

# *Miss WEIO born in Bethel* **Alaskan gets NCAI title**

Valerie Davidson, Miss WEIO 1986, was named Miss NCAI last week in Phoenix, Ariz., at the 43rd Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians.

She also was named Miss Congeniality. The first runnerup in the national competition was Lisa Williams of Sitka, who also was named Most Talented.

The two Alaskans competed among 13 young women nationally.

Davidson's purpose in traveling to Phoenix to represent the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics was twofold. The 19-year-old University of Alaska-Fairbanks sophomore ran successfully for the title of Miss NCAI, while also working to involve Lower 48 Indians in the WEIO.

She hopes to involve dance groups and athletes in the cultural event, held annually in Fairbanks.

Miss WEIO, a Yu'pik Eskimo, was born in Bethel, lived in Aniak for 10 years and has been a resident of Salcha for the past seven years.

Sharon Barker, Miss WEIO 1985, accompanied Davidson to Phoenix and acted as chaperon.

NCAI is the oldest national organization serving American Indians and Alaska Native governments and people. Their conventions, the largest annual gatherings of Indian and Native leadership, offer a forum for the development of national policy and strategy. This year's theme was "Beyond Survival: The Next Step is Ours."

Davidson, a former president of the



*Valerie Davidson was named Miss NCAI at the 43rd Annual Convention at the National Congress of American Indians. photo courtesy of Nelson's Photography*

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# Miss NCAI '86

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Alaska Federation of Natives Youth Council, says she would like to continue her involvement in Native issues and politics — especially as they concern Alaska Native elders.

The speech that she presented at the NCAI Convention was "The Importance of Elders in Education."

As a future teacher, Davidson says she is especially concerned with the role elders can and should play in passing on culture, history and traditional ways.

She said she wants to use the special bond between elders and youth in a classroom setting and believes that elders should not be called on to volunteer their services, but should receive monetary compensation.

Davidson made her first trip for the WEIO to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference held in Kotzebue in July. There she saw a resolution passed by the full delegation supporting the WEIO's efforts to realize Siberian Chukchi participation in the next Olympics.