

# TRAINING OF HEAD START TEACHERS BEGINS

## Being Conducted at Anchorage Community College

This week another unique class began at Anchorage Community College. Native Alaskans who will be teaching Head Start classes in villages from Barrow to Angoon arrived to participate in the second of two (2) four-week training courses, which will prepare them as Head Start teachers and aides.

The Office of Child Development, Department of Health, Education and Welfare granted the funds to an unusual consortium composed of the Alaska Methodist University, University of Alaska, Greater Anchorage Area Community Action Agency, Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc., and the Greater Fairbanks Head Start Association to provide training courses for the Head Start teachers and aides.

At a time when budget cuts are being made for this type of program everywhere else in the United States, the three Community Action Agencies, which employ the Head Start teachers, and the two Universities, which have historically competed for

the administration of the grant funds, combined their efforts, planned the entire program together and were successful in receiving the grant.

This grant is 33% larger than last year's grant. The Office of Child Development was justifiably impressed, as we are, with the high degree of inter-agency cooperation and planning which have gone into this program.

Over 100 Head Start teachers and teacher aides will have participated in the training this summer.

All Head Start staff members who have never had previous Head Start experience are being training at Anchorage Community College in a special four-week course to prepare them to teach Head Start programs.

The experienced Head Start personnel are attending regular college courses at either the Alaska Methodist University or at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

While the combined program is available to Anchorage and Fairbanks Head Starts, almost

90% of the trainees are from remote rural villages and will be employed by the RurAL CAP Head Start Programs.

One of the principal objectives of this program is for the Native Alaskan to obtain the necessary college credits so that they may be licensed and eventually employed within the existing state school system.

All the courses at Anchorage Community College, Alaska Methodist University, and the University of Alaska carry regular college credit which can be applied towards a degree.

The members of the consortium (Jesse Kinard, Director of Head Start, Greater Anchorage Area Community Action Head Start Association; Betty Scamon, Director of Child Development, Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.; Ingrid Eaton, Director of Head Start, Greater Fairbanks Head Start Association; Rose Barquist, Director of Head Start Supplementary Training, Alaska Methodist University; and Margaret Connet, Head Start Regional Training Officer, University of Alaska) report that they are coordinating their efforts on this program as well as future plans with the Department of Education and the State Operated Schools so that courses and credits offered under Head Start training are also accepted and interchangeable with training programs being offered by the Department of Education and the State Operated Schools.

The training programs being carried out at the three campuses are unusual in several respects—this is the first time five statewide agencies have applied for a single grant together; the program provides college credit for Native Alaskans many of whom do not have high school degrees; and this cooperation produced an increase in funds for badly needed Alaskan programs at a time when other states are receiving budget cuts.

This program will not only provide training this summer prior to the school year, but also provide the funds for vitally important regional training sessions next fall and spring which will benefit the disadvantaged children of the entire State of Alaska by improving the quality of their local Head Start Programs.