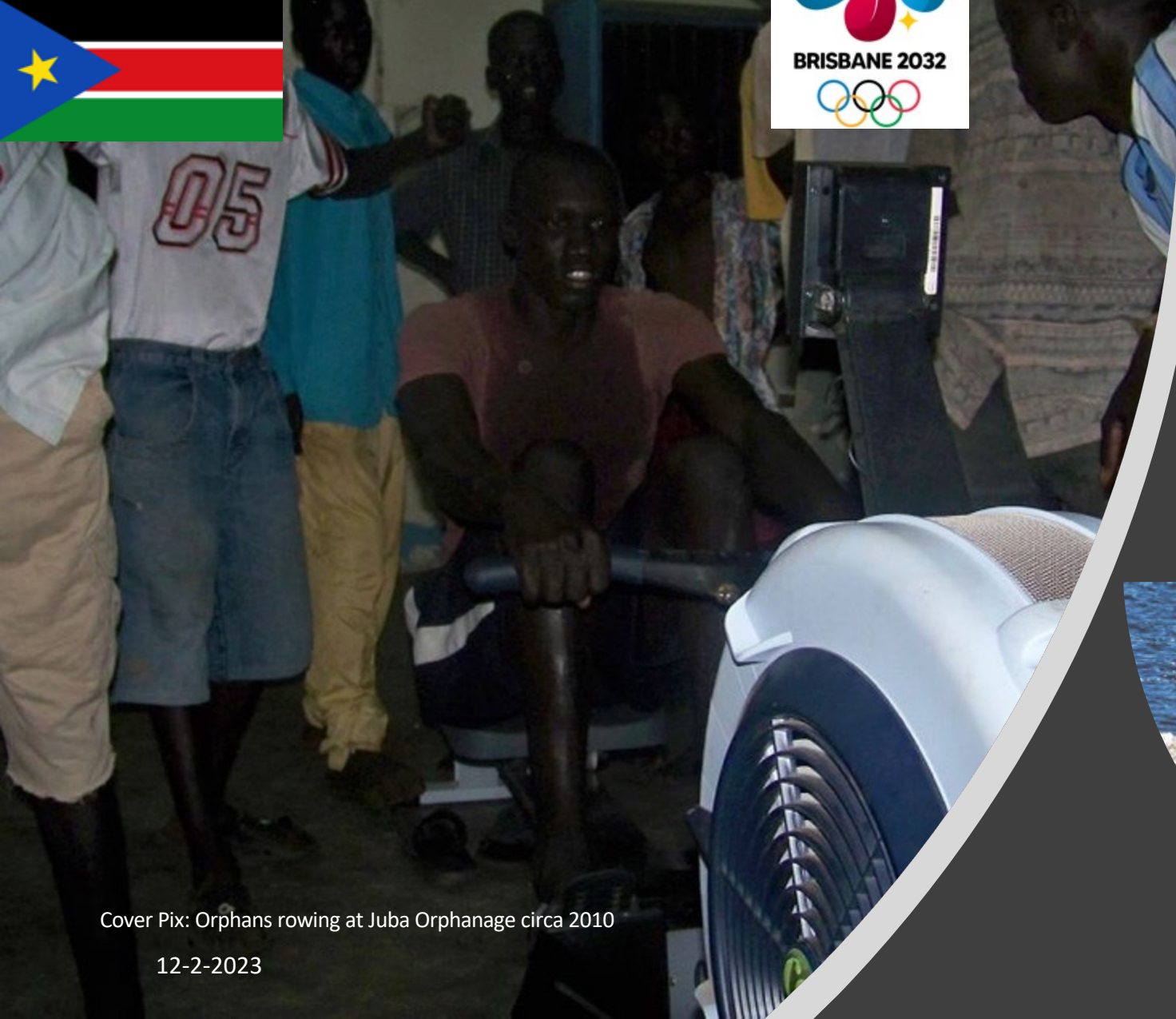


# South Sudan Olympic Rowing



# Row4Life

*Nurturing Exceptional Leadership  
from Rowing*



Cover Pix: Orphans rowing at Juba Orphanage circa 2010

12-2-2023

# History of Kyle and KCC, the founder of Row4Life



## Kyle Thaller

Senior at University of Lynchburg

- Newman Civic Fellow, Clinton Foundation Fellow, Bonner Leader Fellow
- Former U.S. Senate Page (Sen. Warner, Virginia)
- Nominated by Univ. President for White House Intern, Rhodes Scholar, Truman Scholar, and others

Diagnosed w/ Type-1 Diabetes 4-22-15

Formed KCC in 2016

Kyle's Campaigns for Change (KCC);  
Saving Lives By Never Giving Up

- KCC Humanitarian Branch:
  - Saved 50+ T1-diabetic kids and T2-diabetic adults
  - Donated millions of dollars of insulin and supplies
  - Supporting [helpkids2live.org](http://helpkids2live.org);
- KCC Policy Division:
  - Served as Constitutional intern in S. Sudan
  - Wrote/led *Federalist Letters of South Sudan*
  - Formed [Row4Life.org](http://Row4Life.org) & [R-GDI.org](http://R-GDI.org)
  - Campaign for T1Ds to serve in military
  - Forming TED Talks chapter in Lynchburg, VA



# Background of Row4Life

- South Sudan is one of the most violent, war-torn, and poverty-stricken countries in the world.
  - Violence is ethnicity-based
  - Ethnic concentrations are generally aligned by the country's ten states
- Families and, in turn their children have extremely limited prospects for school and nearly zero opportunities to attend college.
- The world's primary source of international rowing athletes are frequently from the most esteemed colleges and universities.
- Many SS children are inherently exceptionally athletic with tall height, great stamina and immense strength; (typical students from Wau in pix to right)
- With nearly nobody from South Sudan attending American Universities (where Olympians are groomed), the S. Sudan is virtually untapped.
- With no outlet to use this athletic prowess many of these youth instead have a life of poverty and tend to resort to continued ethnic violence.
- Finding a solution that unites the different ethnicities with a symbol of national pride while also providing an outlet for competition other than violence is critical.
- KCC witnessed and understood the above situation from living and working in S. Sudan, first-hand, and so created Row4Life to create the country's first Olympic Rowing Team.

12-2-2023



# Proposal & Goals

## Proposal

- Concept-2 (world standard) erg Rowing machines (called an erg) will be provided to various locations throughout South Sudan; at least one per state.
- Students (boys and girls) between ages 16-18 will be introduced to the erg, tested, exceptional athletes identified, trained/tutored in South Sudan, and exposed to training and universities in the United States.
- Exceptional students will obtain scholarships and eventually compete for South Sudan.

## Goals

1. Mitigating conflict amongst the youth of South Sudan by using the erg to as an outlet for competition between schools, etc.
2. Groom and nurture South Sudan's future leaders.
3. Enter and competitively race in men and women's crew at the Olympic Games in Brisbane, Australia in 2032. By so trying and doing, enhance national unity and mitigate civil war violence.





# How to you get a Rowing Scholarship?

You need to have a very fast erg-score!

This sounds simple, but it's impossible for most world-class athletes.

This is not likely the case in S. Sudan

Tiers	2k Erg Time for Scholarship	<i>QUOTE: When it comes to rowing recruits, coaches generally look at the following things in order of importance (give or take a slot):</i>
<b>Tier 1; Harvard, Yale, Princeton</b>	< 6:10 (men) < 7:20 (women)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. 2k erg time</li><li>2. Academics</li><li>3. Club or high school rowing experience</li><li>4. Size of athlete</li><li>5. Rowing technique</li></ol>
<b>Tier 2; Syracuse, Penn, Wisconsin</b>	< 6:20 (men) <7:30 (women)	
<b>Tier 3; Colgate, Drexel, Temple</b>	< 6:40 (men) < 7:50 (women)	
<b>Tier 4; Jacksonville, Michigan</b>	<6:40 (men) <7:55 (women)	

*2k erg times are a dependable gauge of rowing potential and speed on the water, so rowing (erg) times are the first thing that college coaches usually review. UNQUOTE*

Redacted from: <https://www.ncsasports.org/mens-rowing/college-rowing-times>

<https://www.ncsasports.org/womens-rowing/college-rowing-times>

# Row4Life Program Phases

## **Phase 1: Identify and Recruit athletes; \$25k-\$50k each year**

- Ideally, 10 boys and 10 girls from all ten states
- Selection is based on local erg times, size, attitude, academic capability, potential, family support, and references

## **Phase 2: Transport all 20 athletes to Juba for 30 days of training at the *SS Erg Rowing Center* at the Comboni Secondary School; \$25-\$50k each year**

- This phase includes airfare, room, lodging, supervision, athletic training, academic tutoring, and in-country manager
- While in Juba, training will include athletics, diet, mathematics, English (writing and reading), and standard collegiate entrance tests such as TOEFL, etc.
- Additional 10 ergs are needed; two ergs are already on site; room and facility are VERY good!

## **Phase 3: Transport the best athletes (based on erg times) to the United States for 2-3 weeks; \$10k plus \$10k/athlete**

- Athletic training on the water in Virginia
- Exposure to national-level coaches and several trips to local universities to visit with rowing teams, students, and coaches
- Only execute after athletes obtain competitive erg times (see page 5)

## **Phase 4: Establish SS Rowing Center; \$500k to establish and \$200k annually**

- Co-located with Destiny College at Terekaka (25 miles north of Juba on Nile tributary)
- Two boats, equipment, open air storage for boats and locked storage for equipment, sanitation, cooking, covered eating/meeting area.
- Athletes in Juba colleges commute to erg training at Comboni School and/or to Terekaka for on-the-water training

### **Notes:**

1. It is entirely possible that Phases 1-3 will be so sufficiently successful that Phase 4 will not be needed for several years, if ever, since the Erg Training Center in Juba can be used by athletes attending college at the University of Juba or Destiny University year-round, with yearly recruiting visits occurring to the U.S.
2. Providing scholarships to the best athletes at SS colleges is optimal, but is not part of this budget. If/when desired, these costs are estimated at \$10k per student per year (tuition, room, board, books, etc.). Juba is very expensive compared to the rest of SS.

# Grand Vision

- Row4Life’s “Grand Vision” is to have a South Sudan crew team compete in the 2032 Olympic Games in Brisbane, Australia.
- Create national unity amongst South Sudan as all 10 members of the team (8 rowers, 1 coxswain, and 1 coach) will represent all ten states of South Sudan. (See image of map of 10 states to bottom right)
- Each rower will likely be from different ethnic groups (Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk, etc.) and will help mend the ethnic tension.
- Place 1 Erg rowing machine in each state. This will give Row4Life more exposure and also allows recruitment from entire country.
- This program is going to create a world class, Olympic gold medal. The questions is not “if”; it is “when”, since success is inevitable as the talent pool in South Sudan is too rich, too underserved, too untapped.... And the young men and women are simply far too big, strong, and passionate!
- **The strength of *federalism* occurs when the sum of the parts, when working together optimizes success. This is exactly what the South Sudan team represents.**





# Requirements for each Erg Location

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1. Densely populated area
  2. Security of erg from weather
  3. Security of erg from vandalism
  4. Adult Supervision to ensure proper treatment and behavior
  5. Easy access for teenage boys and girls
  6. **Placement of banners for local sponsors of program made available.**
    - World class coaching is not needed at this early level. The computer on the erg will tell us who is truly capable of becoming an Olympic athlete.
    - Erg competitions determine the overall best athlete, regardless of their skill or experience at another sport. The erg just measures your total strength and fitness; period.
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## Erg Locations Established in 2022

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### **Central Equatoria; Straight Link Orphanage School; Gudele (Juba)**

- School/Orphanage in Kabo (outside of Juba); 150 orphans and 2000 students.

### **Bahr El Ghazal; *Standard Secondary School*; Wau**

- Secondary school located in the city of Wau, South Sudan. There are 200 students and is a good central location for all of Wau.

### **Warrap State: Warrap Town**

- Governor of Warrap has been briefed on this concept by his son, Emanuel, and is keenly interested to become involved.
- Provided erg to Standard Secondary School in Warrup Town. Pix to left.

# Erg Locations Established in 2023

Below: Kyle instructing young rower from the war-torn state of Malakal

## **Eastern Equatoria; Airport View Secondary School; Torit**

- Secondary School in Torit, the capital of Eastern Equatoria, South Sudan; 150 students ages 14-21

## **Jonglei; Malek Secondary School; Bor**

- Secondary school in Bor, the capital of Jonglei state in South Sudan; 200 student ages 14-18

## **Malakal; St. Lwanga Secondary School; Malakal**

- Secondary school in Malakal, capital of Upper Nile state of South Sudan; 200 students ages 14-18

## **Central Equatoria; Comboni Missionary School; Juba**

- Site of S. Sudan National Rowing and Leadership Center
- 500 students ages 12-20
- School is very high-end by South Sudan standards
- Currently two rowing machines at this location in total; To be increased to 10 machines in 2024







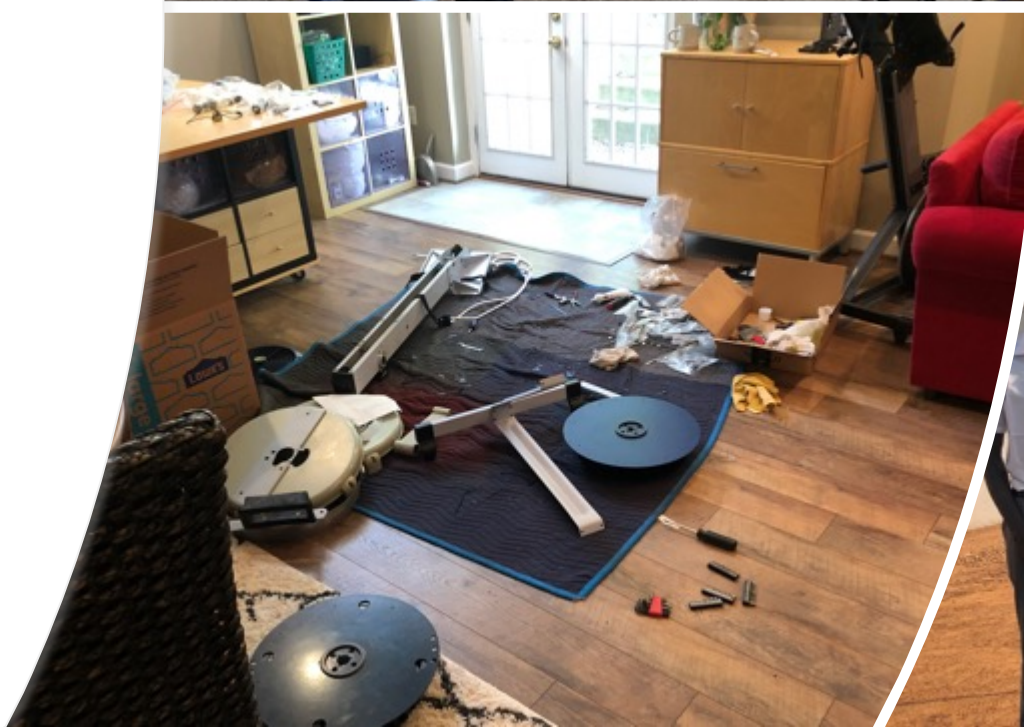
# 2022 Row4Life Photos



# Row4Life Videos

- Links to videos

- <https://youtu.be/awkEFTSenNE>
- <https://youtube.com/shorts/Cv5BrsctGOA?feature=share>
- <https://youtu.be/PjXsHu3VSHc>
- <https://youtu.be/lDDzFCO5au0>
- <https://youtu.be/Wi2BBK7OeNE>
- <https://youtu.be/atnIvva6eEE>







# Summer 2023 Photos

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## Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan

- Strong supporter for Row4Life
- Political risk and diplomatic issues will be mitigated
- Assistance and endorsements will be provided to students seeking a U.S. visa to visit the U.S. and/or to attend school in the U.S.
- When desired, the S. Sudan Ambassadorial leadership will assist Row4Life arranging for inter-country erg competitions in Africa

Kyle pictured to right with Ambassador Gordon Buay of South Sudan; 2023







# Next Steps

Initiate Fund Raising for \$250k, but with initial focus on:

- Phase 1: Identify Athletes; \$25k
- Phase 2: Establish South Sudan Rowing and Leadership Center and conduct 30-day training clinic for 20 athletes; \$50k
- Execute Phases 1 and 2 in 2024
- Execute Phase 3 only after athletes approach erg standards (see page 5); estimated 2025

**NOTE: The identification of just one or two phenomenal student-athletes will:**

- Catapult this concept past conceptual and easily into the “inevitable” category of long term success
- Facilitate likely sponsorship from Nike, Amazon, and other corporate sponsors





# Fundraising Sources

- Solicit support from:
  - Clinton Foundation Network
  - Individual Rowers
  - Venture Capitalists
  - Bonner Leader Network
  - Newman Scholars
  - Senate Page Network
  - Legends and Legacies Network
  - Humanitarian Friends
  - Rowing Clubs & Teams
- George and Amal Clooney and “Boys in the Boat” network
- Network and introductions via professional media campaign
- **Initial target is \$75k (for Phases 1 & 2); Overall target is \$250k**
- **Identify long-term sponsor for nominal annual expenses of \$75k/year**

12-2-2023

Image to left is an image of Lopez Lomong, a “Lost Boy” of South Sudan who went on to compete in the Olympics for Track. He is a prime example of what Row4Life aims to do.