



## Starke County Initiative For Lifelong Learning

### Contact:

#### Starke County Initiative For Lifelong Learning

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## LOCAL STUDENT WINS DISTRICT 13 AMERICAN WELDING SOCIETY (AWS) WELDING SCHOLARSHIP

A 2013 Knox High School graduate, Katlynn Surfus, has been selected as this year's winner of the District 13 American Welding Society (AWS) Welding Scholarship. District 13 encompasses the Chicago area and Northwest Indiana. Katlynn graduated from the Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL) vocational welding program in May, after earning 4 AWS welding certifications. She applied for the scholarship through the AWS website and is the first recipient of this scholarship from Indiana. She will be putting that scholarship to good use in August as she will be attending Ohio Technical College (OTC) in Cleveland, Ohio to further her welding education. She has been using the days between high school graduation and entering OTC by taking an advanced welding program at SCILL this summer. In addition, Katlynn will be competing at the Indiana State Fair in August after having been crowned as 4-H Junior Leader Achievement Royalty at the recently held Starke County 4H Fair.

When asked about the scholarship she stated, "Andy Odle (SCILL Welding Instructor) taught me so much in just one year. I went from knowing nothing about welding to falling in love with welding and wanting to make it my career. Jerry Gurrado (SCILL Coordinator of Student Services and Programs) has encouraged all of us to reach for our dreams and to apply for anything that is available in the way of scholarship help. I applied back in March and I was

thrilled when I was contacted about being the winner.”

The SCILL vocational welding program began in August of 2012 in Knox, Indiana with an opening class of 16, all of whom finished the one year program. All 16 students received at least one AWS certification, and the class as a whole earned 47 such certifications. In addition, all 16 students received 11 hours of college credit from Vincennes University while still enrolled in high schools from 4 different school corporations in 3 counties. The program was developed by a committee of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation as a means of providing workforce skills to meet an acute need for welders, not only in Starke County, but also in the area, and nationally.



**Katlynn Surfus, 2013 Winner of  
District 13 American Welding Society (AWS) Welding Scholarship**

#### **ABOUT SCILL:**

The Starke County Initiative for Lifelong Learning (SCILL), an Internal Revenue Code 501(c) (3) organization, was established by the Board of Directors of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation (SCEDF) in 1996, to create and nurture a trained workforce for the growing industrial base in the County. SCILL’s mission is to assist in meeting the needs of local businesses, industry and the general population and to assist the governmental agencies of Starke County, the City of Knox, the towns of Hamlet and North Judson and local educational institutions in providing education and training to the citizens of Starke County and its neighboring areas.

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