



SIOUX FALLS
DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

WIN  **IN 20**
WORKFORCE **SUMMIT** **25**



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KEYNOTE

DR. REBECCA HEISS



Rebecca knows fear. As a stress physiologist, Dr. Rebecca Heiss is dedicated to helping us overcome our instinctual limitations - the ancient, often subconscious fears that hold us back from our optimal performance and our happiest lives. Her research has been designated “transformative” by the National Science Foundation and it is waking up audiences around the world.

As the author of two books, *Springboard* and *Instinct*, founder and CEO of the leadership

360-review mobile application, *icueity*, and highly sought-after professional speaker, Rebecca has found her calling in helping others recognize the power of biological applications in their lives. A former educator, Dr. Heiss spent much of her earlier career in the classroom at both the high school and college levels and was recruited to be a founding member of an innovative charter school with a focus on entrepreneurial thinking and impact-based learning. Today she shares her Fear[less] Stress formula to transform fear to fuel from stages around the world as a full-time speaker and facilitator of her Fearless Masterclass. She continues her research on how we can turn trauma into Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) rather than PTSD.

Rebecca’s “fear (less)” message inspires hope and actionable insights to train our brains to work for us, rather than against us in times of change and uncertainty. With surprising humor and palpable energy, no matter if Dr. Heiss is delivering virtually or on stage, she wins over her audiences with interactive, inspiring, and timely takeaways.

Rebecca lives in South Carolina with her spoiled rotten dogs named Guinness & Murphy and every day tries to live her life motto:

“Spread Happy.”

TALENT TALK - BRIDGING THE GAP: WHAT INSPIRES LEADERS - NOW AND NEXT

JODI SCHWAN - MODERATOR



Jodi Schwan is the founder of Align Content Studio, which launched in 2017 and provides content marketing strategy, production and distribution for clients in a wide range of industries. She also develops and oversees Align's original digital media brands, including www.SiouxFalls.business and Pigeon605.com, along with providing business news and analysis to Dakota News Now and KELO-AM. Jodi is a former editor, broadcaster and columnist who also served as chief of staff for the city of Sioux Falls from 2006 until 2010. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from Northwestern University and is a native of Cleveland, Ohio.

DAVID FLICEK



David Flicek is the Chief Operating Officer for Avera Health. As COO, he leads all operational areas in Avera's care delivery system and is responsible for maintaining and driving operational results.

He previously served as President and CEO of Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center and Chief Administrative Officer of Avera Medical Group. Flicek has been with Avera for 29 years. He is a graduate of The University of South Dakota.

Flicek is actively involved in many community and professional organizations. He has previously served on the Center for Family Medicine board, the Lifesource board, the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce, the Sioux Falls Link and the Forward Sioux Falls board (Co-Chair). He is currently serving on the boards for the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce, Sioux Falls Joint Management Committee (Chair), SculptureWalk Committee, South Dakota Symphony Orchestra (Chair) and is a member of the Sioux Empire Leadership Council.



DAN HERMANSON

Dan Hermanson began his career with SCHEELS in 1999 as a part-time shoe sales team member while attending Mankato State University, where he majored in aviation. What started as a college job quickly turned into a lifelong passion as Dan discovered how much he valued the culture and opportunities within SCHEELS.

Now, with over 26 years of experience, Dan has worked in 9 different stores across 7 states, gaining a deep understanding of the company and its people. For the past 4 years, he's proudly led the incredible team at Sioux Falls SCHEELS, where he and his family have put down roots and committed to staying long term.

Dan is passionate about building strong teams, serving the community, and continuing to grow alongside the business that first inspired him as a 19-year-old part-timer.



ANDY PATTERSON

Andy Patterson is the CEO of the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation. He works to connect donors, nonprofits and civic leaders to help advance ideas and strategic community investments. He also works closely with the Foundation's Board of Directors, setting the direction for the organization and ensuring its connection to the community we serve.

Andy joined the Community Foundation in 2006 and was named president in 2015. Prior to joining the Foundation, he served as director of development for the University of Sioux Falls, where he oversaw the "Greatest Gift" campaign, the largest in school history.

Andy holds a bachelor's degree and an MBA from USF. He also holds the Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP) designation, maintaining an in-depth knowledge of the philanthropic process. An active civic volunteer, Andy serves on a number of boards and committees dedicated to addressing our community's most pressing needs.

He and his wife, Sara, are parents to Josiah, Isaiah, Caleb and Lydia.

The Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, in partnership with donors, provides trusted leadership that inspires philanthropy, and enriches the quality of life in our area – for good, forever. Founded in 1984, we are a 501(c)(3) public charity. Today, we manage more than 1,000 charitable funds, serving as the trusted stewards for more than \$364 million in charitable assets.



LISA ROMKEMA

Lisa Romkema, CEO, Sioux Empire United Way

Lisa Romkema serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Sioux Empire United Way, where she provides strategic direction and leadership to advance the organization's mission to lead, sustain and nurture a unified, effective response to community needs. Her leadership emphasizes building strong partnerships, ensuring financial transparency, and maximizing the impact of every dollar raised to support the most vulnerable populations in the region.

Born and raised on a farm near Springfield, South Dakota, Lisa developed a strong commitment to service and community collaboration at an early age. She earned a degree in Business/Marketing from Dakota State University, which laid the foundation for her successful career across both the business and nonprofit sectors.

Lisa's nonprofit journey began in 2010 when she joined Sioux Empire United Way as Campaign Director. Over the years, she gained invaluable experience in fundraising, community outreach, and nonprofit leadership through various roles in fundraising and nonprofit leadership. In July 2024, she returned to Sioux Empire United Way as CEO.

When she's not focused on her professional or volunteer roles, Lisa enjoys traveling, spending time at the lake with friends and family, and cheering on her 12-year-old son, a math whiz and avid basketball player who motivates Lisa to stay curious and continue her own journey of growth and learning.



AVA GUZZETTA

Ava Guzzetta is a senior at O'Gorman High School and co-founder of Guzzetta Girls of SD, a volunteer organization serving veterans and children in Sioux Falls. She is an advisor and founding member of her school's DECA chapter, serves on the board of its Best Buddies chapter, writes for The Knights Scroll, and—alongside her fraternal twin sister—is one of the youngest participants in the ABCD Twin Study at the University of Minnesota, the nation's longest-running research on cognitive and behavioral development in twins. Ava is passionate about service, leadership, and building stronger, more connected communities.

THE EVOLVING ROLE OF MANAGERS



CHRISTINA COTA, MODERATOR

Christina Cota-Donovan (she/her) is the founder of Cota Coaching & Consulting, a Human Resources firm based in Sioux Falls, SD. Since she has seen a lot in her 25 years of HR work, she brings humor, heart, and a sharp eye for helping organizations grow through their people. Christina holds both SHRM-SCP and SPHR credentials, and thrives on coaching leaders and untangling the messier parts of the employee experience. Outside of work, you'll find her in the garden or cooking up something delicious—because good food, like good leadership, is best when shared.



ALLIE HARTZLER

Meet Allie Hartzler, a small-town Minnesota native with a heart for service. Growing up, Allie wanted to be a graphic designer. Her dream was to use art to do good. After graduating from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN with a degree in Communications & Journalism, Allie started her career in advertising.

While working with clients like Andersen Windows, General Mills, and Purina was creatively inspiring, Allie felt a pull toward work more centered on people. This led her to a career in public service. Today she serves as the Communications and Culture Officer for the City of Sioux Falls. In this role, Allie leads the strategic direction for marketing, branding, and employee engagement.

When not at work, Allie loves reading cookbooks, eating pizza with her daughter, and discussing the latest season of *Love Is Blind*.



MARGARET CARMODY

Margaret Carmody is the Vice President of Development for the University of South Dakota Foundation & Alumni Association, where she leads fundraising strategy, donor engagement, and team development to advance the mission of USD and strengthen its alumni community.

She also served as Chief Strategy Officer for the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls' premier cultural institution for arts, science, and education, guiding organizational strategy and growth.

Before joining the Pavilion, Margaret spent a decade at Raven Industries, a publicly traded technology company, where she held leadership roles in organizational culture, marketing, brand, communications, community relations, administrative services, and facilities. She led initiatives to modernize the Raven brand, implement transformative cultural strategies, and enhance corporate communications. As Assistant Corporate Secretary, she also supported governance, board, and shareholder relations.

Her career began on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., serving in various capacities. An active community leader, Margaret serves on the Board of Trustees for Dow Rummel Village and the Board of Directors for the Sioux Falls Zoo & Aquarium Society. In 2022, she co-founded Power Lunch, a program that empowers 8th-grade girls through career and leadership exploration.

She holds a B.S. in Contemporary Media & Journalism and an Executive Master of Public Administration, both from the University of South Dakota.



MARLA DZIEDZIC

Marla is the Light Program Manager at Avera Health based in Sioux Falls. The Light Program is a well-being program offered to all physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners across the Avera system. Marla has been part of the Avera system for 14 years where she has served as Director of Talent Development and a Service Excellence Consultant. Marla utilizes her experience to inspire others to develop their strengths to help them excel in life and their careers.

Marla holds a master's degree from University of Sioux Falls, is certified in Everything DiSC®, Emotional Intelligence, Managing Organizational Transition®, Crucial Conversations® and is a Master Certified Physician Development Coach. When she's not developing others, Marla is happiest spending time with her husband, three children, and five grandchildren. Marla and her husband, Dean, live in Sioux Falls, SD.

FROM FRUSTRATION TO FLOW: THE PLAYBOK TO WORKING GENIUS



JOE OBERMUELLER

Joe Obermueller (W-E) serves as the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer at the University of Sioux Falls. Now in his 13th year at the university, he works closely with faculty and staff in both the undergraduate and graduate programs to support and develop the academic portfolio of the university. Joe has worked in the higher education industry for almost 20 years as a professor and administrator and believes in the transformative power of education.

He is a certified Working Genius facilitator and enjoys helping people discover and deploy their genius to achieve better productivity and greater job satisfaction.

A Wyoming native, he earned his MFA in Theatre Pedagogy from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA and a BA in Theatre from Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA. He is married to Janette who directs the theatre program at Britza Performing Arts Studio in Sioux Falls.

TALENT ON TAP: FILLING THE PIPELINE WITH PURPOSE



COURTNEY SNELLER

Courtney Sneller is a visionary leader in talent acquisition, who serves as the Vice President at Sanford Health, one of the largest integrated health systems in the United States. With over a decade of experience in strategic recruitment and workforce planning, Courtney has built and led high-performing teams that drive innovation, elevate candidate experiences, and align talent strategies with organizational growth.

Over the course of her career, Courtney has advanced through a series of leadership roles, including positions as Director and Manager of Talent Acquisition Strategy. Her experience encompasses technology transformation initiatives, community engagement efforts, and the creation of scalable recruitment frameworks. She is recognized for her talent in motivating teams, promoting collaboration, and driving data-informed strategies that align with long-term workforce goals.



APRIL MEYERINK

April Meyerink serves as Vice President of Business Development at American Bank & Trust, where she leads strategic relationship-building efforts and drives growth through community engagement, partnership development, and client-focused financial solutions. Based in Sioux Falls, April brings extensive experience in financial services, with a strong track record of helping businesses and individuals achieve their goals through personalized support and world-class service.

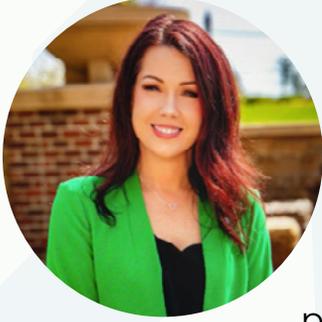
A proud South Dakota native, April grew up near Reville and is a graduate of South Dakota State University. Her professional journey has been marked by a deep commitment to community, having held leadership roles at both American Bank & Trust and Black Hills Federal Credit Union. She is known for her ability to connect with clients, identify growth opportunities, and foster long-term partnerships that benefit both businesses and the communities they serve.

April is an active volunteer and community leader, serving on numerous boards and advisory councils including the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Alzheimer's Association – SD, Sioux Falls Art Council, and SDCEO – East. She has chaired major fundraising events, led capital campaigns, and mentored professionals to deepen their civic engagement.

Outside of work, April enjoys golfing, kayaking, painting, and spending time with her husband, Troy, their daughter, Grace, and their tiny but mighty Mal-Chi, Miss Pepper.

April's passion for people, purpose-driven leadership, and dedication to community impact make her a valued voice in conversations about business development, relationship banking, and regional growth.

WENDY ALEXANDER



Known for her high energy and natural ability to connect people, Wendy Alexander brings over 20 years of experience in HR, specializing in talent acquisition, learning and development, employee relations, program building, communication and behavioral assessments such as DISC and the Enneagram.

Wendy's expertise in recruiting, coaching, and leadership has played a pivotal role in driving business growth, attracting and training high-performing teams, and developing impactful talent programs for leading organizations. She's a dynamic HR professional who delivers engaging training sessions on LinkedIn/networking strategy, DISC, Enneagram, leadership development, emotional intelligence, customer service, and influence.

In her "free" time, Wendy pours her passion into shaping future HR professionals as an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Sioux Falls and through frequent speaking engagements and workshops wherever people are ready to grow.

A natural alliance-builder, Wendy is deeply committed to helping people truly understand themselves and each other through tools like DISC, Enneagram and many more. Her enthusiastic, insightful approach inspires individuals and teams to build more authentic, fulfilling relationships—both at work and in life.

CODE. CLICK. CONQUER. THE DIGITAL SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT MOST



VICTOR TAYLOR

Victor E. Taylor (Ph.D., Syracuse University) serves as Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Extended Studies/ Professor of English-Interdisciplinary Studies at South Dakota State University. He oversees the Graduate School, Center for Continuing and Distance Education, Center for Instructional Design Services, and the Center for Professional Enrichment and Teaching Excellence. His work supports initiatives in global education, XR instruction, GenAI policy development, and civic engagement. In 2023-24, he served as the Interim Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences.

He is the executive editor for the Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory and editor of two book series with Parlor Press: Emerging Conversations in the Global Humanities and Critical Issues in Higher Ed Leadership. His current research includes a volume entitled Global Kafkas co-edited with Sander L. Gilman.

He was a research associate at The Johns Hopkins University and has held similar appointments at UCLA, University of Pennsylvania, and UC, Irvine. In 2015 he completed Harvard University's MDP in higher education leadership.

TALENT TALK: NAVIGATING WHAT'S NEXT WITH HEALTHCARE AND HIGHER ED



JULIE LAUTT

Julie Lautt is the Chief Financial Officer for Avera Health. As Avera's CFO, Julie supports a transparent, metrics-driven approach to financial business planning while developing and aligning financial measures of success across the organization. She leads the Finance, Business Planning & Economics, Revenue Cycle, Information Technology (IT), Supply Chain Services and Organizational Excellence divisions.

Julie received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with majors in accounting and mathematics from the University of South Dakota.

With a commitment to community service, Julie has served on and chaired many boards including the Sioux Empire United Way, Bishop O'Gorman Schools and SF Area Casa. She currently serves as a board member for the Sioux Falls Development Foundation and is on the Bishop O'Gorman Foundation Audit Committee, University of South Dakota Foundation Finance Committee and the CHA Finance Committee.

ANDY MUNCE



Andy Munce, MSN, RN, CENP, President & CEO for Sanford Health Sioux Falls Market.

Munce began his career at Sanford Health as an RN in the surgical cardiovascular unit in 2004. He has served as clinical care coordinator, clinical manager and director in several areas. He later served in leadership roles as the director of Cardiovascular Services, executive director Heart & Vascular and Cancer, and executive roles over Orthopedics and Sports Medicine and Neurosciences. Munce was promoted to the Chief Nursing Officer for Sanford Medical Center and Clinics in 2017 and then to Chief Operating Officer in 2020.

He currently serves on the American Red Cross Eastern South Dakota Board of Directors, Forward Sioux Falls IX Campaign Co-Chair and has previously served on many other community boards.

Munce completed his bachelor's degree in nursing as well as his master's in nursing administration from South Dakota State University.

Munce and his wife, Arika, enjoy spending time outdoors and rooting for the sports teams in the region.

STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN



Stephanie Herseth Sandlin serves as the 24th president of Augustana University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota — the first woman to lead the university since it was established in 1860.

As a result of her leadership, the university developed its transformational **Viking Bold: The Journey to 2030** strategic plan — supported by the largest and most comprehensive campaign in Augustana’s history. Key accomplishments in the Viking Bold journey to date include new and innovative academic programs, record enrollment, the addition of Division I men’s ice hockey, the construction of Midco Arena, and new and renovated student housing.

Stephanie graduated summa cum laude from Georgetown University, and cum laude from the Georgetown University Law Center. Called to public service, she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2004, serving four terms. She was the first woman elected to the U.S. House from South Dakota and the youngest woman serving in Congress during that time.

Following her time in public office, Stephanie became a partner in a Washington, D.C., law firm and later joined Raven Industries in Sioux Falls, as the company’s first general counsel and vice president of corporate development.

Stephanie has had the honor of serving on numerous local, regional and national boards, including as president of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities from 2023 to 2024, and currently as chair of the Audit & Compliance Committee for the Sanford Health Board of Trustees. She was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame in 2017, and, in August 2020, was named to USA Today Network’s select list of “Women of the Century,” in recognition of her significant contributions to the state of South Dakota and the country.

Stephanie is married to former Texas Congressman Max Sandlin. She and Max live in Sioux Falls with their teenage son, Zachary. They also have four older children and 10 grandchildren.

UNLEASH THE LEADER IN YOU WITH LIZ CARLSON



LIZ CARLSON

From keynote stages to team training and 1:1 coaching, Liz delivers growth with heart, humor, and serious results. She's part coach, part communicator, part magnetic force. Liz is all about helping you grow—with heart, humor, and high standards.

Liz's mission is to strengthen, encourage and equip leaders and organizations with empathy, practical strategies, and heartfelt support to create positive change in the workplace.

With over 20 years of experience in leadership, communication and coaching, Liz helps purpose-driven professionals show up with clarity, confidence, and heart. She's not here for surface-level soundbites. Liz delivers real strategies that shift culture, elevate leadership, and strengthen teams from the inside out.

Armed with a BA in Communication/Speech and Education and an MBA, and a career spanning corporate leadership, sales training, executive coaching, and higher ed, Liz brings depth and energy to everything she does. Whether she's onstage, in a workshop, or working 1:1, she makes communication feel actionable—and personal.

CLOSING SESSION

THE POWERFUL 3: WITH THINK 3D

VANEY HARIRI



Vaney Hariri has been helping people develop intentional cultures for over 16 years in many different levels of his community. As a leader, board member, mentor, and community advocate – his biggest mission is to help people love better, starting with themselves.

AARON DANG



Aaron Dang was born and raised in Sioux Falls and works at Augustana University in the Sharon Lust School of Education. Aaron has been an elementary teacher, instructional coach, adjunct professor, visiting professor and is currently an assistant professor. Aaron's passion for education has developed over time, and his personal experiences have guided him to teach with compassion, energy and innovation.

Aaron has always been a community member of Sioux Falls and all that it has to offer. He has is a graduate of the Sioux Falls School district, Augustana University (BA in elementary education), and The University of Northern Colorado (MA in applied educational psychology).

As a way to continue his journey as an educator, Aaron is earning an Ed. D. in educational studies, focusing on school policy, reform and innovation. In this way, he hoped to continue serving his Sioux Falls community.

& Liz Carlson, Biography Above