

MMS Alaska OCS Region

News Release

For Immediate Release
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Interior Agencies and University of Alaska, Anchorage,
Develop New Training Program for Native Students

The Minerals Management Service and four other Department of the Interior agencies are partnering with the University of Alaska Anchorage's Native Student Services, to develop a new program to provide Alaska Native and American Indian students in Alaska with internships with Interior agencies. The program, titled "Internship for Native Student Training and Education Program," or INSTEP is designed to increase the recruitment and hiring of Alaska Natives and American Indians in Alaska within the Interior Department workforce. The participating Interior agencies include Minerals Management Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

Students participating in the ten-week program will work as interns at one of five Interior agencies in addition to attending a specially developed class and conducting a research project relative to Alaska Natives or American Indians. The sponsorship provided by the Interior agencies will cover room and board at UAA, round-trip travel from the student's village, books and tuition for six credits, a weekly stipend, local transportation, and administrative costs. The internship will allow students to gain work experience, develop marketable work skills and personal contacts that can be shared with their tribal communities.

This year's pilot program has enrolled six students, but it is still open until Friday, May 26, 2000, to accept students if additional Interior agencies agree to sponsor other interns. INSTEP may expand in subsequent years as Interior agency budgets and interest allow or it may be opened to include other government agencies.

Questions regarding INSTEP may be directed to UAA's Native Student Services Director, Barbara Fleek, at (907) 876-4015.

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