Avera, derived from the Latin word meaning "to be well." Sisters remain involved in Avera leadership, holding operational and governance roles.

Values

Avera seeks to heal the whole person—body, mind and spirit—as we live out our three gospel values of Compassion, Hospitality and Stewardship.

- **Compassion:** The compassion of Jesus, especially for the poor and the sick of body and spirit, shapes the manner in which Avera’s employees, physicians, administrators, volunteers and sponsors deliver health care. We express compassionate care through sensitive listening and responding, understanding, patience, support and healing touch.
- **Hospitality:** Jesus’ encounters with individuals were typified by openness and mutuality. The Avera community expresses hospitality by means of a welcoming presence, attentiveness to needs and a gracious manner, seasoned with a sense of humor.
- **Stewardship:** Threaded through the mission of Jesus was the restoration of all the world to right relationship with its Creator. In that same spirit and mission, the members of Avera treat persons, organizational power and Earth’s resources with justice and responsibility. Respect, truth and integrity are foundational to right relationships among those who serve and those who are served.

Moving Health Forward

Avera is moving health forward, both as an organization and as individuals, for better health. Avera continues to look ahead with renewed focus, to grow and enhance health ministry by investing in research, innovation and facilities. Avera seeks engagement with consumers not just in single, disconnected episodes of care, but across their lifespan. Avera serves as a trusted health partner, listening to the health needs and goals of its communities, and helping at every stage of life through care and health insurance coverage to help people feel their best, so they can be their best. When medical and insurance needs arise, Avera is a loyal, caring and trusted health care partner. Avera has a passion for connecting the health needs and goals of persons and communities with hope filled and innovative solutions that empower them to reach those goals. Avera uses the latest technologies and evidence-based practices as their partner in health.

Awards and Recognitions

Avera facilities have received [numerous recognitions](#) for quality of clinical care and service. Each hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission, and many care programs hold specific accreditation. Among its recognitions as a system, Avera has achieved:

- 15 Top Health Systems by IBM Watson Health based on quality and patient satisfaction data (2019, 2021)
- Forbes list of America’s Best-in-State Employers 2019 – No. 1 in South Dakota and in the Top 20 in Minnesota
- 2019 Customer Approved Award for senior care (ranked first out of top 20) by NRC Health, a health care intelligence firm based in Lincoln, Nebraska
- Level 10 Most Wired Health Care Organizations by the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME)
- Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center is a Magnet-designated hospital, with the fifth designation since 2001

- Five Avera hospitals have been named 5-Star facilities by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS): Avera McKennan, Avera St. Luke's Hospital, Avera Queen of Peace, Avera Heart Hospital and Avera Sacred Heart Hospital
- Several Avera hospitals have been designated as a Top 100 Critical Access Hospital or Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital
- Several Avera senior care centers have earned the CMS 5-Star Rating for Long-Term Care Centers and/or the U.S. News & World Report Best Nursing Homes designation
- Avera Cancer Institute earned three-year accreditation through the Commission on Cancer, a quality program of the American College of Surgeons, and three-year certification through the QOPI® Certification Program
- Avera has been recognized for its hospice program by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- Avera Health Marketing was awarded, as part of the 21st Annual American Business Awards®, two Gold Stevie® Awards for its "Ask the Question" suicide awareness campaign and "Moving Health Forward" branding campaign. "Ask the Question" also received a Grand Stevie Award as the Highest Rated Nomination of the Year.

Avera Medical Group

More than 1,200 physicians, advanced practice providers and allied health professionals collaborate to deliver comprehensive, seamless care through Avera Medical Group. Through more than 200 primary and specialty care locations, Avera Medical Group strives to improve the health of communities across the Upper Midwest through ease of referral to specialists, advanced technology and best-practice care, virtual visits, evening and weekend urgent care and a seamless care experience. Avera Medical Group provides health care expertise that sets community standards and exceeds expectations in a way that is caring, convenient, affordable and accessible.

Through Avera's Service Line concept, Avera physicians from across the system collaborate to identify best practices that result in consistent care, which in turn builds quality and reduces cost. More cohesive transitions of care are the result of stronger relationships among physicians that in turn improve outcomes and create higher quality experiences for patients.

Avera Health Plans

Avera Health Plans, founded in 1999, is Avera's provider-owned health insurance division that is dedicated to helping the people and communities it serves by providing cost-effective, innovative health plans. With over 75,000 members totaling more than \$300 million in annual premium revenue, Avera Health Plans offers employer group, individual and Medicare Supplement plans. As part of the dedication to provide care and services to those in need, Avera Health Plans has participated in healthcare.gov since it began in 2014, after the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Through the ACA and healthcare.gov, individuals and families can take advantage of unique benefits such as guaranteed coverage and reduced costs.

Financial Summary

Key highlights of Avera's financial profile are as follows:

- Liquid cash and investments of \$1.4 billion at June 30, 2023, with resulting cash on hand of 197 days.
- Total revenue of \$2.9 billion for the year end June 30, 2023.
- Operating EBIDA margin of \$185.6 million, or 6.4%, at June 30, 2023.
- Operating margin of \$45.5 million, or 1.6%, at June 30, 2023.
- Outstanding public debt rated AA- by both S&P Global and Fitch.

Philanthropy

In 2020, Avera centralized Avera hospital foundations into a singular and more powerful fundraising entity, Avera Foundation. Philanthropic support has been part of Avera's health ministry for more than 130 years, as the Sisters were joined by their neighbors and friends when they began caring for the ill, poor and marginalized. Avera McKennan was founded in 1911 thanks to Helen Gale McKennan, who upon her passing, directed a \$25,000 gift in her will for a new hospital in Sioux Falls that would care for all. Numerous other hospitals and facilities have similar stories of generous benefactors who stepped forward to join the Sisters in this noble work. Individuals, organizations and corporate partners who wish to support Avera often direct their gifts toward a local hospital or project, or a certain area of care, such as hospice, pediatrics, cancer or addiction care. At the local level, community councils in each of Avera's six regions support local philanthropic priorities.

For the third consecutive year, Avera Foundation was recognized by the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy for the High Performer distinction, representing the top 25% of health care foundations and philanthropy offices throughout the United States and Canada. Additionally, Avera is one of only 15 health systems included as a Health Care System High Performer, reaching the top 25% in net fundraising returns. The accolades are based on fiscal year 2021 data, although Avera Foundation continues to report strong giving, with \$46 million raised during fiscal year 2022. Avera is the region's only health system to be listed in both categories.

Governance

Like other Catholic healthcare organizations, Avera has a twofold governance structure which includes the Avera System Members and the Avera Board of Directors. Each of these entities has certain responsibilities and reserve powers.

As noted in the Mission section, in 2000, the Benedictine and Presentation Sisters joined their health ministries in a unique co-sponsorship model under the name Avera. The primary mechanism through which the Sponsorship Members exercise their sponsorship of Avera Health is through the appointment of the System Members. The two sponsoring religious communities select three members of their respective orders to serve as Avera System Members for a set term. In 2022, the System Members were expanded to include three laypersons who have engaged in education and spiritual formation in preparation for effectively leading a Catholic healthcare ministry.

The primary purpose of the System Members is to oversee and ensure that Avera's mission is alive and evident at all times. The System Members select the Avera President and CEO, and the Avera President and CEO reports

directly to the System Members. The System Members also appoint the Avera Board of Directors, approve expenditures beyond a certain amount, and give voice to Avera's Catholic identity and mission direction.

The Avera Board of Directors make-up includes Sisters, physicians and persons from the communities Avera serves. The Board of Directors' purpose is to work with the Avera President and CEO to oversee implementation of Avera's mission and strategic plan, approve annual budgets and certain levels of system expenditures, approve key operational initiatives and champion the Avera brand.

Regional boards function as champions in their respective communities for the Avera brand and voices of local input for Avera leadership. They work with the respective regional President and CEO on local initiatives in their communities.

For more information on Avera, visit www.avera.org.

Position Summary

Reporting Relationships

Reporting to the Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer.

The Vice President, Data and Analytics will lead the teams over decision support, data strategy and integration, data science and automation, and data systems.

Responsibilities

The successful Vice President, Data and Analytics candidate will:

- Responsible and accountable for elevating the value of Avera Health data and enterprise information assets. This includes analytics used to render insights for decision-making, automating decisions and the positive augmentation of human performance. Serve as the leader of data-driven insights that help support the execution of strategic and tactical business opportunities.
- Work across the spectrum of peers, executive/senior leadership and local operational partners to establish a cohesive vision for data and analytics that serves the institution and functional areas of the health system.
- Establish an effective data governance structure to manage the priorities, data definitions, and algorithms used for analysis, analytical applications and automated decision making.
- Define data and analytics strategy practices, lead the creation (and assure the ongoing relevance) of the Avera's data and analytics strategy in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer (CIO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and Chief Strategy Officer (CSO), among other partners.
- Implement an enterprise operating model that is consistent with the mission, vision, and values of Avera. Ensure the organization has the capabilities and competencies to enable the effective integration of new data and the utilization of that data across clinical and business operations.
- Research, create and develop new data products or services to help Avera expand into new markets and continue a growth trajectory. Expand the organization's research and analytics offerings, especially in emerging analytical approaches, skills, and technologies, focusing them on digital business innovation.
- Foster the creation of a data-driven culture. Provide opportunities to expand analytic related competencies, and data literacy across the enterprise with a focus on self-service tools.
- Help the health system to innovate through the acquisition and thoughtful analysis of new data sources throughout the organization. Create and oversee a centralized service for integrating external data (ex., EMR) to ensure quality, traceability, timeliness, usability, and cost-effectiveness in support of Population Health and Social Determinants of Health.
- In partnership with the CISO, legal, and compliance, lead regulatory programs related to data and analytics assets. Act as a corporate representative to regulators. Ensure that appropriate audit controls exist for data and analytics that serve as the source material for regulatory reports. Ensure that the data used for financial reporting and to support legal requirements is valid, reliable, traceable, timely, available, secure, and

consistent. Develop and maintain controls on data quality, interoperability, and sources to effectively manage the corporate risk associated with the use of data and analytics

- Define, manage, and advance enterprise information management principles, policies and programs for stewardship, advocacy and custodianship of data and analytics, in partnership with legal, information security, and corporate risk and compliance offices.
- Evolve and institutionalize behaviors for the appropriate use of information taking into consideration changing security requirements, privacy needs, ethical values, societal expectations, and cultural norms (in collaboration with the Vice President, Information Security and legal counsel).
- Organize and lead a data and analytics center of expertise and constantly improve the organization's capacity to develop insights with advanced analytics. Define job roles, recruit candidates, and manage (directly or indirectly) a team of data and analytics professionals.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been identified as priorities for this position:

- Partner with senior leaders to become fully integrated into Avera. Be perceived as a solid team player who has credibility, integrity and contributes broadly as a subject matter leader for data, analytics and artificial intelligence.
- Fully evaluate the existing data analytics environment and lead in the development of a vision and execution of the strategy for data and analytics that is aligned with the vision and strategic priorities of Avera.
- Build trust, credibility and strong relationships with the business, research and clinical leaders across Avera to identify and address their data and reporting needs.
- Enable a culture that energizes and is supportive of staff and offers career growth and development opportunities to aid in recruitment and retention.
- Develop standards, principles and governance as it relates to data usage, access and intelligence and create a center of expertise in data which democratizes data thus enabling data access for end users and providing insight and actionable information leading to an agile, data driven organization in support of operational excellence and performance improvement.
- Promote the adoption of a unified data platform and tools and evangelize the capabilities and value that data and analytics can provide the organization. Develop a vision for the organization that ensures continued success and viability for the future.

Candidate Qualifications

Education/Certification

- A bachelor's degree is required. A master's degree is preferred.

Knowledge and Work Experience

- 15+ years of data, software development and business experience at or near the executive level.
- Requires broad business, management and leadership knowledge.
- Experience in integrating complex, cross-corporate processes, and information strategies, and/or designing strategic metrics and scorecards.
- Progressive leadership experience in leading cross-functional teams and enterprise-wide data and analytics programs, operating and influencing effectively across the organization and within complex contexts.
- Demonstrated servant leadership alongside a proven track record of leading multidisciplinary teams and delivering data solutions.
- Has practical experience across multiple professional disciplines within the organization, combining theory, past practical experience and Avera's business practices.
- Required experience in SSIS, SSRS, SQL Server, Power BI, Qlik, Tableau, AWS Cloud Technologies (GCP, Azure experience a plus).

Leadership Skills and Competencies

- Passion for excellence: Believes in exceptional patient care, education, research, and service to the community.
- Able to communicate highly technical information security concepts to lay people and garner consensus.
- Possess exemplary presentation skills. Able to organize and present data in a concise and easily understood manner.
- Proven success in developing a large, high performing staff with an emphasis on the ability to recruit and manage a culturally diverse workforce.
- A strategic thinker and problem solver, able to succeed in a complex environment where decision making may be ambiguous.
- Must have a personal values system and style that reflect and model the mission, vision and values of Avera.

The Community

Avera covers an expansive region totaling 72,000 square miles and approximately 100 communities across its footprint. The system is headquartered in Sioux Falls, SD, one of the fastest-growing cities in the Midwest. The region offers a small-town feel with big city amenities. It has been recognized nationally for its economic climate and has benefited from a strong philanthropic community that supports a wide range of causes and needs throughout the region.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

With a lesser tax burden compared to other cities in the region, Sioux Falls is a welcoming and thriving business community that has been named by Forbes as one of the top Small Cities for Business and Careers each of the last 15 years.

The population of Sioux Falls' Metropolitan Statistical Area is nearly 300,000, yet the area is full of rolling plains visible for miles and miles.

The downtown area is the pulse of this city, with the Big Sioux River flowing between the streets full of restaurants, shops, businesses, bars, and cafes. Sioux Falls residents are fortunate to have an abundance of sports options and outdoor activities from which to choose, regardless of the season. The city is known for its outdoor activities and green spaces, with many parks, recreational fields and complexes, as well as world-class hunting grounds during the season. The city has about 80 different parks to choose from. The largest is Great Bear, with 220 acres of land for picnics, hiking, jogging paths and more. For those desiring a blend of outdoor activity and exercise, groomed trails are available for cross-country skiing. In addition, a world-class bike trail system is perfect for running, biking, or in-line skating to explore the city, get outside and find peace in nature.



With plenty of independent restaurants offering everything from Mediterranean to Mexican cuisine, the diversity and culinary talent in Sioux Falls has earned it the title of "the Paris of the Plains", and the New York Times has proclaimed Sioux Falls the place of "newfound culinary fame."

Not only does Sioux Falls offer an exceptional business climate, gorgeous park systems and endless food and entertainment options, it also offers one of the most competitive educational environments in the country. Sioux Falls' educational offerings are near the top in several national rankings. From public and private preschools to post-secondary opportunities in technical education and four-year degrees and beyond, Sioux Falls has it all.

For more information about Sioux Falls, please visit: www.visitsiouxfalls.com and www.siouxfalls.org.

Procedure for Candidacy

Please direct all nominations and resumes to Zachary Durst and Scott Dethloff via the WittKieffer Candidate Portal [here](#). Inquiries may also be directed to the consultants through the portal or sdethloff@wittkieffer.com.

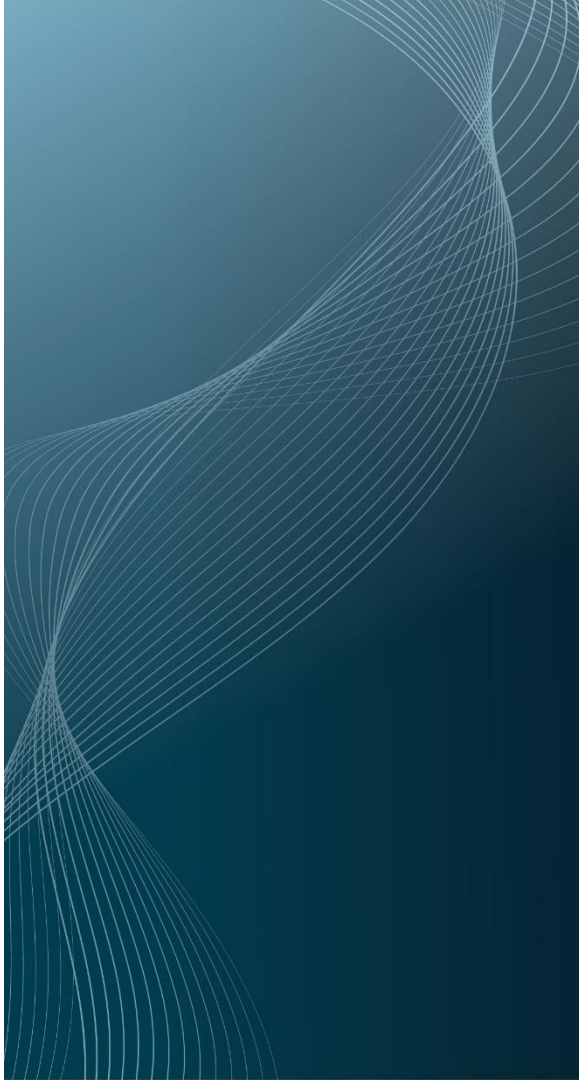
Zach Durst
Consultant, Information Technology Practice
(630) 575-6956

Scott Dethloff
Senior Associate, Information Technology Practice
630-575-6176

Avera values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Avera documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

All images and logos used in this leadership profile were attained from Avera and/or are owned by Witt/Kieffer Inc. via Getty Images.



WittKieffer is the premier executive search and advisory firm developing inclusive, impactful leadership teams for organizations that improve quality of life. For more than 50 years, we have operated exclusively at the intersection of not-for-profit and for-profit healthcare delivery, science, and education – the Quality of Life Ecosystem. Through our expert executive search services as well as our Professional Search, Interim Leadership, and Leadership Advisory solutions, we strengthen organizations that make the world better.

Visit [WittKieffer.com](https://www.WittKieffer.com) to learn more.

WittKieffer