

Foundation Grant Asked— Center for Northern Education Proposed

Is there one group in Alaska which represents Alaska's native people in the field of education?

Which Native people? The Eskimos in the Yukon-Kuskokwim or the Tlingits and Haidas in Southeast? With the wide variety of regional cultures and education needs the question is more confusing than enlightening. Also, readers of the AFN and several regional organizations are presently preoccupied with the vitally important land claims fight.

For four days last week, two representatives of the Ford Foundation visited native leaders in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks to obtain opinions on the proposed University of Alaska Center for Northern Education.

According to the UA funding proposal, the Center will be a central research and program design institute designed to assess native education needs and act as a resource center for developing programs in cross-cultural education.

One major aspect of the Center is their intention to involve the native people in every aspect of the policy making and work. To set up the center and support it through its initial years, the University of Alaska has asked for a \$654,000 grant from the Ford Foundation. Other funds will come from UA contracts with various agencies to perform cross-cultural educational research and program design.

Donald Sandberg and Ralph Bohrsen spent four days in Alaska trying to evaluate the proposal last week. They searched for "native representatives", spoke with native leaders in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks and conferred with education officials in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State Operated Schools.

According to Ralph Bohrsen, Ford Foundation's education department has three major questions about the proposed center. First, he wants to know if such a center can effectively ask questions and be responsive to the issues Alaskan natives cite about cross-cultural education in the north.

Second, will anybody in policy making decisions in Alaska be responsive to suggestions from

the Center. Will it have influence?

Third, will there be other money available to maintain the center's operations.

Where the Ford Foundation people did not travel is to the villages, where communities are becoming newly aware of the possibilities for local control of education of their children.

In Alaska, the reactions to the center idea have been mixed. Most Native leaders know little about the Center and while the intention for native participation is present no mechanism has yet been designed.

One major question is whether the Institute will join the plethora of official agencies concerned with Alaskan natives, who are more aware of what is happening in their fellow agencies than among the people they supposedly "serve".

The questions a Center for Education could ask in Alaska could be painful - not only for Alaskan officialdom but for the native people themselves. Education budgets are still voted on in the legislature and legislators have not been notably informed in what is going on as far as education research and proposed solutions.

Where Ford Foundation has not gone to ask its questions, is into the villages where people expressing their concern over education. Political participation in the schools is a recent American phenomena-one which is just now faintly tingeing village politics.

Till now, there has been no means for village people to influence officialdom and evaluation trips which bypass the villages increase this political impotence.

According to Tundra Times editor Howard Rock, one of the native people the Foundation people questioned, the answers are in the regional organizations where representatives are close enough to their people and culture to evaluate education needs.

Yet, like any agency, a Center for Northern Education can only be effective in the flesh - not on paper. A paper proposal is difficult to evaluate from any angle.

Yet, the Ford people who control the purse strings have nothing else on which to base their evaluation and a great deal hinges upon their decision - a solid economic base for a Center which can, if it works, be a vital coordinating center for native education in Alaska.

McLean President of UA Alumni

COLLEGE - Terry McLean '64, assistant manager of the Market Basket in Fairbanks, was elected president of the Fairbanks Chapter of the University of Alaska Alumni Association at a recent meeting.

The other new officers chosen at the session, at which plans were made for the Annual Alumni Banquet on May 14 in honor

of the 1971 graduates, are:

Andy Warwick, '66, an accountant and member of the legislature, vice president.

Mrs. Arthur (Grace) Schaike '49, a lawyer, secretary.

Mrs. Jack (Pat) Babcock '64, a homemaker, treasurer.

Mrs. Joe (Rosie) Abel '60 was appointed chairman of the alumni office on the campus.

A highlight of the banquet will be the presentation of The Distinguished Alumni Award.



TERRY MCLEAN

Kotzebue Carnival

The Kotzebue Student Council hosted its annual carnival, April 23. It seems that all of Kotzebue showed up for the event, including a few people from different villages.

It included the dunking machine, cartoons, country store, cake walk, bingo, and many more attractions.

The booths brought in a net profit of \$3,657.00. This money is to be used in sponsoring and other activities for the school students.

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Native Students Awarded at SJC

Six Native students were among those awarded scholarships last week by Dr. Charles C. Bovee, Acting President of Shledon Jackson College.

Ten \$400 scholarships were awarded to the ten freshman students with the highest grade point averages, and five faculty scholarships of \$300 were awarded to students chosen by the faculty as having the greatest promise on the basis of their productivity and progress this year.

Edward Frank, Kotzebue; Evelyn Hamilton, Craig; and Vernon Nusunginya, Nenana, were among those receiving Academic Excellence scholarships; and Lou Ann Benson, Sitka; Fritzoff Auliye, Koyuk; and Anthony Sarren, Anchorage, were among those receiving Incentive scholarships.

Sheldon Jackson College began making the faculty scholarship awards last year instead of the more traditional department heads. The new program seems well received by the student as the incentive it was intended to be.

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