

A place of learning

By BOB KOWELUK
ILISAGVIK. In Inupiaq, it means "a place of learning."

And at the Cook Inlet Native Association's Adult Basic Education Center, ILISAGVIK, is the place of learning for Native people ages 16 to 65.

The teachers at Ilisagvik teach adults to learn the basic reading, writing and math skills; provide the student with classes to prepare the student to pass the GED exam; to study for the written drivers license exam and prepare their students for other training programs.

Agnes Ivanoff Baptise, the supervisor of Ilisagvik said that their program is funded through a grant from Part C of the Indian Education Act of 1972.

Part C of the Indian Education Act provides for Native adult education. Mrs. Baptise said, "our adult education center here in Anchorage provides Alaska Natives and American Indians who are 1/4 Native or more with an education that they can use. Our teachers can teach their students the basic reading, writing and math skills that people use in everyday life.

"Some students come here to take their GED tests. The teachers here will talk with the students to tell them about the GED and how the teachers here work to help the student prepare to successfully pass the GED tests," Mrs. Baptise said.

Students who come to the Ilisagvik ABE Center to study for taking a GED test are screened during their first meeting with the teachers. Some personal information about the student is gathered. The student's full name, address and phone number or other ways the student can be contacted are listed. The last grade the student completed in the regular school is recorded.

The student is tested to find out at what grade level they are in reading and math skills to determine the grade level at which the student will best learn.

The teachers at Ilisagvik require each of their students to:

1. attend a minimum of 25 hours of instruction each month.
2. attend either the morning or afternoon classes, 3. call their instructor if they will not be able to attend on that day.

Jeanie Kennedy, one of the teachers there said that the Ilisagvik learning center provides its students with an open atmosphere. "The students here feel comfortable. We have an open atmosphere which is the ideal situation for students to learn in. There is no pressure we provide encouragement, with

work 1:1 with our students and the students can come in at any time for either the morning or afternoon classes." Jeanie said.

The instructors at Ilisagvik may make it easier for those people interested in getting their drivers license. Amy Lohr, CINA Ilisagvik instructor, rewrote the Alaska Drivers manual.

"I noticed that some of the students here could not read the State of Alaska Drivers License Manual," she said. Mrs. Lohr found the manual inconsistent in its reading level which ranged from the 7th grade to the 12th grade. So Mrs. Lohr rewrote the manual to a 6th to 7th grade reading level with much help from the Director of Field O-

perations in the Motor Vehicle Division, Jim Brandon. "People will still have to study hard to learn the information in the manual," said Mrs. Lohr. "I just hope it's easier to read so learning it won't be such a pain." Mrs. Lohr said that about one third of Ilisagvik's students are taking the driver's license study.

So if you are an Alaskan Native or American Indian of one fourth or more descent, and want to study some of the following, come to the Ilisagvik learning center at 27th and Spennard (behind Job Service, across from the Denali Theater), or call at 265-1288.

Instruction in life skills: using the bus system, using the telephone, making change, telling

time, locating information, filling out job applications, first aid, using community resources...

Career guidance: Job-O surveys of occupational interests, information on training programs, referrals to training opportunities...

Assistance with: letter writing, resumes, filling out official papers, contacting agencies...

Screening and referral for GED tests...

Referral for: personal counseling, financial assistance, day-care assistance, training or college assistance or legal assistance...

Instruction in basic academic skills: reading, writing, using the english language, and learning math...