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Project Vote Smart Scholarships available for Alaska students

Great Divide Ranch, MT – March 10 - Project Vote Smart's founding board has approved funds to cover all expenses for up to five University of Alaska Southeast students to spend ten weeks at its unique political research retreat center.

Considered the nation's most independent, dependable and accurate political research organization with over 5,000 sponsoring news organizations and libraries, the project conducts background checks on over 30,000 political candidates and issues.

"We lack researchers from Alaska and we are very interested in attracting students from University of Alaska Southeast," said Lisa Coligan, the Project's Intern Coordinator.

With its headquarters in an exclusive high-tech wilderness park 6,000 feet up in the Rocky Mountains, the Project's volunteers have created what the New York Times says "is a program so good even the Federal Government recommends it."

"We are still building the retreat research center and are in need of students willing to work on everything from candidate interviews and presidential research to building corral fences and painting lodge facilities," said Coligan. "The big payoff is seeing the hundreds of news stories and thousands of citizens' right to the facts instead of the rhetoric. The work is hard and terribly important, but you get to live in an incomparable paradise that features fishing, hiking, swimming, boating and horseback riding.

Students must commit to a ten-week internship, which can be scheduled at any time, but those interested in serving during summer 2003 should act quickly before spots fill up. Although political science, communications and journalism majors are particularly encouraged to apply, interns from all backgrounds, including recent college graduates and graduate students are accepted and eligible for scholarship support.

Additional information and applications for Project Vote Smart internships are available on the Vote Smart website (www.vote-smart.org). Students can also call the Voter's Research Hotline for more information (1-888-868-3762).

The Alaska Native Oratory Society Contest: it's not just about the money

By Vita Wilson
Whalesong Staff

I laughed, I cried; my face puckered at the mention of eating human eyeballs. No, I wasn't watching the latest award-winning film; I attended the First Alaska Native Oratory Society Contest held at UAS. The contest was open to high school students and anyone taking at least three college credits, and over a dozen college students from UAS and UAA competed this past Sat., March 22, in one or more of the following categories: oratory, dramatic declamation and storytelling. My first intention was to take few photos for this newspaper, but the speakers were so talented and their stories, oratories and declamations so intriguing,

that I stayed until the very end of the awards ceremony.

Calling this the First Alaska Native Oratory Society Contest is a bit misleading. This is the first one held at UAS; the actual first ever contest was held last academic year at UAA, and UAF held their first one earlier this academic year. UAA will host their second annual contest this April 19, which will feature UAS' own Tlingit Cultural Dancers, and maybe some of them will even compete in the oratory.

In fact, the Alaska Native Oratory Society itself is a fairly young entity created by Executive Director Dan Henry (with lots of support from UAA and corporations such as the First

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The UAS Tlingit Cultural Dancers performed at the Alaska Native Oratory Society awards ceremony.

Photo by Vita Wilson

UAS adding to the menu

By Sean Smith
Whalesong Staff

Two new appetizers and three new entrees were added to the UAS menu when the UA Board of Regents met on Feb. 19-20. The additions made their final formality when the Board ruled in overwhelming favor for UAS to offer a bachelor's degree in English, social science, and information systems, and one-year certificate programs in automotive technology and building science. Also added to UAS's repertoire is a minor in gender studies.

UAS is showing a commitment to meet students needs. Paul Kraft, dean of students, said, "(The programs) will

have the greatest input on those students who come to college undecided." Kraft also said that retention was a key aspect of the future of UAS. In order to get an understanding why students would leave UAS, calls were made to students that had left and asked they wanted a change. The study showed that a majority of the students said they left because UAS did not have the programs in their area of interest.

There are large hopes that by offering bachelor degrees in areas that were previously bachelors of liberal arts (B.L.A.) degrees will help retain students that want to stay in Juneau. "By offering a B.A. in social science it

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