

WILL DETER

SUMMARY

Executive leader with 12 years of progressive YMCA experience spanning operations, strategy, workforce development, and community engagement. Proven ability to align people, programs, and organizational systems with strategic goals across a \$30 million, multi-branch association. Skilled in partnering with boards and senior leadership to drive fundraising growth, build community partnerships, and develop high-performing teams. Doctoral candidate in Systems Science with deep expertise in organizational performance and strategic planning.

KEY SKILLS

Twelve years of leading within a complex nonprofit organization, paired with doctoral training in Systems Science, give me a distinctive ability to build and lead organizations that:

- Build effective teams grounded in shared principles and behaviors that advance the organization toward its goals.
- Identify why initiatives stall by understanding the organizational dynamics working against them, not just reviewing the dashboard.
- Measure what matters by connecting frontline operations to member outcomes and community impact through intentionally designed performance systems.
- Make strategic decisions with analytical rigor, bringing empirical discipline to choices that are too often made on instinct alone.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

YMCA of Western North Carolina

2013 - Present

Director of Systems & Strategy

2024 - Present

- Partner with VP and C-Suite leaders to shape and drive organizational strategy across every major function of a \$30 million, multi-branch YMCA association serving Western North Carolina.
- Created the organization's framework for sustainable innovation, establishing structured processes for identifying, evaluating, and implementing new initiatives across the association.
- Designed the association's performance measurement system using the service profit chain model, aligning KPIs and key performance outcomes to give leaders a clear line of sight from internal operations to member and community impact.
- Applied systems modeling to identify harmful feedback loops working against organizational goals, redirecting effort and resources toward strategies that drove measurable progress on association priorities.
- Developed and facilitated strategic planning sessions for senior leadership, grounding organizational direction in systems science research and ensuring alignment between board governance, executive strategy, and operational execution.
- Contributed to annual fundraising campaigns and donor engagement efforts, supporting stewardship, retention, and community outreach initiatives across the association.

- Participated in the YMCA's National Advocacy Days, making asks of federal elected officials on behalf of Y communities.

Senior Director of Operations

2019 – 2024

- Oversaw licensure and compliance for 34 licensed childcare and camp locations serving more than 1000 youth each week.
- Co-developed and managed an operating budget exceeding \$7 million, collaborating with finance leadership to align resource allocation with strategic priorities.
- Supervised and developed a team of 150 full- and part-time employees across operational and administrative functions, fostering a culture of accountability and professional growth.
- Presented directly to state legislators on childcare regulatory reform, contributing to favorable regulatory outcomes for licensed childcare providers across North Carolina.
- Supervised Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) implementation as a sponsoring organization of 31 affiliated centers.
- Developed and launched custom management information systems to efficiently monitor and maintain compliance with regulatory requirements.

Director of Operations - Licensing

2016 - 2019

- Lead safety and compliance operations contributing to the success of 34 licensed or otherwise grant-funded childcare facilities serving more than 1000 youth.
- Facilitated compliance and safety training and development for approximately 100 staff members.
- Facilitated the licensure of 8 additional school-age childcare facilities.

EDUCATION

PhD Binghamton University, Systems Science

Expected January 2027

Research Area: Organizational and Enterprise Systems

MS Binghamton University, Systems Science

Advanced Graduate Certificate

Binghamton University, Complex Systems Science and Engineering

BS Western Carolina University, Emergency and Disaster Management
Summa Cum Laude