

Alaska Natives win 'studentships' in Northern Studies

The center for Northern Studies in Wolcott, Vermont, selected two Alaska Natives as recipients of the 1985 "Studentships in Northern Studies." In September, Mary Jane Litchard of Nome and Suzanne Mendenhall of Kotzebue began an interdisciplinary nine-month program in Northern Studies with the aid of Center scholarships available to Native students. Ms. Litchard and Ms. Mendenhall were chosen from a pool of excellent applicants from Canada, Alaska, and Greenland.

The studentship awards enable northern Natives to participate in the Center for Northern Studies program in Wolcott, Vermont, a rural community with a population of about 1,000, that is physically and

biologically Subarctic, but is located within a day's driving distance of Montreal, Boston, or New York City. The interdisciplinary curriculum includes botany, ecology, prehistory, anthropology, public policy, political economy, conflict resolution, law, and community development of Arctic and Subarctic regions. During the fall semester, students travel to Atlantic Canada for several weeks of field work in the natural sciences. In the spring, they visit government offices as well as Native and environmental organizations in Ottawa to learn more about Canadian issues pertaining to Native land claims, self-determination, and natural resource development. Throughout the year, speakers come from business, academia, and government to discuss topics concerning the entire circumpolar region including Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Scandinavia and Siberia. The program provides a broad liberal arts background and prepares students for employment as natural resource and wildlife managers or northern and Native policy makers.



This year's studentship recipients are particularly well-qualified to participate in the program as well as teach about their culture and lifeways. Mary Jane Litchard is an artist and writer

who has taught in the Bilingual/Bicultural program at Nome's elementary school. Originally from Lost River, she is a graduate of Mount Edgecumbe and holds an A.A. degree from the University of Alaska's Rural Education Program.

Her career goals include teaching in the North and developing children's books to communicate the Eskimo culture world-wide.

Suzanne Mendenhall is a graduate of Kotzebue High School. The year at The Center for Northern Studies will help her to complete her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. She is majoring in Alaska Native Studies with a minor in Geography and expects to obtain a secondary education teaching certificate. Commenting on her first few months at the Center, she said, "I enjoy the small scale setting of this school because there is room for acceptance of students as individuals. Also, the atmosphere is open and flexible. Compared to a large university, the Center for Northern Studies is sensitive toward the needs and wide range of backgrounds that students may have. You're not just a number here."

The Center for Northern Studies will award two or more scholarships to Native northern students for the 1986-1987 academic year. The scholarships may be used to cover housing and tuition costs; the amount will be determined on the basis of individual need after considering other available aid (for example, state, federal, and Native corporation grants). The maximum award per student is \$10,000.

To qualify for a "Studentship in Northern Studies" an applicant must:



Student award winner Mary Jane Litchard (Nome) 1985.

photo by Mark Hitchcock

1. demonstrate successful completion of two or more years of college level study or have equivalent life experience (older students are encouraged to apply);
2. be fluent in written and spoken English; and
3. have knowledge and experience in Native northern lifeways.

Native students wishing to apply for a "Studentship in Northern Studies" for the 1986-1987 academic year should contact: Studentships, The Center for Northern Studies, Wolcott, VT 05680 USA or telephone (802) 888-4331.

The deadline for applications is April 10, 1986.



Studentship award winner Suzanne Mendenhall (Kotzebue) 1985.

photo by Mark Hitchcock