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**64,000 CALIFORNIA FFA MEMBERS HAVE A PLACE TO CALL HOME  
FFA Center Opens in Galt, California**

**Galt, California** - For 79 years members of California Association Future Farmers of America (FFA) have been homeless, but that just changed. Today, the doors of the newly constructed FFA Center in Galt, Calif., officially open to 64,000 members across the state.

More than a thousand high school FFA members, supporters and donors joined dignitaries for the ribbon cutting, dedication and grand opening ceremony at 11:00 a.m.

"FFA members are positive role models for youth in their communities. It is their drive and passion for agriculture and leadership that is an inspiration to others. I'm excited that this much anticipated FFA Center will help provide the resources and accommodations needed to help the organization move even more boldly into the future," stated A.G. Kawamura, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture during the ceremony.

The FFA Center will serve as a leadership development site with state of the art technology for leadership and communication training. It includes laboratory classrooms for curriculum development, administrative offices, meeting rooms and state FFA Officer living facilities. Located on six acres, 20 miles south of Sacramento along Highway 99, the FFA Center will be the hub of operations for the organization and a home for FFA's rich heritage.

The creation of the FFA Center is credited to the vision of the FFA members. FFA is the largest high school student organization in California with 64,000 members and millions of alumni. Students throughout California have worked hard to raise funds for the FFA Center and are proud that work has finally paid off.

"FFA members have always had a desire for a place to call home and we knew it would take a lot of support from the agriculture industry and past and present FFA members," said Jesse Garcia, California State FFA President. "The FFA is like one big family, we all pulled together and now we finally have what we all have been working for."

The FFA Center could not have been completed without help from a few key supporters. More than 600 individuals, companies, organizations and foundations "Believe" in the 64,000 students who are developing personal leadership skills to ensure the future of California agriculture. The "I Believe" campaign was launched in 2002.

The California FFA is proud to complete Phase I of the FFA Center, but there is still work to be done. Members, alumni, and friends of the FFA have come together to raise \$2.3 million. Additional funds to complete this first phase were made available through the USDA Rural Development Communities Program. The goal of the Foundation is to continue to generate financial support to pay the low interest loan and begin the development for Phase II.

"Completing the first phase of the FFA Center is achieving a dream together," said Garcia. "We hope supporters of the FFA will continue to show their generosity by helping us complete this worthy project."

*The mission of the FFA is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Founded in 1928, the California FFA has contributed to the success of millions of Californians. For more information visit [www.caffafoundation.com](http://www.caffafoundation.com).*

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