

# Thune urges Girls Staters to serve with purpose

By Travis Gulbrandson  
travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

During his visit with the 2012 South Dakota Girls State attendees, Sen. John Thune (R) said they need to commit themselves to three points in order to be successful leaders: Excellence, character and service.

The senator made his comments in the Aalfs Auditorium on the USD campus Thursday morning.

In discussing excellence, Thune clarified that he didn't mean "perfection." "Really, excellence is making the most out of what you've been given," he said. "Everybody here has some God-given abilities, gifts, talents. They may be different for all of us. Not everybody's a scholar, not everybody's a musician, not everybody's an athlete, but everybody has something that they can contribute, that they can use to make the world a better place.

"Excellence has to do with making that most of that ability," he said.

To illustrate this, Thune related an incident that occurred when he was on his high school basketball team his senior year.

One point behind with five seconds to go in the fourth quarter, Thune received a pass and shot. And missed.

"I'm sitting in the locker room after the game ... because I really felt like I had let my teammates down," he said. "And my coach comes up to me and taps me on the shoulder and says, 'John, it's time to get on the bus. And by the way, track starts next week.'"

Thune said his coach new he hated track, "but he was sending me a very



U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-SD) talks Thursday, May 31, about the value of good citizenship while addressing Girls State delegates on the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion.

(Photo by David Lias)

important message, and that is, 'I know you played as hard as you could, I know you gave it everything that you have. It didn't work out ... but there's always another opportunity.'

A commitment also is important, Thune told the Girls Staters. "Character has to do with the kind of person that you are, the quality, the

attributes that you have as an individual," he said. "Are you honest? Are you fair? Do you treat other people with respect? Do you play by the rules? Do you take responsibility for your actions?"

Acting with character may mean not doing the "popular thing," Thune said, but it may mean doing the right thing.

"Character is what defines you as a person. It's how you'll be remembered after you're gone," he said.

Finally, Thune said the girls should make a commitment to service and serving others.

"Ultimately, leadership is really about serving," he said. "We talk about public service, but the reality is, that is what it's all about. If you're looking at any venue of life ... there are all these opportunities, no matter what career path you choose, no matter where you are in life, to serve other people."

It could be as simple as helping someone with their yard work, or helping friends when they have problems, he said.

Thune cited the book, "A Purpose Driven Life," by Rick Warren.

"The first sentence in that book is, 'It's not about you,'" he said. "Every single day I've tried to remember that."

He added that he hoped the attendees would take advantage of the experiences they gain throughout the week.

"This is a great opportunity for you to come to Girls State (and) learn about the political process," Thune said. "Obviously somebody in your community has recognized leadership abilities that you have. They have identified that in you, and I hope that you'll continue to build on that ... in your lives as you move on from here."



South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard urges Girls State delegates to dream big during his speech Friday at the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion.

(Photo by David Lias)

## ■ JOHNSON

From Page 01

gives patients more control and Washington less control, and to keep up the fight to stop Washington's war on the family farm," Noem said in a written statement.

Barth called Varilek to concede the primary and congratulate him.

"I gave him some shots and he kept on going. I think he will do a good job in the fall," Barth said.

The Democratic candidates, both of whom are residents of the state's largest city of Sioux Falls, took different approaches in their campaigns.

Varilek, 37, touted working his way through several colleges before spending nearly seven years working for Johnson, the last five in South Dakota as the senator's economic development director. He said that experience allowed him to "get to know the communities, and also learn from Sen. Johnson how to do the job effectively."

**JOHNSON STILL UNDECIDED**  
Johnson met with local media in the lobby of the new Beacom Hall of the USD

Beacom School of Business on the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion. He later was given a tour of the new building by Mike Keller, dean of the business school.

The senator, who grew up in Vermillion, said he has yet to make a decision on his own political future.

"It's too early to tell," he said, when asked if he plans to seek another Senate term. "I'm up in 2014, and we're yet in 2012, so I'll wait and see."

He believes that the campaign for the presidency that pits President Barack Obama against his Republican challenger, Mitt Romney, will be "close and tough."

"I think it's too early to say what will happen," Johnson said. "But legislatively, Congress is too often known for not getting things done in an election year. We'll see what happens. We have had a rush of things completed this year – it doesn't look as bad as all of that – and we'll be making progress, as far as I'm concerned, throughout the year."

Johnson hopes that the new Farm Bill being considered by Congress will be passed by the Senate without facing a filibuster.

"The bill looks good from a northern agricultural perspective," he said. "But the

southerners aren't satisfied, as of yet. The southerners have the rice and cotton and peanuts, and they're not happy about this farm bill. We in the Northern Plains are pretty satisfied with the Senate farm bill. As you know, the farm bill can be held up by one person in the Senate, much less a filibuster, so we'll see what happens.

"We need bipartisanship on the farm bill. It's always been that way," Johnson said. "It's less partisan and more regional, as far as attitudes toward the farm bill. Republicans and Democrats in the north are all together, and unfortunately, Republicans and Democrats in the south don't see it that way."

Johnson said he hopes the farm bill is approved sometime this fall. Otherwise action would have to be taken during the lame duck session of Congress following the November election.

If Congress still failed to pass the legislation in 2012, the current bill's provisions would need to be extended into 2013, he said.

Economic uncertainty in several European countries, Johnson said, is currently casting a pall on fiscal recovery efforts in the United States.

"Anything can happen that is beyond the president's

parents and my siblings all live, to be within a little closer day's car ride to see grandma and grandpa. Those were all very attractive for me," she said. "I had such a great childhood growing up in the state, and I'm excited that my girls are going to get to spend time here, too."

Williams earned Academic All-Big 12 honors during the 1997-98 season at Nebraska. She was a four-year letterwinner for the Huskers.

Williams has one sibling who is in the coaching ranks in South Dakota, Emilee Thiesse, an assistant coach at South Dakota State. Williams was on the Nebraska-Kearney staff as a graduate assistant during part of Thiesse's career for the Lopers.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at [twitter.com/aceman904](https://twitter.com/aceman904)

control," he said. "But the lesson that Europe is learning is that they cannot solve their (economic) problems through austerity alone. They must combine austerity with growth to be satisfied with the outcome, and the president is doing that quite well – not good enough, but he's doing his best.

"We'll see what the combination of growth and austerity does as opposed to the Europeans, the Germans especially, who want austerity alone," Johnson said.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

## ■ COACH

From Page 01

22-12. "Part of the reason I was drawn to that job is the unique opportunity to build something from scratch and know, if we were able to build something special, it was because of the hard work that we put into it," Williams said. "To be involved with every decision that was made, to get that program to where it is, it just was a unique opportunity. I really value and appreciated that. I think it has really prepared me well for the challenges I am going to face at USD."

Williams inherits a program that is coming off a second straight WNIT appearance. The Coyotes ride back-to-back 20-win seasons into their first year of NCAA post-season eligibility.

But that is not all that excited the 1998 University of Nebraska graduate about the opportunity.

"It doesn't take much to sense the excitement that's surrounding USD athletics right now," she said. "You can feel that commitment. You can see. I admired from afar just what they've been able to do in such a short time at the Division I level."

Advertise statewide in S.D. newspapers



Contact your local newspaper or S.D. Newspaper Assoc. for details.

1-800-658-3697 | [www.sdna.com/advertise](http://www.sdna.com/advertise)

Today I am a guardian.

The Year of the Nurse.

Time spent working in a nursing home is all Jodi Lundgaard, LPN, needed to inspire her. She is a guardian. Making meaningful connections with her patients. Being strong for them when they feel their weakest. That's a true nurse's passion. It's work that's not for everyone. For Jodi and all of our nurses, we thank you for your commitment to our patients.

[yearofthenurse.sanfordhealth.org](http://yearofthenurse.sanfordhealth.org)



Jodi Lundgaard, LPN

**SANFORD**  
HEALTH

100-11395-4011 5/12