

# VISTA VOLUNTEERS IN ALASKA VILLAGES



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One of the most significant programs now underway in Alaska is one which is eventually slated to see about 200 young people volunteering their time and energy to help fight poverty in the state.

The young people, on the front line of the anti-poverty war, are called VISTA or volunteers in service to America.

Right now there are 25 of these volunteers stationed at various villages in the state from Anaktuvuk Pass to Pt. Hope and another 30 are in training at Juneau.

The program is significant because it is exactly the type program that was requested for so long. It is based on the peace corps idea where resource people work to help people help themselves.

As early as 1962, Father Jules Convert, of Kaltag, was stressing this approach.

"Actually the VISTA volunteer program offers a better chance to do good than the peace corps program," said Gerald Miller, VISTA coordinator for Alaska stationed in Fairbanks.

"In the Peace Corps program, there is very little support or backup, while in the VISTA program, there is," he said.

Miller should know, because he himself is a former Peace Corps worker.

The program already is showing great promise. At last villagers have a resource person willing to reside in their community to assist them technically with their problems. This is a far cry from the government agency officials who have bounced in and out of villages for years.

Under the new social security law, people 72 or older may receive a special monthly benefit with credit for less work than was needed under the old law. Call or write your social security office for more information.



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