

Students learn leadership skills



Students at the conference practiced many of the skills they learned. Liz Whalin of West High School in Anchorage, top, presented resolutions to the floor. Among others attending was Pam Nunooruk, president of the Anchorage Native Youth Leadership Council, shown at right. Shown above, students present resolutions and participate in a goal-setting workshop.

The Sixth Annual Cook Inlet Tribal Council/Johnson-O'Malley Native Youth Leadership Conference recently drew more than 120 students from all over the state.

Students attending the four-day conference at Meier Lake came from Circle, Hoonah, Kodiak, Point Hope, Bethel, Juneau, Takotna, Yakutat, Tanana, Valdez, Mat-Su, Nome, Northwest Arctic School District, Copper River, Anchorage and the ANF Youth Council.

The focus of the conference was leadership skills.

Organizers said unlike past conferences, this year's conference was sponsored by the Anchorage JOM Native Youth Leadership Council in hopes of having a meeting geared toward the needs of the youth. The NYLC started organizing the conference last October and met on a weekly basis, planning everything from workshops, contacting speakers and selecting the menu.

The NYLC not only hosted the conference but acted as the facilitators for the workshops. The students did research papers and met with their adult facilitators ahead of time to assure that their workshops would be factual and informative.

The workshops covered the areas of education, subsistence, after-borns, 1991, health and corporation/non-profits.

Each workshop developed a resolution that was presented at the general session and then voted on by the students that were present. The students were able to apply their new found knowledge on resolutions and voting to pass nine resolutions from the general assembly.

To guarantee that the students' concerns do not fall by the way side, the nine resolutions that were passed were given to the Alaska Federation of Natives Youth Council to be brought to the AFN Youth Conference and even on to the AFN Convention.

Other issues that were covered included goal setting, smoke/smokeless tobacco concerns and drug/alcohol abuse.

Organizers said students were so overwhelmed by the drug and alcohol abuse presentation by Sam Lamabull of Anchorage that the entire conference gave him a standing ovation and made a commitment to take a strong look at themselves or how drugs and alcohol could damage their growth as future leaders for their people.

Photos by Gloria Pushruk