Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Ground is being broken for a new Indian vocational-technical school at Albuquerque, N.M., the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs announced today.

An $8,778,185 contract for the school's construction recently was awarded to the Lembke Construction Co. of Albuquerque, which submitted the lowest of three bids.

Bureau officials said the program will remain continually flexible to meet the changing needs of Indians, Indian communities, and society at large. The new school will not rest content to place an Indian in front of a turret lathe and let him graduate with a skill that may be obsolete before he is out of the classroom.

These officials said further that even the buildings, featuring a post-tensioned concrete structural system with exterior masonry walls and demountable interior partitions, will allow the flexibility which is required by changing educational concepts.

The school will teach basic skills for entry level jobs, while at the same time it may also act as an interim school to help a young Indian go on to college.

It will work with the Indian who wants to change the kind of job he is now doing, the Bureau officials said, as well as help the one who is under-employed and needs. new skills to obtain a better job.

The present contract includes construction of physical education facilities as well as classrooms; a dining and institutional services center, and dormitories for 500 students.

The school is scheduled to open in the Fall of 1971.