UNL Indian student considers grant an investment

By Julie Hintz

"My scholarship shows an investment in me that I must continue my education to make all Indians aware how much they can achieve if they are willing," said Janice Bigbee, a second-year graduate student in Feonomic Development for Native American People at the UNL College of Business Administration,

Bigbee, a Comanche from Oklahoma, was one of 223 American Indian students awarded fellowships under the Indian Education Act, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

She competed with more than 700 applicants from 92

schools in 34 states for the award of \$1,975 from the office of Indian Education within HEW.

Bigbee, 46, received her bachelor of arts at the University of Maryland. Later she started her graduate study at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where she learned about the grant money and applied.

"I've been receiving grants for 3½ years including my two years spent here. So far with my grant money I have enough to begin my Ph.D. program, Bigbee said.

Bigbee said her goal is to influence policy on the national level for the welfare of native American Indians.

"My parents were forced to quit school in the 8th grade to find work. Today it's realized how important the financing of college students is to attain the professionals we need," Bigbee said.

At the national level, Bigbee said her chances of informing native American people of the graduate program will not be a lot greater. The encouragement behind it is

"The ultra-conservative Reagan appears as a strong; threat to the program. My hopes are that he will help us along in the long process of educationg our people," Bigbee said.

According to Bigbee, if the federal government hired her in Washington, it would mean commuting to and from Lincoln to see her husband Daniel Bigbee, a UNL professor of Animal Science, who wants to remain in Lincoln.

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