Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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About thirty American Indians are being provided a course in co-operative management and leadership training that will enable them to successfully operate enterprises that vary from arts and crafts through campground, credit, farming, fishing, livestock, marketing, paddy rice, and tourism.

It began in mid-July at the University of Wisconsin and is funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Training includes nine weeks of classroom and group learning situations interspersed with one week researching on their home reservation and a two week field trip reviewing selected United States cooperatives.

Following this 12 week -period a one-year on-the-job training opportunity, which selected United States coo-operatives have agreed to provide, will be given each participant. Three one-week seminars are scheduled, one after each-four months of on-the-job training.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce, a former member of the board of directors of the Dairyman's League Cooperative Association and former public relations and promotions director of Mid-Eastern Cooperatives, a chain of 23 co-operative supermarkets said in commenting on the program:

"It is particularly appropriate that Indians be trained in cooperative techniques because they suit the Indian tribal concept. Indians take readily to the idea of cooperative enterprises both, as tribes and as groups of individuals."

Classroom and group leadership training if provided by the International Cooperative Training Center and by the Center for Community Leadership Development, both of which are at the University of Wisconsin.

All field and on-the-job training is arranged for and supervised by Cooperative Education and Training, Inc. (CET), an organization representing United States cooperatives. Their management work experience may be anywhere in the United States where participating cooperatives can provide the training required. However, those cooperatives nearest reservations will be favored.

Expenses of participants during the, classroom training period are paid by the Bureau, as well as the travel, expenses of participants and their families during their on-the-job training period. Participants will be paid the going local wage by those cooperatives for which they work during the on-the-job training portion of the program.

Information on the program is available from International Cooperative Training center, University of Wisconsin Extension Service, 610 Langdon Street, Madison, Wisc. 53706.