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Kyle Thaller team presents federalist ideas for South Sudan to consider in new constitution

By E. BRUCE DAVIS
Observer staff

Think back in history to 1787 when the Founding Fathers gathered together in Philadelphia and with much discussion and thought wrote the U.S. Constitution which eventually was ratified by all the states and established the United States and its way of government.

Fast forward to Aug. 26, 2020... Kyle Thaller, 17, a rising senior at Patriot High School who recently concluded a term as a Page with the U.S. Senate, had the opportunity to present along with nine other Spring-session U.S. Senate Pages (via Zoom) a proposed new concept of federalism for South Sudan, a country since 2011 that consists of 10 states and is located in Africa. The country's leaders are considering writing a new constitution.

There were other participants from North America, Europe and Africa, including government officials in Juba, The Republic of South Sudan's capital.

Kyle said many Senate staffers, members of not-for-profits and other organizations were represented, including the Presidential Precinct, which promotes leadership in young individuals.

Although the President of South Sudan, His Excellency (HE)



Kyle Thaller hosting a Zoom presentation with nine other Spring Session U.S. Senate Pages on "Federalism, a New Constitution and Peace in South Sudan" to South Sudan Government officials
Courtesy Photo

Salva Kiir Mayardit, did not participate due to other presidential duties, HE Losuba Wongo, Minister of Federal Affairs (MoFedA), participated.

First VP, HE Dr. Riek Machar Teny attended by telephone but did not speak publicly.

Kyle said, the FIRST VP later, "told the Minister that he was very impressed and thankful for these talented young Pages and future American politicians."

Kyle started Kyle's Campaigns for Change (KCC) after realizing a Type 1 diabetes diagnosis in 2015 disqualified him from fol-

lowing Mark, his father, as a U.S. Naval Academy graduate. He had hoped to become a Navy Seal and change the world as a Naval Officer.

Through KCC, he developed a program providing South Sudan with testing paraphernalia, insulin and financial support for Type 1 diabetes cases in two Juba clinics.

Kyle became aware of this need when his father worked independently in South Sudan and other countries, helping governments, while working on his Ph.D. in Conflict Resolution.

A KCC project, entitled,



His Excellency Losuba Wongo, South Sudan's Minister of Federal Affairs, during Kyle Thaller's Zoom presentation
Courtesy Photo

"Federalism, a New Constitution in Sudan; Perspectives; Spring-2020 U.S. Senate Pages," began after Kyle served as a U.S. Senate Page from Jan. 26 to early April in Washington, DC, and due to COVID-19, finishing in Gainesville in June.

With KCC's goal of "Saving Lives by Never Giving Up," a new project began, "To assist the Minister of Federal Affairs, Republic of South Sudan with development of federalism, in support of a new constitution for South Sudan," and, "Averting return to civil war, saving lives of many people."

Kyle's related his passion for public service fueled the transition from Diabetes to Federalism.

"I realized that I could use my contacts in South Sudan to do something that was really impactful, and with my U.S. Senate Page friends, there is nothing we can't do."

Losuba Wongo, a family friend, was appointed as South Sudan's Minister of Federal Affairs in March 2020, while Kyle was serving as a Page in the U.S. Senate.

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As South Sudan ponders path for its young government, future public servants share ideas

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This project, independent of the U.S. Senate and its Page program, by established rules, could not begin until after the Senate Page Spring session ended on June 1, 2020.

On June 6, at Kyle's request, Minister Wongo agreed to sponsor Kyle's Federalism project.

Kyle asked other Pages to join him, writing essays regarding Federalism in the U.S. that could help South Sudan, formerly the state of southern Sudan, which gained independence from Sudan in 2011. This followed years of wars.

After the British decolonized Sudan, due to the lessening of fights in the region and an attempt to force Sudan's Arab/Islamic culture on Southern Sudan, a civil war ensued from 1955 to 1972.

Another war from 1985 to 2005, resulted in granting Southern Sudan more autonomy.

On July 9, 2011, the Republic of South Sudan proclaimed and was granted independence from Sudan.

The most recent resolution, the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity, signed on Feb. 2, 2020, focused on establishing federalism and a new constitution.

Federalism included the separation of State and Local powers from National Powers, to include wealth sharing with this. "Goal [being] achieved through adoption, education and implementation of federalism."

In June, Kyle and the pages met via Zoom. "We summarized the project and divided up the work," Kyle said.

"Our first task was getting together a Power Point that we would present to the MoFedA, detailing the objectives and purpose of the project."

With Minister Wongo's full support, Kyle added, "We then began writing our essays. By late July, each of us had two-three essays and a total count of 20 essays for everyone." Mark and Ashley Teague, a former NC, Fall, 2017 Senate Page, acted as advisors.

The projects' 10 Pages established committees and developed ideas to accomplish the goal.

Due to Covid-19 concerns, Mallory Slucher, Phoebe McChesney, Sam Verstandig, Hunter Teague, and Kyle canceled their plan to travel to South Sudan for an in-person presentation to Minister Wongo.

The following cites the presenting Pages, their Top 10 Ideas



Spring 2020 session Senate Pages with Vice President, Mike Pence while serving in Washington, DC

Courtesy Photo

presented through Zoom, the Pages' sponsoring senators, republican and democrat, their idea titles and brief explanations.

Eli Cole-Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY), Domestic Ambassadors. "Domestic Ambassadors should be established as pseudo-diplomats within South Sudan, lobbying on behalf of their States."

Peyton Dashiell-Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas.) Taxation and State-based Monetary Policy. "The

importance of dealing with monetary issues through federalism to focus on macro and micro economic policy initiatives."

Andrew Lichtblau-Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD.) Voter Confidence Through Federalism. "The presence of elected officials at local, state and, federal levels enables voters a feeling of connections to their policymakers that increases trust and voter confidence between the government

and its citizens."

Phoebe McChesney-Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL.) Women Serving in Government. "Mandate for female representation within elected state and central government positions, as well as executive-appointed positions."

Blake Simmons-Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK.) Federalism Information Program.

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South Sudan leaders listen to teens' ideas for future

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"Encouraging elected officials and their staff to effectively convey government transparency and information."

Mallory Slucher-Sen. Mich McConnell (R-KY) Age for Voting Rights. "Establishing a Voting Age for Elections."

Hunter Teague-Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC) Lifelong Terms for Supreme Court Justices. "Establishing lifelong terms for judicial nominations to the Supreme Court."

Kyle Thaller-Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA.) The Federalist Letters of South Sudan. "Modeled after The Federalist Papers, a series of essays written and published in the U.S. 13 Colonies during the 1780s and 1790s to promote Federalism."

Andres Vazquez-Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) Popular Vote. "To increase support and legitimacy for Federalism, national elections, with a popular vote, should be established."

Sam Verstandig-Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY) Balance of Power. "The protection of democracy and legislation should be en-

sured through a nonpartisan official who is not in the president's cabinet."

Remaining ideas: "Surremacy & Necessary & Proper Clauses," "Freedom of Expression," "Federal Jurisdiction: Spheres of Power," "Separation of Powers," "Independent Vice Presidency," "Female Voting Rights," "Election of the Council of States," "State and Federal Offices for Senior Elected Officials," "South Sudan Parliamentary Page-Internship Program" and "Environmental Federalism."

Pages also presented all 20 ideas in writing with highlights and essays.

After the Pages' Zoom presentation, Minister Wongo said the Republic of South Sudan is a vast geographical area with a large population with differing ethnicities and a rich culture, which presents challenges, but potential for greatness. He said for a country's unity,

The Federalist Letters of South Sudan

Senate Page	Senate Portrait	Sponsoring Senator	Senate Portrait
<p>Kyle Thaller Spring-2020 Desired Career Path: Elected Office</p>		<p>Senator Mark Warner D-Virginia Vice-Chair of Senate Intelligence Committee</p>	

Modeled after the *The Federalist Papers*, Federalist Papers were a series of essays written and published in the U.S. Thirteen Colonies during the 1780s and 1790s to promote Federalism

Kyle Thaller presenting a slide of himself and Senator Mark Warner, his sponsoring Senator, during a Zoom presentation and his idea of "The Federalist Letters of Sudan" to South Sudan Government officials

a government that promotes justice and freedom for all, is necessary, where states and local governments, through a constitution, are given autonomy to manage their own affairs.

Minister Wongo cited the importance of the Pages' recommendations, concluding, "I thank all the pages, and particularly Kyle,

for inviting us to participate in this Zoom conference and all the people who are right now attending this Zoom meeting, and particularly the government officials of the United States."

"I really feel honored to be a part of this Zoom and to get to participate in this meeting. I will say you are already the ambassadors of South Sudan in promoting peace

and unity and the prosperity of this country. So, thank you so much."

In late September Kyle, who will continue to participate in his high school classes virtually, and his dad, Mark, headed to South Sudan. Having been accepted as healthcare providers, they will spend a month there, furthering KCC's causes for diabetes relief and Federalism.

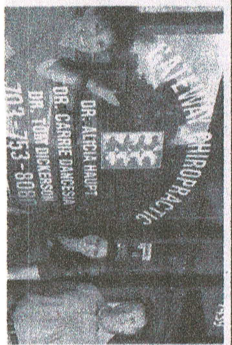


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