

Education agency earmarks \$146,065 to aid handicapped

The U.S. Department of Education recently dedicated another \$146,065 to fund a teaching system aimed at meeting the challenges handicapped students present to the limited teaching staff in small villages, according to the University of Alaska Anchorage.

The UAA School of Education has addressed this problem by developing a teaching system called, "distance education."

The project is called the Rural Specialist Training to Serve Alaska's Handicapped Students Project. It provides instruction to more than 100 rural teachers in about 40 rural sites each semester. In the past year and a half, students in 80 rural remote sites received instruction in more than 15 different courses.

Traditionally, it has been very difficult for the teachers to receive training in special education if they were

away from the UAA campus and particularly in small villages, explained Dr. Mike Carol, dean of the UAA School of Education.

Teacher retention in rural areas still averages only about two years. Therefore, this program focuses on recruiting teachers who already are established in the Bush and who want to stay there. Students in the program are predominantly interested in improving their range of skills to adapt to the special problems of rural Alaska and the special needs of handicapped learners.

Those who want more information on the project may write: Special Education Program — Statewide Services, School of Education, University of Alaska Anchorage, 3211 Providence Drive, Anchorage 99508; or call 786-1771.