

# BYU to Use Foundation Grant To Develop Indian Leadership

American Indians attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah will be the target of two grants totaling \$85,000.

Awarded by the William H. Donner Foundation of New York, the grants will be used for Indian leadership development, \$60,000, and for a pre-college orientation session, \$25,000.

According to Lester B. Whetten, dean of the BYU General College which supervises Indian education, Indians perhaps have the greatest need for thoughtful assistance of all minority groups. They "have an annual income of only one-half of Negroes and one-fourth that of Americans generally," he added.

The \$60,000 grant will be to

help college students become truly professional in their chosen fields and to obtain master's and doctor's degrees.

Successful Indian students who have finished their schooling are encouraged to return to their people to help others achieve similar success but all too often, according to BYU, they return to their reservations with degrees only to accept menial or clerical jobs.

Indian students need special programs to motivate them to attain the highest academic and professional degrees—physician, dentist, engineer, etc., and the \$60,000 will be directed at developing such a program.

The \$25,000 will be used to

finance a pilot six-week session next summer to prepare BYU-bound Indian men and women for higher education in modern society.

"The Indian's main problem," Dean Whetten said, "is that his higher education must be undertaken in modern American society—off the reservation, and this involves a major cultural adjustment."

Indians, most of whom are almost totally unprepared for university life, are sometimes overwhelmed by their first campus experience.

Once classwork begins, many of the students are plagued by feelings of inferiority, poor study habits, difficulty in understanding assignments and low tolerance to pressure.

Having reduced the dropout rate from 56 to 13.5 per cent in five years, BYU hopes to achieve even more progress with the \$25,000 grant to develop a better pre-college orientation.

This money will help pay Indian students' room and board on campus while they receive ability tests, select majors, take pre-college review courses, learn new study habits and build self confidence.

There are over 300 Indians on the campus this year, representing 64 tribes, coming from 27 states and 7 countries, and an Indian enrollment of 1,000 is expected within several years.

The Donner Foundation takes special interest in American-Canadian relations and problems of the disadvantaged, particularly the American Indians.

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