

Eskimo VISTA Associates Instruct VISTA Volunteers Eskimo Dialect

Something new in communications between the VISTA volunteers and the native people in the lower Kuskokwim and Dillingham areas are being tried at the University of Alaska.

Eskimo VISTA Associates along with Levi Lott of Tuluksak and Irene Reed of the UA linguistic department are teaching VISTA Volunteers the Yupik Eskimo dialect of the Bethel and Dillingham areas.

The VISTA Volunteers, 25 of them, are now training for assignments in the villages in the areas mentioned. The language training program is under the direction of Irene Reed.

Miss Reed has five informants. Four of them are young Eskimo women from the lower Kuskokwim area and all of them are VISTA Associates.

They are: Marie Nick, Nunapitchuk; Ina Keene Morgan, Kasigluk; Sadie David, Kongiganak; and Edith Kernak, Tuntutuliak. Levi Lott, Kasigluk, UA student, is the fifth informant.

"The VISTAS are having fun learning Eskimo but the language is a real tongue twister for whites," said Levi Lott. "When they're through, I hope there will be a better communication between them and the villagers."

The language program has been in progress for almost three weeks.

"Some of the kids are doing real well in the program. At least they'll have a better understanding of the cultural background in the villages where they will be



ESKIMO LANGUAGE TEACHERS—This group of young Eskimos from lower Kuskokwim area are teaching the Yupik dialect of the Eskimo language to 25 VISTA Volunteers at the training sessions at the University of Alaska. From left to right: Edith Kernak, Tuntutuliak; Levi Lott, Tuluksak; Sadie David, Kongiganak; Ina Keene Morgan, Kasigluk; and Marie Nick, Nunapitchuk. The four girls are scheduled to go to University of Oregon to teach Eskimo at the VISTA training center of western regions.

serving," said Lott.

Edith Kernak and Marie Nick know how to read Eskimo "in the old way." They, however, along with others have been learning to read their language in the linguistic style as taught by Miss Reed.

"We have found that it's easier to read than the old way," remarked Marie Nick.

Joli Morgan, who is now working for University of Oregon that is responsible for training VISTA Volunteers, said that John Shuler

as the VISTA director for Alaska, first thought of the idea about a year ago.

"If this is successful, we would like to work the same program in northern Eskimo dialect and Athabascan in the interior Alaska," said Morgan.

Levi Lott brought the group from the university for a brief interview in the Tundra Times office. At the end of the interview, he said:

"Tuai." That means: "That's all," in Yupik dialect.