

Curriculum Planning on Claims

"Sweeping changes in life style and land use for all Alaskan, Native and non-Native, will be an inevitable consequence of the Land Claims Settlement Act," stated Fred Bigjim, instructor of a Land Claims seminar for educators held at Alaska Methodist University during August.

"Teachers need help with cur-

riculum planning and instruction so their students can understand the importance and significance of the changes the settlement is causing. Disseminating accurate information regarding the social and economic implications of the Act cannot be stressed strongly enough," was Bigjim's theme throughout the three week course

During the seminar the class invited educators and Native leaders to discuss methods and strategies for teaching land claims. Robert Arnold, who is coordinating the writing of a text book on Land Claims summarized the contents of the text and pointed out that it would not be ready for classroom use this year.

Frank Barthel, former high school teacher in Bethel, outlined the curriculum he used in teaching land claims for the past two years. Two seminar participants, Beth Goodman and Ron Gerton, have also been teaching courses in Land Claims to high school students.

Another guest speaker, Mitch Demientieff, President of Nenana Village Corporation, elaborated on the concept of alternative education systems, such as the Land Claims college initiated by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, which would make it possible for Natives living in rural areas to earn college degrees in their own villages.

Participants in the seminar attended a policy meeting of the Alaska Native Foundation Human Resources Committee where the concern was voiced that "innovative programs are needed to teach Land Claims in all

(Continued on Page 6)



CURRICULUM — Educators' strongly urge adoption of a Land Claims curriculum in all school systems in Alaska during seminar conducted by Fred Bigjim at Alaska Methodist University. Participants left to right: William Mudd, Henry Anderson, Ron Gerton, Joan Fisher, Instructor of the course Fred Bigjim, and Elizabeth Goodman.

Curriculum Planning..

(Continued from Page 1)

school systems throughout the State."

The seminar also met with BLM, BIA, and Land Use Planning Commission officials to obtain background information.

Recommendations of seminar participants include "the immediate need for curriculum planning for all schools and grades, kindergarten through post-secondary, followed up by teacher workshops throughout the State.

Teachers need to have a thorough understanding of the Land Claims Settlement regarding historical background, legislation, implementation and implications for the future."

The Land Claims seminar for educators, held at AMU in Anchorage from July 29 through August 16, 1974, was initiated by the State Department of Education. AMU offered the seminar as a three credit graduate course, to the five participants.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs was sponsor, paying costs for instruction and educational materials. Anchorage Borough School

District and Nome Public schools paid tuition costs for their representatives.

Participants were Henry Anderson from the Anchorage Borough School District; William Mudd, media specialist with BIA Bethel Agency; Ron Gerton, Nome Public Schools and committeeman for the NEA - Alaska instruction and professional development committee; Elizabeth Goodman, Social Studies department, Mt. Edgecumbe High School; and Joan Fisher, BIA public information specialist.

"A full-fledged commitment by the education systems in Alaska to teach a better understanding of the Land Claims Settlement Act is needed. Without this commitment there cannot be the open and informed discussions necessary to make viable choices regarding the economic development of rural Alaska, career possibilities for young people and wise use of the land base," was the consensus opinion of the seminar.