

Learning welding in Valdez

The Prince William Sound Community College, located in Valdez, has now had a welding program for three years. During this period, many new innovations have been incorporated to make it one of the best equipped metal shops in the area. Whatever level of instruction is desired — from high pressure pipe training all the way to beginner's status, PWSCC can handle the job, stated instructor Rick Watson.

Watson is a Tlingit Indian who pursued training at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington during the 1960's. After graduating from an apprenticeship program, he attended college at several institutions for three years before returning to Alaska to secure employment.

Eventually an opportunity came in which he was hired to instruct a select group of maintenance personnel of the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company with 6" all-position pipe weld training, and it was here that he demonstrated his abilities as an instructor. He was given the job at PWSCC to work with the formation of a welding program.

Says Watson of the program he has been working with for

three years: "This is a great opportunity for Alaskan Natives, or anyone, to consider. We have an excellent training program available right here in Alaska." The PWSCC program provides instruction in TIG welding, gas welding, stick welding, oxy-acetylene burning, carbon arc cutting, and plasma arc cutting processes.

The number of classes offered are enough to keep anyone busy. Currently, there are four-credit classes offered in beginning, intermediate, and advanced-level O, gas welding processes, as well as beginning, intermediate and advanced sections for shielded metal arc welding.

The tuition for this sequence of courses is \$100, plus a lab fee of \$150. Also offered is a two-credit bi-weekly course which has a less intense training sequence. The tuition for this sequence of classes is \$50 plus a lab fee of \$100.

A one-credit class involved primarily in introducing the fishermen to what can be done with today's metals and processes, primarily aluminum, is also offered.

The classes are being offered four days a week

throughout the semester. The times for these programs are 1 PM, 4 PM to 6 PM, and 8 PM till 10 PM, Mondays,

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. If students find a conflict with the rest of their schedule at certain times, the

college has a policy that any of the classes can be taken during any of these available time frames.