Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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A number of gifted American Indian students will be given the chance to go with some of the Nation's leading scientists on world-wide expeditions under an Exploration Scholarship Program of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Marvin L. Franklin, and Assistant to the Secretary of the U. S. Department of the Interior for Indian Affairs, announced today.

"The program began on a pilot basis last year, when 11 American Indian and Alaska Native high school and college students were chosen to participate," Franklin said. "We hope to have as many selected this year."

American Indian students between the ages of 15 and 21 may compete now for 1973 scholarships by submitting applications to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Office that serves them by March 16, 1973. Additional information on the awards and the applications are available from that same office.

Scholarships will be funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and will be arranged through two organizations: The Explorers Club and Educational Expeditions International (in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution).

This year's scholarships will be awarded in the fields of astronomy, archaeology, anthropology, ecology, marine biology, and geology. Expeditions of from one to eight weeks will be led by prominent scientists to research sites in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia, South and Central America, and the United States.

Candidates will be chosen on the basis of demonstrated competence and potential for careers in the various scientific fields. Evidence of good health, physical prowess, recommendations by community leaders, and an essay will also be used to judge competitors.

Semi-finalists in the competition will be chosen by each Area Office and forwarded to Washington, D.C. by March 30, 1973.

Final selections will be made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Education Programs in Washington, D.C., and the participating organizations. Winners will be announced by April 16, 1973.

Scholarship assistance includes air fare to the expedition site, subsidized entirely by the program's private sponsors, and all other expenses.

Opportunities to take part in the expeditions are also available for other students and teachers able to pay their own expenses. Schools, educational, civic, or private organizations and state governments wishing to sponsor scholarships may do so. Expenses average $1,500 for each student.

Those students selected last year went to Nyragongo, Eastern Congo; Okavango, Botswana, South Africa; Prince Edward Island, Canada; Ubeidiya site, Israel; Rhode Island; and the wilderness area of Oregon in the United States.

One of the 11 Indian scholarship winners chosen last year reported back to the Explorers Club via an article in a recent issue of its "Explorers Journal." She is Carol Mae Nichol of Los Angeles, Calif., a Delaware-Pottawatomi Indian graduate of UCLA who went to the Ubeidiya site, Israel, last year. She says:

"I, who had been no further than Oklahoma, swam in the Sea of Galilee. I, who have always been a fence straddler in America's anthropology departments have found a place where my particular interest is an established field of study: prehistory. My career objectives are suddenly plausible •••• Thank you."