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Governor Tim Walz Speaks at Minnesota FFA Convention

Three government officials address about the value and importance of agriculture

Members of the Minnesota FFA Association witnessed the appearances of three of the state's top government officials during the 90th Minnesota FFA Convention Monday, April 29.

Governor Tim Walz, an FFA alumnus himself, spoke to the members at 3M Arena at Mariucci in Minneapolis during the fourth general session Monday evening.

"Thank you for understanding the importance of agriculture," Governor Walz said. "Thank you to the parents and the advisors who make this happens. I am an FFA Alumni, and I am incredibly grateful for the experience I was given in this organization. This was the only place where I was given formal parliamentary procedure training. It's American agriculture that feeds, clothes and fuels our world. Our future depends upon agriculture in Minnesota. I believe in the future of agriculture with a faith born not of words but of deeds."

Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen visited participants during the midday session at 3M Arena at Mariucci, addressing the members as an active FFA supporter.

"I appreciated the opportunity to address the state FFA Convention," Commissioner Petersen said. "We face a lot of challenges in agriculture, but here at the convention you see students who aspire to face those challenges and create opportunities."

Mary Cathryn Ricker, Minnesota commissioner of education, participated in the signing of educational commitments of 20 students who identified themselves as future agricultural educators. The students plan to continue their education at North Dakota State University, South Dakota State University, Southwest Minnesota State University, University of

Minnesota–Twin Cities, the University of Minnesota–Crookston or the University of Wisconsin–River Falls.

Commissioner Ricker also addressed convention attendees during the midday session.

“As I visited different schools of all shapes and sizes, one thing seems to ring true no matter where I am,” Commissioner Ricker said. “Students love career and technical education programs; students love FFA.

I look around this room and see the potential and excitement in your faces,” she said. “I see the leaders of this state and the accomplishments you have already made to carry on the great traditions of FFA.”

During a recent school visit, Commissioner Ricker claimed she was struck by the depth of education the students were receiving and how every student was engaged.

“In FFA, we’re proud to play a part of creating future leaders,” Minnesota FFA Executive Secretary Juleah Tolosky said. “The presence of our current leaders, as part of our convention, affirms to our students that they are viewed as valuable, competent and much-needed assets to our communities, our industry and our state.”

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About Minnesota FFA

FFA is a national organization developing students’ potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education with more than 600,000 members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The Minnesota FFA Association represents nearly 11,000 members and almost 200 high school chapters across the state. Agricultural education engages students through hands-on learning in the classroom, work-based learning opportunities known as Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects and FFA activities.

You can learn more about the experiences of FFA members and supporters by visiting www.mnffa.org and www.ffa.org.