Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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American Indians now are participating in all programs offered for the disadvantaged under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the Department of the Interior said today.

The extent of Indian participation in these programs, operated by the Office of Economic Opportunity with Interior Department cooperation is summarized below:

Job Corps

Through Job Corps Conservation Centers spotted across the Nation, disadvantaged young people receive a second chance at schooling coupled with skill training and a change of environment.

Ten such Centers have been approved for Indian reservation areas: Winslow, Arizona and Mexican Springs, New Mexico on the Navajo Reservation; Colorado River and San Carlos Reservations in Arizona; Mescalero in New Mexico; White Earth in Minnesota; Flathead in Montana; Cheyenne River in South Dakota; and Makah and Yakima in Washington. Young people from all over the Nation are enrolled in these camps.

Neighborhood Youth Corps

The Youth Corps program--which encourages 4ropouts to stay in school through a combination of schooling and employment--has been welcomed in Indian communities.

In the few months since the Corps was organized, 55 Indian communities have submitted applications for funds. Of these more than half have already been approved. It is estimated that more than 9,000 Indian boys and girls will benefit directly when all applications have been processed. They will work part-time in hospitals, schools, libraries, and other government and nonprofit agencies while completing high school.

Operation Head Start

This program provides 90 percent Federal financial support for communities to organize and operate preschool programs that will ease the adjustment of young children to regular schooling. Health services and help in developing verbal skills and special abilities are features of Head start.

Of the 20 applications for funds submitted by Indian tribal groups, 18 have been approved for programs to serve about 1,600 children. In addition, more than 65 local school districts in predominantly Indian areas are sponsoring Head start programs to include over 9,000 children.

VISTA

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)--the Domestic Peace Corps--which assign volunteers to work among the disadvantaged, has already assigned 18 workers to Indian reservations and has scheduled classes to train several hundred more workers requested by Indian groups.

Community Action Program

The Community Action Program (CAP) provides financial support for a broad range of antipoverty efforts in local communities. This in-depth approach to socio-economic problems has attracted 66 applications from Indian communities of which 26 have been approved to date.

Included in the proposals have been adult educational enrichment programs; evening study halls for students; nursery schools and day care centers for children of working parents; family counseling and guidance clinics; pre-employment training for service jobs; homemaker's service; manpower availability surveys of reservations; and a plan to preserve for posterity Indian legends, folklore, tribal and family histories on recordings prepared by tribal elders. These programs are expected to provide continuing benefits to the communities that initiate them.
