



Contact:

Starke County Economic Development Foundation

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SCILL HOLDS GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Approximately 240 graduates, family members, and other supporters were on hand recently to honor the accomplishments of the 2014 Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL) graduates in Automotive Technology and Welding Technology. Among the guests in attendance were Brian Spaulding, Field Representative for Congresswoman Jackie Walorski, State Senator Ed Charbonneau and State Senator Jim Arnold. A letter was read from U.S. Senator Joseph Donnelly.

Twelve students graduated from the Welding program, now two years old. Two-year participants in the program earn 15 credits at Ivy Tech Community College at no cost to the student. The curriculum includes a special program by the American Welding Society (AWS) known as SENSE (School Excelling through National Skill Standards Education) to measure learned welding knowledge and earns student's a certificate that can be presented to future employers evidencing that this rigorous curriculum has been followed and completed successfully. All 7 of this year's 2-year graduates in welding technology passed all 9 modules of SENSE. In addition, eligible welding students are enrolled in half-day paid internships with area industries beginning their second semester and attend class on the remaining 4 weekdays. This has resulted in several summer positions as well as job offers for full employment to those students who are not continuing on in educational studies. The 12 welding technology graduates earned 35 AWS certifications. More than \$3,000 in scholarships were presented to the graduates by Instructors Andy Odle and Matt Matlock. Tyler Wilke of Knox High School was named Top Welder.

Twenty-five (25) students graduated from the Automotive Technology Program. Automotive Technology students earn 14 hours of dual credit from Ivy Tech Community College at no cost to the student. ASE (American Service Excellence) certification examinations are administered in 9 different content areas for ASE Student Certifications. The 25 graduates earned 109 ASE certifications. Six seniors earned ASE certifications in all 9 areas. Now in its 13th year, more than 600 students have taken at least one year of the SCILL Automotive Technology Program and have gone on to higher education or have successfully entered the workforce. New Instructors Scott Manns and Josh Holdread, themselves graduates of the SCILL Automotive Technology program, presented the graduates with scholarships valued at \$4,500. The Top Gun winner (top 2-year student) was Gregory Davis of Argos High School.

Janice Hernandez, Regional Operations Manager at Integrity Trade Services in Knox, was the featured speaker for the graduation. Ms Hernandez challenged the students stating “the choices you make today will follow you tomorrow.” Hernandez has assisted in the establishment of the welding internship program. Beginning this coming year, an intern program will be implemented in Automotive Technology.

Both SCILL programs are part of the North Central Area Vocational Cooperative (NCAVC), serving 10 school corporations in 4 counties, including Starke County’s three school corporations.

Longtime NCAVC Executive Director, Jerry Hollenbaugh, was honored as a part of the program on his retirement and was presented gifts fabricated by the SCILL students for his support of SCILL programs. Hollenbaugh’s 37 years as NCAVC Executive Director have created 20 strong vocational programs throughout his district.

ABOUT STARKE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The Starke County Economic Development Foundation is a not-for-profit local economic development organization (LEDO) providing economic development opportunities on behalf of Starke County, Indiana, the City of Knox, and the Town of Hamlet through the development of industrial parks, rail spurs, greenfield sites, shovel-ready sites, infrastructure, and workforce development. For more information regarding Starke County Economic Development Foundation, visit www.scedf.biz.

ABOUT STARKE COUNTY INITIATIVE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

SCILL (Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning) was created by Starke County Economic Development Foundation in 1996 to assure employers that a qualified workforce would be available in Starke County. SCILL, working in conjunction with area employers, provides a customized, innovative training program that meets the needs of area employers and employees and also offers high quality vocational educational programs in automotive technology and

welding. For more details regarding Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning, visit www.scill.biz.

ABOUT NORTH CENTRAL AREA VOCATIONAL COOPERATIVE

The North Central Area Vocational Cooperative coordinates efforts with community businesses and industries, as well as colleges, to create vocational training opportunities for ten area high schools in a three-county area. For more information regarding North Central Area Vocational Cooperative, visit www.ncavc.info.

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