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This Is Your University: Theodore Drahn on student probation parole aids, 3/20/70

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A pilot program to train probation parole aids to serve in villages in Alaska is underway at the University of Alaska. The program began earlier this year with four students, Loretta Kenton of Barrow, Arnold Grant of Unalakleet and Barbara Francis and Moses Peter, both of Bethel. These students have begun work in their own communities. During their two months of training at the university, the students worked with Theodore L. Drahn, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Sociology. Professor Drahn says main reason for training someone in a community to do probation and parole work was to bring someone from the Division of Corrections into a village position where no such position had existed before and, in this case, bringing Native people in to begin doing probation and parole work which, he says, stands as the crux of a successful correctional program.

As soon as the students left the University and began their work, they enrolled in a correspondence course in criminology. The students will be encouraged to continue their studies and may work toward degrees in the social sciences.

The program is a mutual venture between the Labor Department's new Careers Division, the Division of Corrections and the College of Behavioral Sciences and Education at the University.

It is possible more people will be trained. The program is being evaluated right now. A field trip is planned for April to go to the locations the program attendees are now working in order to evaluate areas where the program could be improved.

Usually probation and parole people enter the career at the baccalaureate level. This is the first time in the state of Alaska, and perhaps the first in the country, to introduce people with only high school degrees into that occupation, says Drahn.