

Tlingit Teacher A. W. Demmert Earns Teacher of Year Award

A Tlingit Indian from Klawock, with over 40 years teaching experience in Alaska, was named last week to the National

Teacher of the Year Honor Roll. Archie W. Demmert, a Tlingit of the Raven Clan, shares this honor with three other teachers

from across the nation.

Demmert, selected earlier this year as Alaska's Teacher of the Year, was one of five finalists in the National Teacher of the Year Award Competition. He is the first American Indian to receive recognition in this program.

In his long career, Demmert has taught in many areas of Alaska. During this period, he has encouraged many of his native students to continue their education.

Many of his students were receptive to his coaching and went on to attain a college education, with some receiving higher degrees.

Demmert fashions himself as both a student and an educator claiming that he learns a lot from his students. He has spent most of his life learning to be an educator.

At the age of 43, he graduated from college. Two years earlier, while a sophomore, the death of his wife left him a widower with two young daughters.

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Archie Demmert

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Periodically returning to school, Demmert earned a masters degree from the University of Alaska at the age of 55.

The selection committee's field researcher, in a report on the Sitka teacher, described Demmert's classes as orderly, but informal. Occasionally, the Tlingit teacher will enthrall his students with tales from Indian legends.

It is said that everyone works hard, not excepting Mr. Demmert.

In his recommendations, the researcher concluded that Archie Demmert is making a "lasting mark on his time."