UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

September 21, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) maintains a close relationship with the career and technical student organizations (CTSOs). We recognize that the past performance and future potential of your organizations are compatible with the challenging objectives of education in the 21st century, and we support your objectives and want to involve the thinking of all of the CTSOs in the improvement of career and technical education. On behalf of OVAE, I welcome the cooperation and support from your organizations in strengthening the goals of *No Child Left Behind* through your effective career technical education programs: stronger accountability for results, more freedom for states and communities, encouraging proven educational methods, and more choices for parents.

OVAE recognizes that the educational programs and philosophies embraced by the following CTSOs as being an integral part of career and technical education instructional programs:

- Business Professionals of America
- DECA
- Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda
- National FFA Organization
- Family, Career and Community Leaders of America
- Health Occupations Students of America
- National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization
- National Young Farmer Educational Association
- Technology Student Association
- SkillsUSA

In addition, OVAE recognizes the concept of total student development as being necessary for all career and technical education students to assume successful roles in society and to enter the labor market. Our office will facilitate technical and supportive services to assist your organizations through state agencies in their efforts to improve the quality and relevance of instruction, develop student leadership, enhance citizenship responsibilities, eliminate sex and race discrimination and stereotyping, and serve students of special populations.

OVAE recognizes that the responsibility for career and technical instructional programs and related activities, including career and technical student organizations, rests with the state and local education agencies. Further, we look forward to working together to increase the principles of *No Child Left Behind* and the President's *American Competitiveness Initiative*.

Sincerely,

Troy R. Justesen, Ed.D.

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Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.