

High School Graduates Will Benefit from TVCC

FAIRBANKS — The seven out of 10 Alaskan high school graduates from Interior Alaska who don't go on to college are precisely the ones who will benefit most from the new Tanana Valley Community College, says University of Alaska President Robert W. Hiatt.

"The new college," says Hiatt, "will emphasize a comprehensive program consisting of a college parallel or academic track, vocational-technical tracks as well as a great variety of in-service-type education and training to upgrade present skills."

The new community college, the state's ninth such institution, was activated July 1. The 1974 legislature appropriated \$231,000 for its first year of operations.

Dr. Mildred Matthews has been appointed acting director of the college by Earl H. Beistline, the university's Northern Region provost.

"The community college will be the most exciting development in this community in years," said Hiatt.

"The college will not require new buildings," he said, "and there will not be the expense of a completely full-time faculty, since teachers will often be persons in the community who are experienced in various trades and skills.

"They will teach only part-time, and classes can meet in existing university facilities day or night, and in public school buildings at night.

"A community college is not so much a group of buildings as a group of people," he explained.

"It provides courses and programs based on the expressed

needs and wants of the people; there is an open door policy for admission, and there is no age limit."

Hiatt pointed out that the United States has been able to provide a higher level of education to a greater proportion of its citizens than any other nation in history, because of its system of land-grant colleges and universities which provide a full collegiate education, at a reasonable cost, in every state.

The idea of land-grant colleges began during the Lincoln administration, and resulted in the growth of many great institutions of higher education, he said.

In recent years, however, the growth of community colleges has been a response to a need for educational opportunities for a whole new group of people — those who are not interested in a full-fledged university education which often stresses theoretical ideas, but who would like to learn more about the practical applications of ideas in present-day society, said Hiatt.

Courses to be offered at the college include vocational-technical subjects such as electronics, welding, food service and secretarial studies, and students will have an opportunity to take introductory university-level courses in areas such as the arts and sciences, business and education.

It will also be possible to take courses simply because of personal interest, but should a student wish to work toward a two-year degree or certificate, or plan to transfer later to a four-year college or university, that will also be possible.

Hiatt emphasized that since the state legislature has approved

funds to organize the college, every effort is now being made to find a director as soon as possible so that the college can get off to a good start this fall.

The proposed program for the Tanana Valley Community College has been developed in cooperation with the North Star Borough School District, the Hutchison Career Center, and other local groups.

"It will be a great thing for Fairbanks to have a community college here as well as a university," said Hiatt. "The city will have unsurpassed educational opportunities."