

# Youth learn job skills in CITC program

Nearly 100 Native students between the ages of 14 and 21 were employed this summer through the Cook Inlet Tribal Council Summer Youth Employment Program, according to CITC.

About 30 of the job placements occurred in the villages of the Cook Inlet region, with the remainder in Anchorage.

Funded through the Department of Labor's Job Training Partnership Act, the grant enables CITC to pay students' salaries while they gain work experience. For many students this was their first "real job," and the positions they held varied as much as their reactions to full-time employment.

"I was real reluctant at first. I was kind of nervous because I didn't know what to expect," said Crystal Angnabooguk, 17, who has been working at the Anchorage Police Department.

Angnabooguk said that after seeing the tension policemen and dispatchers work under, she has decided not to make police work a career.

"I had thought of being a dispatcher, but these people are really stressed out," she said. Instead, Angnabooguk has decided to go to college this fall and pursue a career in communications.

This was the first experience some employers have had using summer youth workers. Christie Acuff at the Alaska Energy Authority has four students employed through the program this year. Two are employed through CITC and two through the municipality's program.

"The students are doing excellent," Acuff said. "I highly recommend this program for other employers."

Acuff explained that although students with no experience need a little more supervision, it was an easy investment to make since their salaries are provided through the two programs.

"It's been exciting," said Sonya Moore, 16, a student worker at the Alaska Energy Authority. "This experience will look great on my resume."



Carla Brun, left, helps a customer while working at a Seldovia gift shop as part of the summer youth program.



Tennille Downey

Moore's previous work experience consisted of fast food restaurants. Moore said future plans include attending college after high school so she can eventually work with handicapped children.

Tennille Downey, 15, is the other youth worker at the Alaska Energy Authority. Downey said she will definitely go through the program next summer for employment. This fall she returns to Salem, Ore., where she attends the Chemawa Indian Boarding School.

Kristina Prentice, 18, is into her third year with the program. The first year she worked at the Alaska Native Medical Center. For the past two years she has been employed at the Alaska

Pacific University in the admissions office.

Prentice performed so well at APU last summer, the school specifically asked for her to return again this year.

Summer Youth Employment Program counselor Steve Franklin said most students have worked out very well. Franklin said he put forth a lot of time and effort to convince prospective employers to give the program a chance.

"This is a program I wish all students who haven't worked before would try," he said. "This is a good way for them to learn job skills."

Sharon Moore, coordinator of the program, said most of the students involved were serious about working.

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Sonya Moore, 16, works at the Alaska Energy Authority this summer.



Crystal Angnabooguk

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**—Steve Franklin**