

Natives undertake work in northern studies

Alaska Natives Elias Leo Kelly of Pilot Station and Phillip Kugzruk of Teller are the recipients of this year's Studentships offered by the Center for Northern Studies in Wolcott, Vt.

This award enables them to participate in the center's nine-month interdisciplinary program. The curriculum provides a broad liberal arts background while preparing students for roles in northern research, resources and wildlife management and policy making.

Kelly and Kugzruk began their studentships in September when they traveled with other students to Newfoundland and Labrador for fieldwork in natural science and exposure to North Atlantic culture and prehistory. The remainder of the fall semester will be spent in Wolcott, a rural Vermont community of about 1,000.

The Center for Northern Studies is strategically located in an area which is physically and biologically subarctic. It is an opportune setting for field study which also offers a chance to experience rural Vermont community life. Montreal, Boston and New York City are all within a day's drive.

During the fall semester concentration is on the physical systems of the North. Then in January, a three-week



intensive course in winter ecology demonstrates how plants and animals adapt to winter in a cold climate.

Spring semester focuses on the social, political and economic aspects of life in the North.

Throughout the year, speakers from business, academic, government and Native organizations discuss topics concerning the entire circumpolar region including Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Scandinavia and Siberia.

This year's studentship recipients are well qualified to participate in the program as well as to teach about their culture and life experiences in the North.

Kelly is a Yup'ik Eskimo from Pilot Station on the Yukon Delta. He has worked with the U.S. Forest Service as a biological technician on forest insect and disease studies in Southeast Alaska, and with the Bureau of Land Management correlating fire situations in Western, Interior and Southcentral Alaska.

He completed a course in forest technology at the Alaska Vocational Technical Center in Seward, and he has also completed two years of study in natural resources at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.

Kelly said he looks forward to talking about Alaska with folks in the Lower 48. He will eventually return North to apply his knowledge and insight toward management of Alaska's natural resource and protection of its fragile and unique ecosystem.

Kugzruk has spent the last six years bolstering the survival skills he learned as a child, building a cabin and working to finance the gear he needs to live in the Bush.

In 1984 he took up part-time residence in his new home near the site of Kauwerak, a village which his ancestors left almost 100 years ago. Since then, he has moved with the seasons, fishing salmon in the summer, caring for his team of 15 sled dogs in winter and participating with the rest of his family in the spring hunt for waterfowl, seal and walrus along the coast of the Bering Sea.

He has experience in various community-oriented projects, including adult education, legal services, development and planning for a village comprehensive alcohol program and emergency first-aid practice and instruction.

Kugzruk said he wishes to preserve and protect the resources inherited from his ancestors in Northwestern Alaska. He recognizes the need for

more Alaska Natives to learn scientific techniques in order to effectively participate in resource management and policy decisions.

He hopes to acquire an undergraduate degree in biology and anticipates pursuing an advanced degree, possibly in marine biology.

The Center for Northern Studies will award two or more scholarships to Native northern students for the 1987-88 academic year.

The scholarships may be used to cover housing and tuition costs. The amount will be determined on the basis of individual need after considering other available aid such as state, federal and Native corporation grants. The maximum value of the award for each student is \$10,000.

To qualify for a "Studentship in Northern Studies" an applicant must:

- Demonstrate successful completion of two or more years of college level study or have equivalent life experience (older students are encouraged to apply).

- Be fluent in written and spoken English.

- Have knowledge and experience in Native northern lifeways.

Native students wishing to apply for a "Studentship in Northern Studies" for the 1987-88 academic year may contact: Studentships, The Center for Northern Studies, Wolcott, Vt. 05680 or telephone (802) 888-4331.

The deadline for applications is April 15, 1987.



Scholarship winners left, Leo Kelly and Philip Kugzruk, at Center for Northern Studies, Wolcott, Vt.
photo by Bruce Forbes