

# Rehabilitation Conference Starts Statewide Planning

The first steps in establishing a large-scale vocational rehabilitation program in Alaska were taken at the statewide planning conference in Alaska last week.

A statewide research program, divided into six regional study areas, was established to determine, by type and number, the disability problems in the state; to evaluate the resources available to treat the disabilities, and to determine the short and long-term programs needed for rehabilitation.

The program and the planning conference are the results of 1965 amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, which provided grants to states to create a comprehensive, orderly development of vocational rehabilitation services, and to make these services available to all handicapped individuals in the states by July 1, 1975.

The conference opened on Nov. 13 with introductory speeches by Carroll M. Craft, Director, office of Vocational Rehabilitation; George Sullivan, Mayor of Anchorage; Walter J. Hickel, Governor of Alaska; and Joseph Hunt, Commissioner, Vocational Rehabilitation Services Administration, Washington, D. C.

Hickel and Hunt, who were in Washington during the

conference, were presented to the delegates on four television sets through the use of video tape.

The keynote address, "The New Role of Rehabilitation," was presented by E. B. Whitten, Executive Director, National Rehabilitation Association, Washington, D. C.

The next morning, an

"Explanation of Comprehensive Statewide Planning for Vocational Rehabilitation Services" was presented by Keith J. Anderson, Director, Statewide Planning Project.

For the rest of the day, and for the first hour of Nov. 15, talks were given

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**FAIRBANKS DELEGATES**—Representing Fairbanks at the vocational rehabilitation planning conference in Anchorage were, from left: Frank Chapados (now regional study coordinator), Lois Jund,

Bishop Gordon, Phyllis Phillips, Lee Conrad, Diane O'Leary, Phil Kelly, Leonard Hamilton, and Stan Stowell. Not pictured are Lottie Fleeks and John Noyes, MD.

## Conference Is First Step...

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on the task force group topics.

These talks were: "Organization and Administration", by David Wayne Smith, Ph.D., Professor of Education, University of Arizona; "Facilities and Services", by James W. Caddick, Administrator Rehabilitation Workshops, University of San Francisco; "Financial Resources", by Andrew Marrin, Chief, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State of California;

"Legislative and Legal", by E. B. Whitten; "Recruitment and Training of Personnel", by David Orzech, Ph.D., Professor of Education Psychology, San Francisco State College; and "Research", by Frank Campbell, Research Director, Alaska Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Following the last talk, delegates were assigned to six task force groups. Generally, each was assigned to the group he had selected.

These groups discussed the topics and made recommendations to the full conference. The recommendations were forwarded to the 13-member Governor's Policy Board.

Regional study coordinators were chosen by delegates from each of the six areas of the state to help with the project's research. Frank Chapados was chosen coordinator for the Fairbanks area.

The conference closed with a summary by Andrew Marrin.

During the next year, a study will be made of the disability problem in Alaska.

The study will determine the types of disabilities—such as blindness, deafness, cancer, stroke, heart disease, mental illness, mental retardation, aging, social offenders, military rejectees, public assistance recipients, disabled youth, culturally disabled, and educationally retarded—and how common each type is.

It will include an evaluation of resources available to help people suffering from such conditions. Finances, personnel and programs will be studied.

The short- and long-term

needs for Vocational Rehabilitation will be determined and suggestions made to produce the necessary program.

Six months to a year from now, a written plan will be prepared on the necessary Vocational Rehabilitation services and how to obtain them.

The plan will include organization of the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, priorities for programs, financial resources, legislation to improve Rehabilitation services, and recruitment of personnel.

The statewide study is being financed by a \$98,129 grant from the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. This grant is very close to the \$100,000 limit on agency grants to any single state in one year.

Leonard Hamilton, from the State Vocational Rehabilitation Office in Fairbanks, commented that the conference "has really gotten us off the ground."

He noted that a lot of the effectiveness of the meeting would depend on the activities of the local study committees, and added that he thought Fairbanks had a good one.

Hamilton said a Vocational Rehabilitation group has been established in Fairbanks for about a year, and would soon open its first project—a cafeteria at the Arctic Health Research building at the University of Alaska campus.

He added that there are no programs in operation in bush areas now, and that there were no housing facilities for these people to come to Fairbanks. Providing such accommodations will be one of the first projects for the Fairbanks association.

Hamilton participated in the "Financial Resources" task group. He said one of the main topics discussed was how to obtain federal funds using established facilities, such as crippled children's clinics and special educational programs in high schools.

Phil Kelly, another delegate from Fairbanks, participated in the "Organization

and Administration" task group.

Kelly said his reason for choosing this group was to stress the need for communication with the bush areas. The group's recommendations included suggestions on this topic.

He warned that it would take time to set up the Vocational Rehabilitation program, and that providing services to the bush areas would be difficult.

Kelly said the delegates seemed quite interested in obtaining the opinions of the people. He noted that his points on communications were received with great interest, even though he was the youngest person at the conference and had little experience in actual Vocational Rehabilitation work.