

Working Together—

AFN, State Work Training Programs

By SUSAN TAYLOR
Staff Writer

"I need a job desperately," said the dark-haired woman as she explained that she was separated from her husband and needed some means of support for herself and her three young children.

Appearing to be in her early thirties, the neatly-dressed Eskimo said that the children would stay in a day care center provided for by welfare while she worked.

But, several problems remained. The woman had no means of transportation and lived several miles out of town. Last year, she worked only four months and had little experience to lean on. In addition, she had no saleable skill.

To most employment counselors, the situation would seem hopeless. But not to Max Huhndorf, Fred Bigim, and Miles Brandon.

As administrators of the On-the-Job-Training Program (OJT) sponsored by the Alaska Federation of Natives, they are able to offer the woman a job opportunity by reimbursing an employer while he trains her.

In this way, and through regular job placements, they are able to assist many of the unemployed who come to their office every Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30 to 5 p.m. for interviews.

Several weeks ago, as Huhndorf, OJT coordinator, was talking with the woman mentioned above, Bigim, also an OJT coordinator, was in the same room interviewing a young man about a welding job.

In 30 minutes the two of them had talked with five people on what Huhndorf described as a light day. "You should be here when we are really swamped," he said.

Huhndorf, Bigim and Brandon, director, have interviewed about 600 people in the past 16 months either in their Anchorage office or in rural Alaska.

A little over 200 of these have been placed in OJT training slots, about 140 in regular jobs, and about 15 in other job programs.

The AFN-sponsored OJT program was funded in July of 1968 by the U.S. Labor Department with the contract running until March 31, 1970. The staff for the program is located in the AFN offices in the Kalua Building in Anchorage.

The Labor Department is fully financing the program and the AFN, as prime contractor, assumes the responsibility for administering the program.

Under the OJT program, a private employer receives partial reimbursement for training an unqualified person—either a new or present worker—to fill a job slot. The employer trains on his job site and according to his specifications.

According to Huhndorf and Bigim, the program can work one of two ways. The employer can inform them of a certain number of job openings that he has and the OJT coordinators will refer several applicants to him with the final selection being his decision.

Or a job seeker can contact

the OJT office and the OJT coordinators can refer him to an opening that they know about or can call certain firms inquiring of possibilities.

If a placement is made and an OJT contract signed by the employer, the employer receives an average of from \$25 to \$30 per week for 12 to 16 weeks while he trains the new employee.

To be eligible, Huhndorf explained, the employer must have established the need for the job and the employee must have established the need and desire for training; he does not have to be disadvantaged.

The OJT trainee is considered an employee of the firm the day his training begins.

The OJT coordinators assist the employer in working out a training schedule and counsel both the employer and trainee as necessary.

Huhndorf and Bigim, both natives of Alaska, explained that the services are available to anyone in the state but that most of their interviews are with natives.

Mentioning that the drop-out rate in the OJT program is about 30 per cent, Huhndorf and Bigim said that the main problem is that the natives are not job-oriented and hence find it difficult to stick to a job.

"We encourage them to stay," Huhndorf said, "and ask them where they will go or where they will get work if they quit before they learn a skill."

The AFN is not the only agency in the state conducting such a program. The Alaska Department of Labor with Harry Sturrock, as program coordinator and Mrs. Helen March, as field coordinator, is also conducting a similar program.

"We try to stay in urban areas and leave rural areas for the AFN," said Mrs. March during a visit to Fairbanks last week.

Both she and the AFN coordinators stressed that the two agencies work closely together and assist each other when possible.

Unlike in the AFN program, Mrs. March and Sturrock work primarily with employers and depend on the state employment center to recruit most of the OJT trainees.

Mrs. March explained that Sturrock covers the southeastern part of the state and she, covering everything else, tries to visit every business that has an OJT contract every month.

After about 6 months of promoting the program, she said, the state has filled almost 100 training slots and has until July 1 to fill another 100.

"It has been much easier to find jobs for men than women," Mrs. March said. "And many of the women who need assistance need it desperately to support themselves or their family."

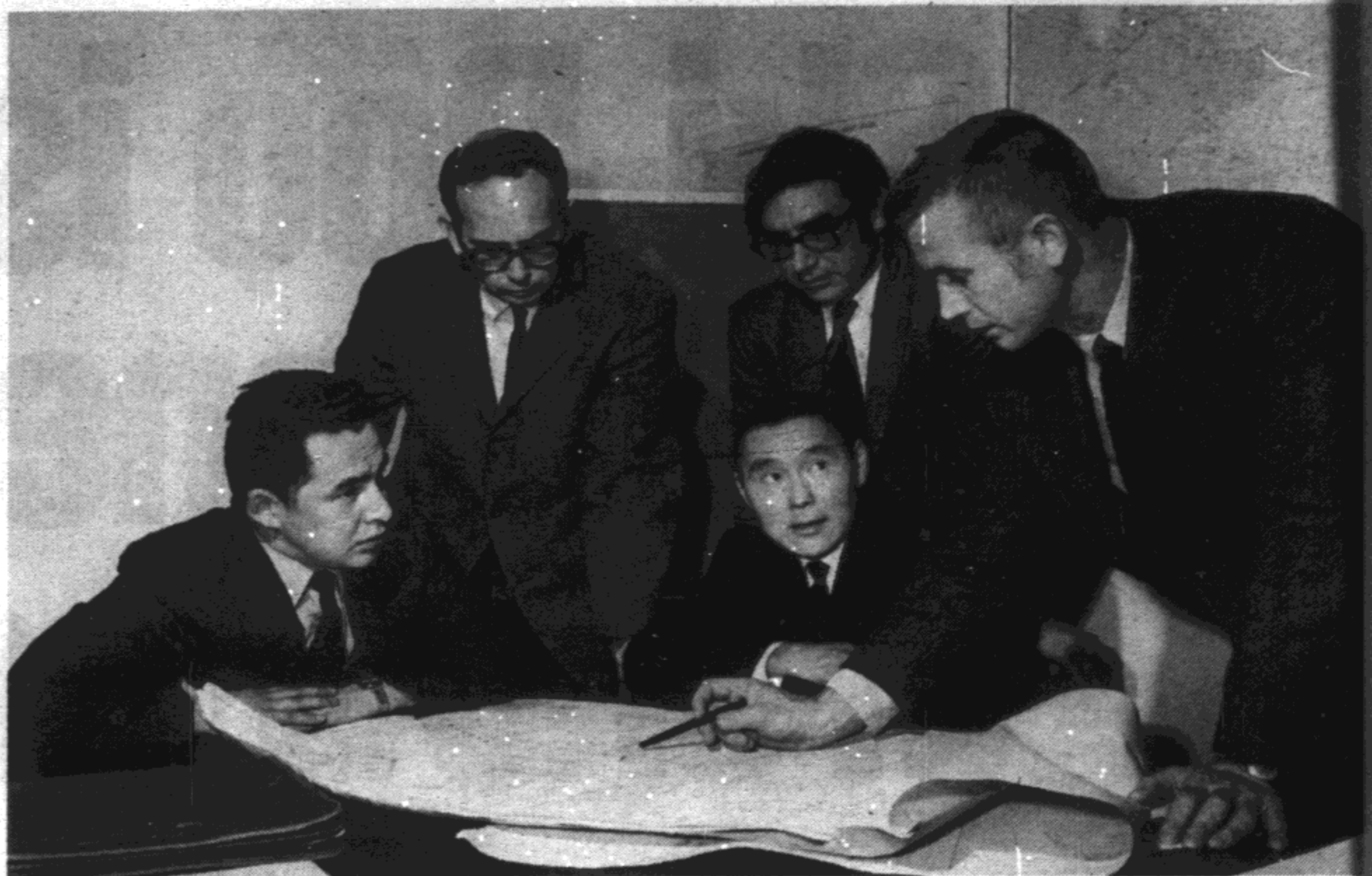
She attributed the lack of jobs for women to the abundance of military wives in the state.

The employer, she continued, is reluctant to train the unskilled if he can find someone already trained.

Also, menial jobs do not pay enough and are dead end, the coordinator said. "We want the women to get jobs where they can progress."

As with the AFN program, placements for men have been varied ranging from parts salesmen to geophysical employees.

AFN coordinators explained that they hoped to make placements related to the pipeline work and to open new possibilities in clinic work.



DISCUSS EDA GRANTS—Two Alaska native fishing cooperatives received large EDA grants last week, Kuskokwim Fishermen Cooperative, \$662,500, and Yukon Delta Fish Marketing Cooperative, \$775,000. The money will be used to purchase freezer barges with about a million pound capacities. Seated left to right: Jacob

Johnson, manager of Yukon Delta, Robert Nick, manager, Kuskokwim Fishermen. Standing, left to right: Jim Shea, EDA Public Works project officer; Harold Wolff, director, Community Enterprise Development Corporation; and Dave Wenzlaff, EDA construction manager.

Northwest Reindeer Herders Group Adopts Rules on Herd Management

The Northwest Alaska Reindeer Herder's Association adopted new rules and regulations dealing with herd management, range rules, ownership marking, and marketing of deer at a meeting in Nome Jan. 19 and 20.

During the two-day session, herders were told that some deer were currently within 10 miles of Nome and other herds within a few days' drive.

No information concerning the new rules was available from Nome.

In other action, Larry Davis of Nome was reelected president of the herders. Other officers elected were: Wilfred Kakaruk of Teller, vice-president and Fred Goodhope of Shismaref, secretary-treasurer.

There were 12 other Seward Peninsula herders and four potential herders present at the meeting.

Also, the following agencies were represented: the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Department Animal Health division of Agriculture, and the Consumer Marketing Service-federal meat inspection.

Logging

Want to learn the skills necessary for employment in the logging industry?

If so, you should contact the Alaska Manpower Center in Room 131 of the State Court and Office Building on Sixth Avenue in Fairbanks immediately.

The agency is now recruiting students for a four-week logger training program to begin in Ketchikan Feb. 23.

Second and third sections are scheduled to start March 30 and May 4 with each section containing 20 trainees.

Including both classroom and field experience, the training will cover woods safety and bucking, skidding logs, and maintenance of equipment.

The Manpower Center is responsible for placement following training.

Of the 83 Alaskans who have completed logger training courses in the past two years, approximately two-thirds were placed in entry logging positions upon graduation or shortly thereafter.

Bob Pegau, of Alaska Fish and Game discussed the possibility of introducing musk-oxen into the area.



TOMCOD JIGGERS—In about a month the Eskimo women of the village of Point Hope will be going out on the ice on the Chukchi Sea off the village and jig for tomcod. This is an ancient and yearly event. Tomcod seem to congregate by the millions under the ice around the month of March. The women chop holes in the ice and use a special sinker with hooks and from which branch out four separate hooks on baleen shaved and polished thin lines. When tomcod is especially thick, all four hooks plus the sinker will have each a fish with one or two snagged on the sinker. When fishing is good, women can catch a sledload in two hours. The picture shows Point Hope women busily hooking for tomcod.

—Photograph by the late DON C. FOOTE



POOR FISHING TEACHER—The editor of the Tundra Times, Howard Rock, is seen jigging for tomcod off the town of Nome three years ago on a visit. King Island Village women of Nome were fishing with good results. The editor instructed a lady professor from a California university who caught 8 tomcod while the editor caught 2 in the same length of time. On seeing the picture, Susan Taylor, Tundra Times staff writer, remarked, "That looks funny—you with a suit on fishing."

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