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Indiana FFA Association

Records, 1910s-2006

Mss 54

Indiana FFA Association Records, 1910s-2006

Mss 54

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ABSTRACT

The Indiana FFA Association, formed in 1929, was the 19th state association chartered by the National FFA Organization, an agricultural education organization consisting of 52 chartered state associations including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Each state association is governed by its own constitution approved by the National FFA Organization and is comprised of chapters within secondary schools throughout the state. In 1968 the Indiana FFA Leadership Center was established in Trafalgar, Indiana, to house leadership activities, the State FFA Officers, and state staff. By 2004, the Indiana FFA Association included 9,000 members in 188 chapters statewide.

ACCESS

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ACQUISITION

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HISTORICAL NOTE

The Indiana FFA Association, formed in 1929, was the 19th state association chartered by the National FFA Organization, an agricultural education organization consisting of 52 chartered state associations including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Each state association is governed by its own constitution approved by the National FFA Organization and is comprised of chapters within secondary schools throughout the state. In order to receive a charter from the national organization, a state association must first have 125 members and four chapters. The state association responsibilities to the national organization include annual reporting to the national office, operating within the parameters of the constitution of the national organization, and participating in national activities.

When the Indiana FFA Association was founded, its headquarters were located on the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. The FFA operated as a branch of the Office of the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, a division of the State Department of Public Instruction (now called the Indiana Department of Education). The State Supervisor of Agricultural Education assumed the role of State FFA Advisor and a Teacher-Trainer at the Purdue University Campus was chosen to serve as the State Executive Secretary/Treasurer. In 1969 the Leadership Training Center opened in Trafalgar, Indiana, to house the administrative operations of the organization and to serve as a training camp for the members of the state association. Since its construction, the center has grown to include office space, camping facilities, hiking trails and swimming, and a residence for the state officers.

Today the association continues to maintain strong ties with the Indiana Department of Education through the Office of Career and Technical Education. The office determines the requirements for the school curriculum in agricultural education and works in conjunction with the FFA and other agricultural education organizations in the state to provide students with opportunities to meet and exceed state education standards. The FFA is part of a three-tiered program of agricultural education that includes classroom instruction, hands-on experience, and community-based programs.

The FFA is a student-led organization supervised by adult leaders designated by the Indiana Department of Education. These leaders, along with the state FFA officers, form the Executive Committee responsible for conducting the business of the organization. Each year members elect seven state officers to serve as student leaders and goodwill ambassadors for the state organization. The officers are: President, Northern Region Vice President, Southern Region Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, and Sentinel. Under the supervision of the State Advisor and Executive Director, the officers travel the state visiting donors, supporters, and local FFA chapters. The officers act as mentors to members and are responsible for conducting leadership training camps throughout the year helping students to develop skills in leadership, public speaking, and parliamentary procedure through skits, lecture, and recreation.

The FFA divides the state into four sections comprised of three districts. Each section has a Section Director, a student elected by members, and a Section Advisor, the chapter advisor of the Section Director. The Section Director presides at section meetings of district officers and helps maintain contact within its districts. Each district elects six officers that travel throughout their areas providing direction and helping members stay in touch with the larger organization. The districts each hold conventions and award events in preparation for the state convention.

Members gather annually to conduct the organization's business at the Indiana State FFA Convention held on the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. This convention is the culmination of the year's events for the association and includes business sessions as well as a variety of award events such as the State FFA Degree, public speaking contest, proficiency awards, and the Stars Over Indiana Pageant. At the end of the convention the new state officers are elected by the delegates to lead the organization.

As part of the Indiana Department of Education's three-tiered approach to agricultural education, the Indiana FFA Association works to provide a successful program for its members. The first tier in this program is classroom instruction. Nearly 200 FFA chapters are located in secondary schools throughout the state. Each chapter has its own officers and is chartered by the state association. Students in grades seven through twelve taking classes in agriculture are eligible for membership in the organization and may maintain an active membership until the fourth year after their graduation from high school. Classroom instruction provides the background knowledge for participation in award events and supervised instruction.

The second tier of the agricultural program, hands-on experience, is accomplished through Supervised Agricultural Experience Projects (SAE). Through SAE projects, students develop and maintain their own business operation under the direction of an advisor and participate in competitions that reward skill in their areas of expertise. Awards include proficiency areas such as livestock, horticulture, agribusiness, landscape design, and a variety of other areas related to agriculture, agribusiness, or agriscience. Students are awarded degrees that signify their level of involvement with the organization and skill in their SAE projects. Degrees begin at the Discovery FFA Degree level for new members and advance to the Greenhand Degree, Chapter Degree, and State FFA Degree. The highest degree level, the American FFA Degree, is awarded by the national organization.

The FFA also succeeds in promoting the third tier, community-based programs, through its service activities. Throughout the year, FFA members participate in activities that place them in direct contact with their community. Through partnerships in local grade schools, members serve as mentors to younger students and help educate them about agriculture. The State FFA Association also sponsors the FFA Pavilion at the Indiana State Fair each year. The first FFA exhibit opened at the State Fair in the 1960s and quickly expanded to a greenhouse in the 1970s and a children's barnyard in the 1980s. In 1993 the Professional Greens of Agriculture, an 18-hole agricultural literacy golf course,

built and operated by FFA members opened. The success of the golf course and FFA exhibits at the fair made possible the construction of the FFA Pavilion in 1999 to house FFA exhibits, the golf course, and Value-Added Country Market offering students a chance to educate the community about the agricultural industry in the state.

REFERENCES

Indiana FFA Association Website: <http://www.indianaffa.org/index.htm>

Indiana FFA...Bringing the Past Forward: Celebrating 75 Years of Indiana FFA.
Evansville: M.T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2005.

RELATED MATERIALS

National FFA Organization Records, 1916-2000, Ruth Lilly Special Collections and Archives, IUPUI University Library, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Indiana FFA Association Records document the history of a state association of the National FFA Organization. The collection details its programs and activities, governance, and relationship to the national organization. While the Indiana FFA Association began in 1929, the majority of the records in this collection originate in the 1960s when the Indiana FFA Leadership Center opened and provides documentation through the 1990s.

Executive Committee Records, 1962-2000, include the records produced by the governing body of the organization and are comprised of minutes, committee information, and the state constitution. Since the minutes of the executive committee cover only a limited timeframe (the 1960s and 1970s), little information about the governing body of the state association is available. More information about the Executive Committee is located in the association's newsletters. The *Indiana Future Farmer* contains actions of the committee with regard to award requirements during the 1940s and 1950s and the *Hoosier Envoy* contains copies of the executive committee minutes during the 1980s.

Administration Records, 1929-2001, contain information about the internal office operations of the Indiana FFA Association and includes correspondence from the Executive Secretary/Treasurer, state officer records, information about the development of the State Leadership Center, audits and financial statements, and chapter information. The records of the Executive Secretary/Treasurer are not complete, but offer a look into the activities of the office through correspondence, convention activities, and reports from a limited period of time. The ledgers kept by the secretary/treasurer help track the involvement of chapters by the record of dues and awards given by the state.

Another source of information about the leadership of the organization is the state officer records. The directory of state officers lists the officers and their positions from the organization's beginning in 1929 through 1978. Biographical information, officer activities, and the names of later officers are located in the newsletters, *Indiana Future Farmer* and *Hoosier Envoy*. More detailed information about the officer team during the 1970s and 1980s is also available in the scrapbooks they produced commemorating their year of service to the organization.

Other records reflect the relationship of the state organization to local areas and include information from high schools, chapters, and the State Alumni Association. The chapter information includes chapter directories and samples of chapter charters. The chapter directories include statistics and can be used to determine how long a chapter has been in existence. Further information about the internal operation of the organization is available in the annual reports to the National FFA Organization also found in this series.

Indiana FFA Foundation Records, 1954-2001, contain records dealing with the fund raising branch of the organization and include annual reports, donor lists, executive committee minutes, and information about the foundation kickoff campaigns. The board of directors' files and annual reports contain the best information about the activities of the foundation. Although neither is complete, together the records present a fairly complete history of the foundation's activities from its incorporation through the 1980s. The foundation materials also contain information about the annual fund drives and fund raising for the leadership training center. Further information about the leadership center is located in the administration records.

Award and Program Records, 1930-2003, include information related to the contests and programs sponsored by the Indiana FFA Association. The information includes incomplete lists of state contest winners, award handbooks, and information about Indiana winners in national contests. More information about the names of award winners is available in the State Convention Proceedings and in the state newsletters. Information about the types of awards offered and their requirements is found in the Contests, Awards, and Activities Guide. The newsletters are good sources for information about early state contest guidelines.

The Indiana FFA Association also sponsors a variety of programs independently and in conjunction with the programs of the National FFA Organization. Most of the information about the state organization's programs relates to the state leadership camps and FFA participation at the Indiana State Fair. The program information includes handbooks describing activities, correspondence, and program highlights. This information also highlights the FFA's involvement in the community.

State FFA Convention Records, 1950-2006, contain materials related to the annual convention held at the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, Indiana. The most complete convention records are from the late 1960s and 1970s and consist of proceedings, programs, letters, and award information. Other years' documentation is limited to programs or announcements. These records help identify award winners and

newly elected state officers. Further information about conventions is located in the newsletters and state officer scrapbooks.

State Vocational Education Records, 1913-1985, includes information about the state FFA association's relationship with the Indiana Department of Education. These records help to indicate how that relationship works. These records include reports, minutes, handbooks, and state board information. Two of the most important items in this series are the Annual Report for Vocational Agriculture from the 1950s and 1960s and the State Plan for Vocational Education from the 1970s. These publications offer a detailed look at vocational agriculture curriculum and statistics for that period. Other materials in this section relate to the State Board of Vocational Education, Indiana Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, and some early vocational education bulletins about the development of vocational education and the FFA in the state of Indiana.

Publications, 1946-2004, contain newsletters, directories, and handbooks produced by the Indiana FFA Association. The newsletters contain some of the most important information about the history of the organization. Although the set of state association newsletters incomplete, it covers a large time period (1940s-1980s) and includes information about chapter activities, the executive committee, and state programs.

Other publications include training handbooks and guides, news articles, and directories containing lists of state vocational education leaders and their positions in the state association as well as leaders in vocational agriculture throughout the state.

Scrapbooks, 1970-1993, consist of scrapbooks compiled by members, officers, and local FFA chapters. Eight scrapbooks compiled by the State FFA Officers document the highlights of their year in office through photographs, news articles, and other paraphernalia. This includes information about the state convention, various conferences, trips, and the state fair. This is an excellent place to find information about the officers' activities and responsibilities.

Photographs and Slides, 1910s-2004, document the programs and activities of the Indiana State FFA Association visually through photographs and slides. This is the largest section of the collection and includes every aspect of the FFA experience from the perspective of both the state officer and the local chapter member through camps, state fair, state and national conventions, supervised agriculture experience, and other programs sponsored by the association. Also included in this section are images of the state officers, Indiana members who became national officers, and award winners. Images are generally identified by date and activity.

Audio-Visual Materials, 1971-2004, includes video and audio cassettes and 16 millimeter sound recordings. These recordings consist of convention footage, the Stars Over Indiana Pageant, State FFA Camp activities, state officer highlights, and promotional pieces.

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