

HUTCHISON CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

By Dan Kupiszewski

The Hutchison Career Development Center, built and opened in the fall of 1973, is a part of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. As a public school, the Development Center follows the school district calendar but some programs, such as aviation, continue during the months of June, July and August. The admission policy is to accept all persons 16 years of age or older. Bus transportation is provided for high school students who attend both the Development Center and an area high school. The development of occupational skills is the prime objective of the Center's educational philosophy.

A career center in Fairbanks is of particular importance to the resident labor force in the immediate area and the Northern Region of Alaska. It enables persons who are unemployed or underemployed to acquire new skills and obtain entry level positions which would otherwise be closed to them. For the majority of the Northern Region's population, the opportunity for persons to receive training without leaving their family or local community is a major advantage. Also, an individual can keep a full or part-time job, depending on whether they attend the Center full or part-time. In addition, persons with children will find the Career Center offers a special advantage as child-care at the school is available for children from 6 months to 6 years of age at a cost of 50 cents per hour. Unlike the Seward Skill Center, a live-in situation, Hutchison students live outside the school facilities.

Many different complete programs, with the primary objective of occupational competence, are currently offered by the Center. They are:

1. Aircraft Technology
2. Auto Body
3. Auto Mechanics
4. Carpentry
5. Child Care Occupations
6. Cook/Chef
7. Cooperative Office Education
8. Custodial Services
9. Distributive Education

10. Health Occupations
11. Industrial Cooperative Education
12. Office Occupations Cluster
13. Small Engines
14. Vocational Drafting
15. Vocational Printing
16. Waiter/Waitress
17. Welding
18. Security Guard Training

General educational improvement, rather than occupational competence is the objective of the Adult Basic Education and General Educational Development programs for people who want to increase their reading, writing and arithmetic skills.

Considerable depth is evident in the course offerings. The Office Occupations Cluster, for instance, consists of 44 major training programs as described in the U.S. Department of Labor "Dictionary of Occupational Titles". Some of the occupations trained for are: bookkeeper; payroll clerk; general office clerk; personnel clerk; secretary; stenographer; clerk typist; MTST operator; MCET operator and memory typewriter operator. Medical, legal, technical, and scientific typing courses are available out of a total of 9 different typing courses. The 8 different shorthand courses include courses in legal, medical, and technical terminology. Each program is divided into several "modules" of instruction. The modules are made up of concepts and objectives and the students must reach a defined level of proficiency to complete the module. Students in the Office Occupations Cluster proceed at their own rate and upon completion are awarded a certificate which will assure employers that they possess the necessary skills for employment. High school students receive a letter grade, while adults are given a written description of their performance.

Aircraft Technology is another impressive program consisting of 8 hours of daily instruction for a period of one year. The first 3 months of instruction are designed to fulfill all F.A.A. general subject areas of mathematics, applied physics, drafting and blueprints, aircraft weight and balance, fuels and fuel systems,

basic electricity, F.A.A. regualtions, shop practices, and safety. The second course is Aircraft Technology II, which covers all phases of engine theory and mechanics from the smallest reciprocating engine to the largest turbo-fan jet. Successful completion of Part II enables the student to take the test for the F.A.A. Powerplant Mechanics License. Course III satisfies the prerequisites for a student to take his F.A.A. Airframe Mechanics License.

Another unique program is Security Guard Training. This 45-hour program is designed to satisfy state requirements. Instruction covers driving safety, first aid, firearms safety, security and patrol procedures. Instructors are recognized experts in their field.

During January 1977, student enrollment totaled 485 persons—270 high school students and 215 adults. Classes are usually limited to 15—20 persons. However, printing classes are limited to 10 persons. The Office Occupations are still popular with adult women, but printing and drafting presently have about a 50 percent female enrollment.

During construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, the kitchen helpers program was full and had long waiting lists. Students (2/3 of which were female) successfully completing the 3-month course were often able to obtain a "B" card from the Culinary Union, thereby greatly increasing their employment chances for pipeline jobs. Welding classes were also full during the pipeline boom and still are today.

Of particular importance is the fact that most of the occupational training offered is for those job opportunities which provide the most stable employment. As a result many of the Alaskans trained will be able to enter the work force in productive year-round employment, thereby reducing the rate of unemployment that would otherwise prevail.

ALASKA LABOR MARKET IN DECEMBER

Employment and Unemployment: Completion of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline continues to affect employment within the State. Continuing the trend of the past few months, large numbers of workers are dropping out of the labor force either by ceasing to actively search for work or by leaving the State. It is interesting to note that the total number of unemployed has only experienced a gradual increase when compared to the tremendous drop in

employment over the past few months. This trend has been caused by a great out-migration of unemployed workers hoping to find employment elsewhere rather than searching for work in Alaska.

Mining: Employment in the mining industry remained unchanged from November to December. At this time of year, usually no new operations are begun and conversely any operations that had anticipated shutting down usually have done so by this time. Most employment, at this time of year, is primarily in the oil industries.

Construction: Primarily due to the completion of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, the construction industry continues to experience severe reductions in employment. December should be the last month of massive layoffs along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. The work force along the pipeline has now been effectively reduced to approximately 6,000 men who will continue to work through the winter months to complete the pipeline.

Due to the extremely mild winter this year, non-pipeline related construction employment has only experienced moderate declines. The mild weather has allowed many projects, which would have normally shutdown, to continue without interruption.

Manufacturing: Employment in the lumber and wood products industry continues to be well above year ago levels due to the extremely mild winter this year. Logging operations are only now beginning to layoff workers as winter snow accumulations are finally beginning to force the closure of some logging operations. Though the timber industry appears to be doing quite well this winter, there has been one noteworthy exception. In highly publicized event, Shnaubel Lumber Company closed its doors on December 3, due to a lack of logs. It is anticipated that the mill will not open again until April or until a new supply of logs can be obtained.

The food processing industry was mixed during the month of December as canneries in the salmon fishing industry continue to shut down and fish processors catering to the shellfish industry begin to gear up for the winter shellfish season.

Transportation: Employment in the transportation industry was quite typical for the month of December. The number of persons employed in the air transportation industry increased slightly