

Student Organizations

There are a number of clubs and organizations available to students. Three national organizations Skills USA-Vocational Clubs of America (VICA), Future Farmers of America (FFA), and 4-H have local chapters serving the interest of welding and agriculture students. Each of these organizations provides students with opportunities for academic and professional development.

Just being a good welder is not enough to be successful in today's competitive labor market. It is true that you must have good academic and vocational skills to get a good job, but it is your interpersonal skills that help you keep the job and advance. How you get along in peer groups, exhibit leadership, and interact and communicate with others can be as important as your ability to weld. Many businesses look at both your school work and your extracurricular activities when considering you for employment.

Joining and being active in Skills USA-VICA, FFA, and/or 4-H will give you a chance to develop these essential skills along with having a lot of fun. You will be a part of an organization that has a long, rich heritage of community involvement. Being involved with your community will both enrich your community and your life.

FFA's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career suc-

cess through agricultural education. They have nearly a half million members in more than 7,000 chapters in all 50 states. For more information about FFA go to their Web site at www.ffa.org.

By tailoring its programs to meet the needs of individual communities, 4-H is able to offer relevant, cutting-edge programs. The diversity of these programs reflects not only the needs of youth and community, but also 4-H's ongoing commitment to create opportunities for youth to make the most of their individual strengths and reach their full potential through activity involvement in their communities. There are nearly three-quarters of a million 4-H members in all 50 states. For more information on 4-H go to their Web site at www.4-h.org.

The SkillsUSA-VICA creed includes the belief in the dignity of work and the American way of life; in education and in fair play; satisfaction is achieved by good work, and high moral and spiritual standards. There are more than a quarter million members in 13,000 chapters in all 50 states and 4 territories.

Each year the VICA sponsors a series of welding skill contests for its student members. The contests allow students from around the nation to test their skills against other students. Local contests lead to state or regional contests, then to national, and on to the International Skill Olympics.

For more information about Skills USA-VICA visit their web site at www.skillsusa.org.