

A Look at A.C.C.'s Native American Program

by Louis Baca

"By every standard, Indians receive the worst education of any children in the country. They attend shabby, overcrowded public schools which lack even basic resources. They are taught by teachers who are untrained, unprepared, and sometimes unwilling to meet their needs. They enter school late and leave early. The percentage of Indians who drop out (are pushed out) of school is twice that for all other children. Among the Indian population fully two-thirds of the adults have not gone beyond elementary school, and one-quarter of Indian adults are functionally illiterate. The educational system has failed Indians. The Federal government's obligation to support Indian education has not been fulfilled."

---"An Even Chance"; a report on Federal funds for Indian children in public school districts.

By the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. with the cooperation of the Center for Law and Education, Harvard University.

Alpena Community College, through a special grant from the State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education, is working to overcome these social inequities. ACC is a pioneer in this field, and until this year was the only school in the state of Michigan operating such a special needs program designed especially to meet the educational needs of the Native American in the state.

During the spring semester of 1971, Mr. Charles Curley and Mr. Robert Dominic laid the foundations for the program's existence. With supportive assistance from the administration, in the form of a commitment to house the program here, a proposal was submitted to the state office of education. That proposal was approved and the active recruitment of students began; a staff was hired; and the framework of the program was built -- it is in this framework that we continue to be housed and built today.

To anyone even vaguely familiar with the social status of the Native American in today's society, they know that the quote opening this article is not an exaggeration of the truth, but rather a pure and truthful statement of fact(s).

The program here at ACC has grown from recruiting 22 students that first spring semester to having as many as 45 - 50 students on campus at one time

Continued next column

Black Dorm at U-Penn. Investigated

Philadelphia, Penn. (CPS) -- The Office of the Attorney General for Pennsylvania is investigating an all-black dormitory at the University of Pennsylvania for possible violation of discrimination in housing status.

The investigation was initiated earlier this year to determine if the W.E.B. DuBois Residence Center is in violation of three state laws concerning discrimination in housing. At that time Peter Kostmayer, press secretary for the Attorney General, said the University of Pennsylvania was being investigated for the "possible violation of the state Fair Housing Act, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and a third law involving discrimination in university housing."

The Attorney General's office says it has no plans to take action against the dorm at this time and has no future plans concerning the violations.

last fall. This year, with many transferring on to other colleges and universities and other opportunities finally beginning to open throughout the rest of the state, we hope to have 30 - 40 Native American students here with us.

Our program is not an exclusively 'segregated and closed' program. But rather, we are an integral part of the college, operating out of the student services office. We endeavor to provide the Native American with the individualized tutorial and counseling services he may not normally receive due to the large number of students enrolled at ACC versus the small counseling staff.

We are striving to cut the high drop-out rate to help make ourselves more employable through education. Thus, the social inequities as stated above will not have to be a stark reality in tomorrow's society.

Although we are funded by the state department specifically for assisting the Native American student, we do not wish to close our doors there. Rather, we try to help all minority students on campus: the Black, Chicano-Mexican American, and foreign students. We do not profess to have all the solutions to all the problems the students face here on campus in pursuing an education, but we try as much as possible to help him succeed while here at ACC.

Our doors are open to all, and we would encourage you to come in and visit with us.

"We only ask an even chance to live as other men live. We ask to be recognized as men. We ask that the same law shall work alike on all men."

---Chief Joseph
Nez Perce Tribe
1879

Local Ministers to Provide Added Counseling Services

ACC students will have the privilege of some additional counselling services this fall, with the addition of several interested individuals who will give up their time to "rap" with students about school life and any difficulties they may be encountering.

These volunteer people are ministers who are giving of their time and energy to be a part of the action at ACC in helping students. Involved will be Reverend Sanford Wright, Reverend Jack Fitzgerald, and other volunteer ministers. Their aim is to "be involved" with the situations Alpena's college students face.

These Lay-Professional counsellors will be on hand within the college from 10:00-2:00 four days per week. These ministers are not required to report any information they may receive during counselling, and do not receive pay for their services because they are not hired staff involved with the college itself. Because of these reasons, students should feel free to discuss any number of hang-ups on their minds. In providing such an opportunity, these ministers hope to provide the following things:

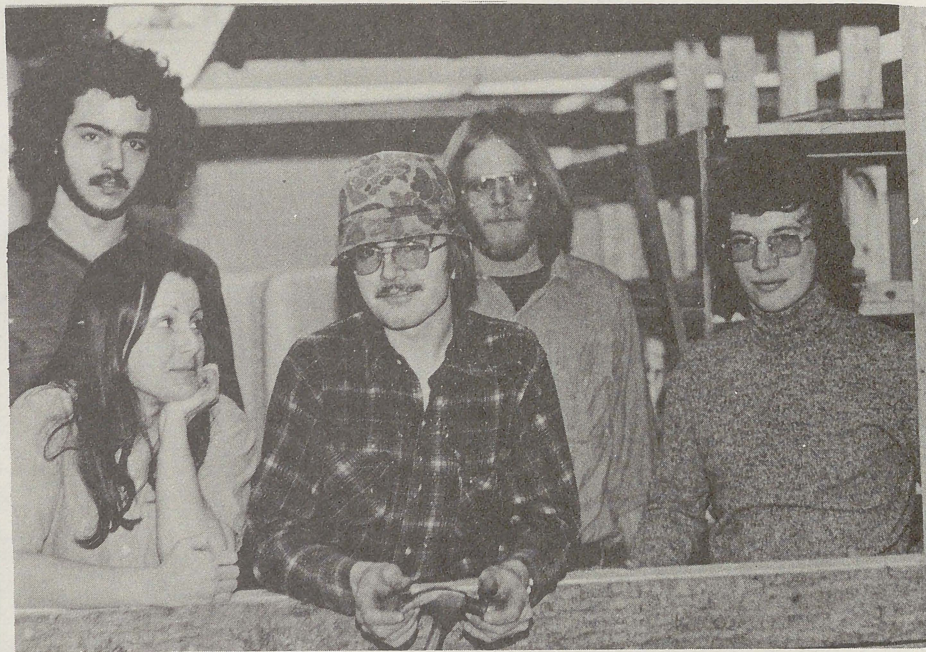
*A volunteer service totally unrelated to the College program itself

*A source of information and counselling services available to the students

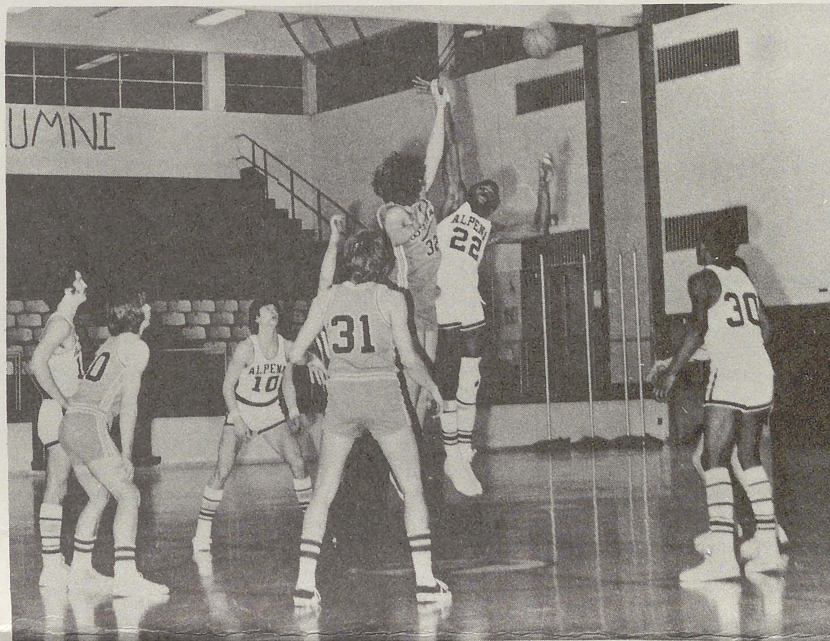
*The introduction of four new individuals the students will have the opportunity to be compatible with in school life

Because this service will be on hand throughout the week, students are welcome to "drop in" for a chat anytime. You, as students, will be given the chance to speak with a person totally interested in what you have to say . . . that's a switch from the usual, hey!?

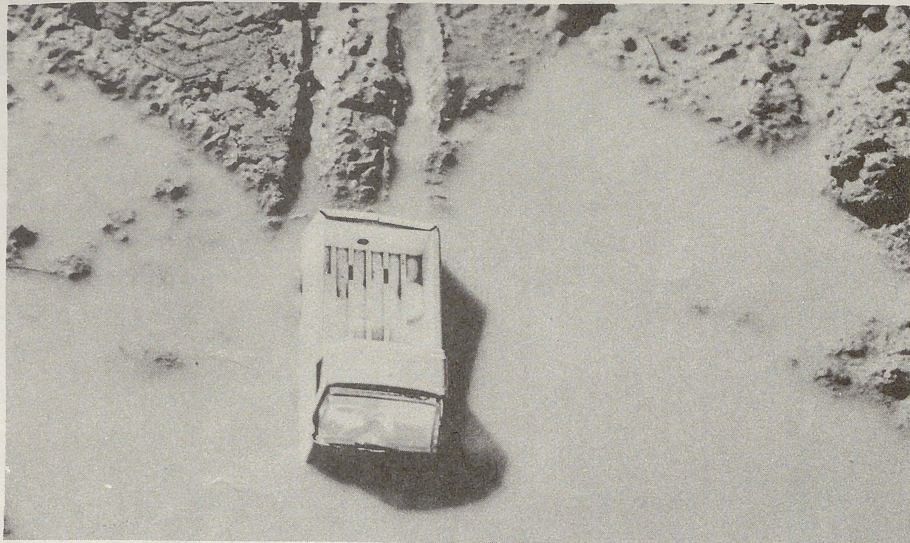
Some Scenes from Last Year



Pictured above are some of the students who worked so hard to build and establish The Cave, a coffeehouse located in the basement of the Student Center. The Cave opened in March and featured some excellent entertainment on weekends! Watch for the fall opening of The Cave . . .



. . . Last year's basketball team ended the season with a mediocre 13-12 won-loss record, but things look good for this year, with the appointment of a new coach, Mr. Bill Morse, and the addition of several new players. . .



. . . One of last year's POLEMIC issues carried a story stating that plans to pave ACC's parking lots were progressing smoothly. Several weeks ago, however, those plans came to a halt as the Alpena Board of Education refused to okay the plans. So, it looks like we'll still be sloshing through the mud puddles . . .

FIRST BESSER AWARDS GIVEN AT 1973 COMMENCEMENT

by June Hinkley

Two new awards were given during the 1973 graduation ceremony held at the Alpena High School auditorium on May 23, 1973. These awards were the JESSE AND ANNA BESSER AWARDS, and were presented respectively to Glen Betzoldt and Sue Reynolds. Beginning with the 1973 year, and continuing through additional graduation years, these awards will be part of the outstanding honor of the commencement ceremony held for ACC students.

To receive either of these awards, a student must exhibit outstanding contributions to the life of the college through scholarship, student leadership, and in the expression of responsibility in the solution of social problems. (This includes student activities and organizations).

The ANNA BESSER AWARD will be once again awarded to a sophomore girl, and the JESSE BESSER AWARD will be given to a sophomore guy at the 1974 graduation ceremony. Both of these awards are given in honor of Jesse and Anna Besser who established the Jesse Besser Museum, contributed to the Anna Besser Junior High School, and also contributed to the college by providing funds for the building of the Besser Technical Building.

These students honored will, in the consecutive years that follow, have their names inscribed in a plaque located in the ACC Library, as a permanent record of their outstanding achievements. In addition to this honor, each student receives a check for \$100.00 to be used toward his/her continued education.