



AN/NHIAC CENTRAL

Providing Economic Opportunity in Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Country

Expanding Capacity Over the Airwaves of Alaska's North Slope

Accessible only by plane, snow-machine, or barge, Barrow, Alaska, might be one of the most remote communities in the United States. Located between the Arctic Circle and the North Pole, Barrow has a reputation as a most inhospitable place to live. The local economy is fueled by oil production, and proceeds from its revenues are a major contributor to the area's income and tax base.

"We are starting to see a decline in the amount of oil production, which impacts the budget of the local government and the level of direct service that it can provide," explains Donald Hoke of Ilisagvik Community College in Barrow. Because of government budget decreases, some community residents are looking for ways to take advantage of the emerging opportunities by providing services otherwise filled by the city and borough government. Ilisagvik College is providing residents the opportunity to acquire the skills they need.

The North Slope Borough (NSB) government employs about 80 percent of the working-age residents in the

inexpensive way to provide business and entrepreneurial training for people excited about the emerging business

opportunities. The most reliable, least expensive, and readily available means of communicating was radio.

Working with KBRW—an Alaska Public Broadcasting station—Dr. Stan Scott of Ilisagvik College developed a weekly public service radio program to disseminate information about business management and the opportunities developing in the local private sector. "We try to bring the opinions of local people and the leaders in business, college, and government into the station to discuss current or planned events of interest to the community that the college serves," states

Hoke. The one-hour programs focus on business management and entrepreneurial issues, and, occasionally, offer a half-hour segment devoted to a particular technique such as grant writing.

Topics for the shows are developed around current events and opportunities that can be supplemented with an



Welcome Bear Sign in Barrow, Alaska.

region. As the move toward privatization continues, the residents and current employees are positioning themselves to take advantage of new opportunities.

Because no roads connect any villages, there is no direct satellite access, and Internet service incurs long-distance telephone charges, the school sought an

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interview with an expert in a specific area. "We ensure that every show includes a segment devoted to entrepreneurial opportunities and how the college can assist residents in obtaining the necessary skills to take advantage of the ideas the guests discuss," adds Hoke. The entry-level skills that are taught during the programs can be directly applied in an employee's current position and are easily transferable to the private sector as opportunities arise from NSB privatization.

The training sessions build upon the discussions with the guests and occasionally continue over the course of a few weeks. Some of the subjects covered include:

- ◆ What is a business plan?
- ◆ How do you prepare a business plan?
- ◆ What is a marketing plan?
- ◆ How do you prepare a marketing plan?
- ◆ New venture opportunities for entrepreneurs.

"Generally the teaching does not follow the same set theme from week to week," states Hoke. "We have found the reception to the idea of business management is better if we let it come as experiences from local and recognized experts."

Guests on the show include Fran Ulmer, the lieutenant governor of Alaska, and Ted Stevens, one of the state's U.S. Senators. During their appearance on the show, Ulmer and Stevens made announcements about available programs in the region. Senator Stevens discussed the work of the Denali Commission and the current state of development within the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge—an important means of potential revenue

for area residents. Lt. Governor Ulmer discussed the ongoing whale census and suggested ways that local residents who are dependent on whale hunting could contribute their expertise.

The weekly program reaches every village in the college's target area. The 10 a.m. broadcast time was selected to reach listeners during their coffee break. The school estimates that it reaches approximately 1,000 listeners, or 25 to 35 percent of the potential audience each Monday. "The numbers are higher in the outlying villages where KBRW is the only station available," states Hoke. As a result of the broadcasts, the opportunities for partnerships with public- and private-sector businesses have improved in the region, Hoke adds.

Even without AN/NHIAC funding, Ilisagvik College intends to continue its radio program and its association with NSB as they develop business and office management skills that are needed as much in the area workforce as plumbing and construction skills. The school intends to sponsor a grants management association and plans to apply for additional grants to build or remodel locations for distance-learning equipment. "Any way that we can more effectively deliver training will be of benefit to the villages," concludes Hoke.

For additional information contact Karen Stretch, Grant Coordinator, e-mail: karen.stretch@ilisagvik.cc; phone: (907) 852-3333. ◆



Angoon Pilot

Kaua'i Community College Addresses Residents' Needs

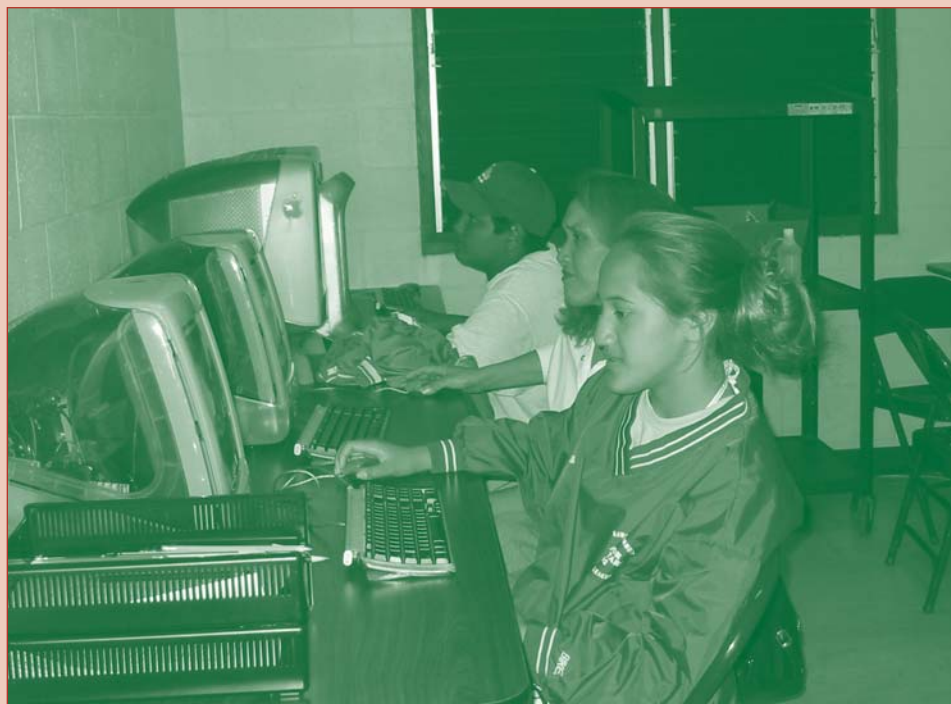
For many, just the mention of the word Hawaii conjures mental images of pristine beaches; rolling, swelling surfs; lush foliage; and menacing lava beds. And these are all real features of the Hawaiian landscape. But there is much more to this chain of islands. Beyond the world-class resorts and picturesque backdrops are everyday communities where people live and work and where local entities use their resources to improve residents' lives. The island of Kaua'i is such a place, and Kaua'i Community College, its only public tertiary level institution, is providing training programs and youth activities for the island's low- and moderate-income residents.

Presently, the college offers an ongoing computer training project at a temporary site and will use its Native Hawaiian Institutions Assisting Communities (NHIAC) grant to construct a 1,200-square-foot building to house a computer lab with high-speed Internet access and to provide a safe, permanent venue for an afterschool program.

Computer Training and Youth Activities

One of the college's strongest links to the community exists through the Hawaiian Studies Department, which houses the Native Hawaiian Community-Based Education Learning Center (NHCBELC). The center oversees a computer lab available to Native Hawaiians for training opportunities.

In June 2003, NHCBELC opened a lab in Anahola—one of Kaua'i's low- and moderate-income towns—in partnership with Project Ka Hale Pono, which was formed as a result of a college's current AN/NHIAC grant. Summer Helms, the previous HUD grant coordinator at the college, is excited about the college's involvement with this project. "Classes were held twice a week for



Youth learning computer skills during Kimo's class in Anahola.

6 weeks on topics ranging from basic computer use to Microsoft PowerPoint. More than 25 Anahola residents were served," she says. Later, an afterschool program was offered, another component of the AN/NHIAC grant.

"Because the youth were so eager to use the computers, the program coordinator decided to make computer lab access the incentive for them completing their homework assignments," she adds. "The youth enjoyed activities such as Internet surfing and downloading and uploading pictures, and several of them used the lab to complete reports for school. Sign-in sheets show that close to 40 youth use the lab on a weekly basis."

Engaging the Youth

According to Helms, so many youth have no place to go after school and often end up getting into trouble, which often includes alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. "Our afterschool program and computer training classes are a positive response to this problem.

I've seen it first hand," she says. Helms visits the clubhouse, the afterschool program's temporary site, and talks with the participants and onsite coordinator. She recalls a student enrolled in the program whose mother is a known drug user. "I asked her about her mother's drug habit," says Helms. "You may think this approach is backwards, but it was a straightforward question, and she appreciated my honest inquiry," says Helms. "The student said, 'Yeah, why?' That's where our communication started. After that, she became a regular attendee to the program. She showed such a need to be involved and feel needed that we asked her to become a tutor. Her grades were average but her patience with the younger kids was exceptional. She's been a youth volunteer at our program for 6 months now and has shown more consistency and dedication than any of the paid tutors. We can only hope that her involvement in the program and positive impact on other kids has made a difference," says Helms.

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Top: Children studying during the Anahola After-School Program. Bottom: Youth learning computer skills at Kimo's class in Anahola.

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Future Expansion

"Because there is such a strong need in the community for youth activities and computer training programs, these services were started in a small clubhouse during construction of the building," says Helms. The college expects to complete construction of a 1,200-square-foot building some time in April 2004. Once completed, an 18-station computer lab will be installed. Sandwich Isles Communications, a project partner, will provide all wiring and labor for the lab's high-speed Internet access. Another future project partner, Hawaii Technology Institute, plans to use the site for job training by offering Microsoft and other computer programming certification classes. These classes will feed into the college's Rural Development Project (RDP), which will provide job placement for individuals who complete the training. RDP has existing relationships with several local employers, such as the Pacific Missile

Range Facility, who have a high demand for computer-trained individuals. In this way, the community, especially Native Hawaiians, receive the training they need to improve their economic status, and the college fulfills one of its main directives—to be responsive to the workforce needs of Kaua'i. In addition to housing the computer lab and being the venue for the afterschool program, the new structure will provide a site for other organizations to provide services directly to the residents of Anahola.

For more information on Kaua'i Community College, contact Summer Helms, Institutional Researcher, Kaua'i Community College, Office of the Chancellor, 3-1901 Kaumuali'i Highway, Lihue, HI 96766; phone: (808) 245-8304; fax: (808) 245-5042. ♦

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AN/NHIAC Program Grantees Pursue Education, Training, and Economic Development Projects

The five institutions of higher learning that received 2003 AN/NHIAC program grants are pursuing projects in education, training, and economic development to combat the challenges faced by the geographic isolation of their communities. The following profiles summarize the types of activities that grantees are undertaking.

Ilisagvik College in Barrow, Alaska, will use its \$799,724 AN/NHIAC program grant to improve delivery of its distance education programs and economic development activities. Courses provided through the program are designed to increase student skills in business management and office systems and procedures and to help individuals and families achieve economic self-sufficiency. The college and the North Slope Borough will collaborate on the project to ensure community economic development. Both entities are committed to increasing the number of residents that have stable, sustainable employment.

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Bristol Bay campus, in Dillingham, Alaska, serves 33 Alaska Native villages and provides educational opportunities to rural Alaskans. It will use its \$800,000 grant to provide village residents with training opportunities in building maintenance and construction trades, computer support, and the development of Internet-based microenterprises. The university will work closely with the Bristol Bay Housing Authority, Alaska Works Partnership, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and the Southwest Alaska Vocational and Education Center to achieve its goals.

Chaminade University of Honolulu will use its \$799,297 grant to acquire a property that will house the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs and provide a facility from which the civic clubs can serve their communities. It will also be used as a training and community outreach facility, which will be located in a low-income community in the city and county of Honolulu. Activities will include community service by Chaminade students, faculty, and staff.

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Kuskokwim campus, will use its \$798,598 program grant to provide communities with the following microenterprise opportunities:

- Native arts and crafts production and marketing
- Native dance performance and marketing
- Village bed & breakfasts
- Management/coordination
- Tourism
- Driver's education as a business opportunity

These activities will help to alleviate some of the high unemployment by providing the training needed to establish and run a small business in a small rural village. This project is a collaborative effort with a variety of regional partners.

University of Alaska Fairbanks, Northwest campus, in Nome, Alaska, will use its \$798,598 program grant to rehabilitate a facility to provide mechanical, welding, and carpentry vocational workshops available to both students and adults. This program proposes to address the lack of vocational training in the region. During the school year students in grades 9 to 12 will be able to take vocational and life skills classes. Adults will participate in the evening and on weekends and will have an opportunity to increase their skill levels in vocational trades. In the past, high school-age children had to move or attend a boarding school hundreds or even thousands of miles away to obtain this type of training. The university will work closely with the Northwest Alaska Career and Technical Center and the city of Nome. ❖

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