

Fort Wainwright's 'Project Hire'

Trains Alaska Natives for Jobs

"The program is working, and I know it will be successful," says Mrs. Betty Rollins, Fort Wainwright's "Project Hire" coordinator. "Project Hire" is the result of an agreement last year between the Civil Service Commission and the Departments of Labor, Interior, and Defense, to establish a training and employment program for Alaska natives.

With Mr. G.L. Yoder, Civilian Personnel Officer at Fort Wainwright, acting as the Fairbanks area coordinator, the program got under way in the Fairbanks area last October.

Presently there are 18 new employees on the Eielson Air Force Base payroll, and 16 on the rolls at Fort Wainwright, with five more expected to be hired this month.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs identifies prospective employees and forwards employment applications to the Civil Service Board in Fairbanks. The majority of Fort Wainwright's new employees under the program reside on post in Civilian Bachelor Quarters.

Hired at the GS-1 or Wage Grade 1 level, "Project Hire" employees enjoy the same leave and retention benefits as other Federal Career Conditional employees.

They occupy positions ranging from clerical to carpentry, and from laundry work to warehousing, learning every phase of their jobs in on-the-job training.

For those who do not possess a high school education, a school has been set up where they are

prepared to take the General Education Development test and qualify for a high school diploma.

Following the initial year of on-the-job training, and as the educational and job skills increase the "Project Hire" employees are placed in permanent positions as they become available.

But the program involves far more than training in educational and job skills. For many new employees, it is a matter of learning a new way of life; of adjusting from village life, where survival is most important, to metropolitan living; of learning to live by the alarm clock instead of by nature's clock.

All those new employees with whom we talked agreed that it is an exciting new way of life.



DION RIVERS (Center) operates the table saw in the Fort Wainwright Post Engineer Carpenter Shop as Frank Coletta, (left) Shop Foreman, and John Olson, Lead Supervisor (right), look on. Mr.

Rivers came from Hooper Bay as an employee under the Department of Defense "Project Hire." He is an apprentice cabinetmaker.

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