

submit an essay that reflects their thoughts about their experience as a page. The winner earns the right to deliver that essay at the closing ceremony for his or her page class. Sam Wohn's essay was selected as the winning essay last month, and it is clear from his essay that this past semester has had a positive and inspirational impact on him and his fellow pages.

It is a distinct honor to be chosen as a Senate page, and the work that this page class has done is valued by all of us in the Senate. I know my colleagues join me in thanking each Senate page for a job well done. I look forward to hearing about their many successes in the future.

I ask unanimous consent to have the text of Sam Wohn's speech at the closing ceremony of his page class last month printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Good morning. It's hard for me to believe that today is our last day of Paging. Part of me feels like I just arrived. I still have so much to learn about our political process and there is still so much more that I want to do in DC. On the other hand, part of me feels like I've been here for years. I'm fully adjusted to dorm life, shortened class periods, and the demands of working at the Senate.

While I had dreamt of nearly every aspect of being a Page before I first stepped foot in Webster Hall, I hadn't imagined having to leave. Knowing that I'll never again have the opportunity to bring a senator a glass of water or to rush back early from dinner to open doors during a rollcall vote is disheartening, but knowing that I'll have the friendship of my fellow Pages for years to come is encouraging.

The other Pages from all around the country have enriched my experience more than anything else. And while I did learn the particulars of parliamentary procedure, the proper way to set up an easel, and how to operate on five hours of sleep a night, the most important lesson of this semester has been the value of teamwork. The bond between all of the Pages made no challenge insurmountable and made no hardship unbearable. Without that support network, I think my experience as a Page would have been very different.

As I was preparing this speech, I came across an email that I sent to my parents in the summer after my freshman year. I described the Page Program as a "flawless utopia" in that email. After taking Advanced Composition this semester I know that my word choice, "flawless utopia," was a little redundant, but I think you get the idea—I had high expectations. I expected nothing short of an amazing experience, and my experience was nothing short of amazing.

Yet, it wouldn't have been as rewarding if it wasn't as challenging as it was. The weeks when I didn't get done with work until ten o'clock at night were the most memorable. I'll never forget the last night of rollcall votes when the senate was in session until after midnight or the last day of legislative business when Senator Levin showed all of the Pages his favorite signatures inside the desks on the floor. I worked long hours, but it certainly didn't seem like work.

I consider this semester a gift. I feel so fortunate to have been a student in each of my teacher's classrooms, to have made so many

great friends, and to have played a role in the functioning of the world's most powerful legislative body. This semester has been a gift of knowledge from my teachers, a gift of friendship from all of the other pages, and a gift of new awareness and perspective that I gained from the many responsibilities all of us Pages shared at the Senate and at Webster Hall.

Like most gifts in Washington, this one has strings attached. As former Pages, we'll have obligations that we didn't have before. Our firsthand knowledge of the legislative process obligates us to stay informed of current events, our new awareness of some of the deep injustices in the world obligates us to do what we can to address them, and our work experiences obligate us to share our many stories with friends and family.

Many people have told me that a semester of Paging is similar to the first semester of college. I can only hope that my college experience is as memorable as the last four and a half months. It has been an honor and privilege to serve with you all. I will miss you and yet I know that we are inexorably connected for a lifetime.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT BALL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, all of us who knew Robert Ball are saddened by his death last week. For many of us in Congress and for tens of millions of Americans in recent decades, Bob Ball was Mr. Social Security. He deserves immense credit not only for his indispensable leadership in making it the most successful and most beloved social program in the nation's history, but also for doing so much over the years to keep it that way when some in high places sought to undermine it.

President Kennedy named Bob as Commissioner of Social Security in 1962, the same year I came to the Senate, and I know my brother would regard him as one of his finest appointments. Bob's leadership was indispensable in maintaining the strength of Social Security in the 1960s and dramatically expanding it to include Medicare and disability benefits. Countless times over the years, I have benefited from Bob's extraordinary wisdom, experience and friendship.

Bob stepped down as Commissioner in 1973, but he never really retired. He was a key member of the Greenspan Commission on Social Security reform in the early 1980s, and in 1986 he founded the National Academy of Social Insurance, whose studies and publications have been an invaluable policy resource for all of us in Congress on Social Security, Medicare, and other important social programs such as workers' compensation and unemployment insurance. Through its awards and internships, the Academy has inspired many young people in government, the private sector and universities to devote themselves to these issues as he did.

As recently as last fall, at the age of 93, Bob was sending out to his extensive mailing list his ideas for protecting and financing Social Security, backed up, as they always were, by sound cost estimates provided by loyal Social Security employees who are still deeply inspired by Bob.

I will miss Bob very much, and I extend my deepest condolences to his wife Doris and all his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Bob Ball was one of a kind. Few if any in the long history of our country have done so much for so many for so long.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that last Friday's obituary in the New York Times on Bob Ball be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Feb. 1, 2008]

ROBERT M. BALL IS DEAD AT 93; LED SOCIAL SECURITY

(By Dennis Hevesi)

Robert M. Ball, the commissioner of Social Security in the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon administrations, an architect of Medicare and an influential opponent of privatizing Social Security, died Wednesday at his home in Bowie, Md. He was 93.

The cause was congestive heart failure, his son, Jonathan, said.

"Bob Ball left an indelible mark on the Social Security program and the agency in that he played a critical role in the establishment of Medicare," the current commissioner, Michael J. Astrue, said Wednesday in a statement. "His commitment to Social Security was unequaled."

Mr. Ball was commissioner from 1962 to 1973, but his advocacy for preserving the program went well beyond his retirement from public service.

In 1981, he represented the speaker of the House, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., Democrat of Massachusetts, on the National Commission on Social Security Reform.

Called the Greenspan Commission, for its chairman, Alan Greenspan, who later became chairman of the Federal Reserve, it was created by President Ronald Reagan at a time when Social Security faced financial problems. High inflation and high unemployment were significantly decreasing revenues.

Mr. Reagan wanted a report by the end of 1982, but the commission was deadlocked along partisan lines. Behind the scenes, Mr. Ball negotiated with James A. Baker III, Mr. Reagan's chief of staff, and Richard G. Darman, a deputy Treasury secretary.

Weeks before the deadline, they came up with a compromise, a complex balance of tax increases and benefit cuts that was acceptable to the president and to Mr. O'Neill. Those 1983 amendments remain the most recent substantial changes to the system.

In 1996, Mr. Ball was a member of a Social Security advisory council that was considering partial privatization of the system, a precursor to the broader plan that President Bush would propose eight years later. The council chairman, Edward M. Gramlich, a Federal Reserve board member, favored the plan. But Mr. Ball managed to place so many other issues before the council that privatization was kept off the table.

Still, privatization became a centerpiece of Mr. Bush's re-election campaign in 2004. The president wanted to allow workers to divert part of their Social Security payroll taxes into private accounts. Opponents, including Mr. Ball, said the Plan would leave the system under-financed.

"Bob Ball essentially set up a war room in his living room; a phone, a fax machine and his big Rolodex," Thomas N. Bethell, the editor of Mr. Ball's 2000 book, "Insuring the Essentials: Bob Ball on Social Security" (Century Foundation Press), said on Thursday. "He wrote position papers, broadsides and papered Capitol Hill with them."

Mr. Ball said the system was not facing financial disaster, as the president contended, and could be strengthened by, among other measures, raising the level of wages that could be taxed for Social Security, which is currently capped at \$102,000. With Democrats in the majority since the elections of 2006, Congress has not addressed privatization.

Robert D. Reischauer, a former director of the Congressional Budget Office, said Mr. Ball's influence was potent. "For years he has been one of the strongest defenders of the existing structure," Mr. Reischauer said Thursday. "He provided the intellectual firepower to those who want to preserve it."

Robert Myers Ball was born in Manhattan on March 28, 1914, the son of Archey and Laura Crump Ball. His father was a Methodist minister. Mr. Ball graduated from Wesleyan University with a degree in English in 1935, and an An official for three presidents and an architect of Medicare, year later earned a master's degree there in economics.

Besides his son, Jonathan, of Cazenovia, N.Y., Mr. Ball is survived by his wife of 71 years, the former Doris McCord; a daughter, Jacqueline Ball Smith of Meredith, N.H.; three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Mr. Ball first worked as a Social Security field assistant in New Jersey in 1939. In 1947 and 1948, he was staff director of the Senate Finance Committee's advisory council on Social Security, playing a crucial role in shaping legislation that significantly expanded coverage and benefits. In 1949, he rejoined the Social Security Administration and began rising through the ranks. President John F. Kennedy appointed him commissioner in 1962.

As commissioner, he played significant roles in creating and winning enactment of Medicare, which provides health insurance to people 65 and over, and the Social Security disability program.

Recently, Mr. Ball had called on all presidential candidates to vow not to cut Social Security benefits. Last October, in an op-ed article in *The Washington Post*, he wrote: "Social Security is the nation's most effective antipoverty program. But it's much more than that. For every worker it provides a solid base on which to try to build an adequate level of retirement income. To weaken that foundation would be grossly irresponsible."

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the importance of the National Defense University, NDU, and its contribution to our national security. Since 1976, the NDU has been the premier center for Joint Professional Military Education. Under the direction and leadership of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, NDU provides an educational and research environment to prepare future leaders of the armed services, the Department of State, other civilian agencies, and allied countries for high-level policy, command, and staff responsibilities. In addition, a limited number of students from private industry attend the university. Members of both Houses of Congress have benefitted from interactions with students and experts on the NDU campus. Students are selected for their leadership potential and many NDU alumni have gone on to senior leadership positions in their service, agency, or country.

NDU is a center for joint, multinational, and interagency education. It is comprised of the National War College, NWC; Industrial College of the Armed Forces, ICAF; Joint Forces Staff College, JFSC; Information Resources Management College, IRMC; School for National Security Executive Education, SNSEE; Institute for National Strategic Studies, INSS; Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, CSWMD; Center for Technology and National Security Policy, CTNSP; Institute for National Security Ethics and Leadership; and five special programs: Capstone/Pinnacle/Keystone, Joint Reserve Affairs Center, JRAC; International Student Management Office, ISMO; Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellows Program, SDCFP; and the NATO Staff Officer Orientation Course, NSOOC.

With facilities located in Washington, DC, and Norfolk, VA, more than 1,000 people attend university courses and programs on any given day. NDU is an accredited graduate-level university awarding approximately 600 masters degrees each year. Through agreements with a number of universities, IRMC students can earn 15 graduate credits for work completed at NDU.

At NDU, students are taught how to think—not what to think. The curriculum combines information technology, classroom experience, and experiential learning. Through lecture programs, students gain important insights from top military, government, industry, and international leaders to include the President of the United States, Cabinet-level officials, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, commanders from major military commands, Members of Congress, civilian leaders, and foreign ministers of defense. Speakers talk frankly with students under the University's nonattribution policy allowing a free exchange of ideas.

Annually, NDU's outreach efforts include more than 500 conferences, symposia, and workshops; 20,000 visitors; 120 faculty and staff publications; and 350 conference presentations by university faculty and staff to both national and international audiences.

The award-winning NDU Press produces numerous publications, which address national security issues. The NDU Library with a collection of more than 500,000 bound items, audiovisual materials, classified documents, and on-line services is an extensive source for information about national security policy, military strategy, defense resource management, and industry studies.

The National Defense University is a significant and valuable institution for the development of leaders for America's national security needs.

#### DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Defense Ad-

vanced Research Projects Agency on its 50th anniversary. Today, DARPA celebrates 50 years of innovation and dedication to America's security.

After the Soviet launch of Sputnik, President Dwight D. Eisenhower was determined to ensure this nation was never again surprised by the technological accomplishments of an adversary. On this day in 1958, a central research and development organization, known then as the Advanced Research Projects Agency, or ARPA, and unlike any organization in the world, was created within the Department of Defense.

From the very beginning, its mission has been to ensure that the United States Armed Forces have access to the most advanced war fighting capabilities by developing ideas that many would consider too risky to implement. DARPA's mission is about making smart investments on high-payoff opportunities, and it has been very successful.

Over the past 50 years, DARPA has delivered to our country innovative technological achievements that have given American Forces never-before-seen capabilities. I also note that this achievement has not come without tremendous sacrifice by thousands of DARPA employees and their families as they worked long days to solve challenging scientific matters.

DARPA's notable achievements include early ballistic missile defense, stealth aircraft technology, unmanned aerial vehicles, and autonomous navigation. The benefits of DARPA's efforts have evolved in many ways, from the rocket engines that powered the first manned space flight to the smallest microelectronics in our cell phones today. DARPA also helped develop the Internet, and built the small receivers that made the global positioning system data easily accessible—both have changed the ways our forces operate, and have also changed the lives of all Americans for the better. Entire industries have developed from early DARPA-funded research in core technologies such as material sciences, microelectronics, photonics, and information technology.

I congratulate DARPA for its service to our Nation. The Agency's commitment and contributions over the past 50 years have made DARPA the crown jewel in our nation's national security and we look forward to the achievements they will continue to make for future generations.

As DARPA begins its work for the next 50 years, it is important that we do everything possible to help DARPA continue its tradition of excellence, and thus keep our Nation strong.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I was unable to cast my vote on Thursday, February 7, 2008. As a result,