

Kuskokwim Community College reaches 700

Kuskokwim Community College, from the start was given the mandate to serve the bilingual population of Southwestern Alaska. This area is the home of the Southwest Yupik speaking Eskimo people. The Yupik Eskimo make up the largest and

most language-dominant group in Alaska.

Of the 700 students enrolled at Kuskokwim Community College during the 1975-76 school year 90% are Yupik native to this region of Alaska. The first language of the majority of

these students is Yupik.

Kuskokwim Community College began a new educational effort in January 1976. With a grant funded under Title VII, Bilingual Education, to Kuskokwim Community College and Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bethel started a field based, four year, degree oriented, demonstration training program for Yupik Bilingual Teachers, presently involved in teaching a total Yupik curriculum in these schools. Kuskokwim Community College delivered college level education to numerous

village students who cannot attend, full-time, campus training. The training program is unique because college courses are taught right in the bilingual villages during the school year.

Each of the students is a member of the village community and has excellent rapport with parents as well as the children.

The two Kuskokwim Community College instructors traveling to deliver the college courses under the bilingual program are:

Cathy Collier, former BIA teacher who has a B.S. Degree in Education and a Master's Degree both from Utah State University. This is Ms. Collier's second year with the program.

Fred Bigjim, Eskimo from Nome, former AMU Professor, who has a B.Ed from the University of Alaska and a Masters Degree in Education from Harvard University. Bigjim has also attended law school and is now also the Academic Coordinator of the Bilingual Teacher Training Program.