

Students get teaching experience from tutoring

By Ward W. Triplett III

UNL students have been gaining valuable learning experience and better communication skills through tutoring, said the educational assistance coordinator for the Lincoln Action Program.

"The bulk of our tutoring core comes from the Universities," said Ed Spry of LAP.

"Usually, students do it as part of a major requirement," he said.

Spry said about 100 tutors spend two hours a week for 10 weeks assisting Lincoln area students. Tutors help in 11 Lincoln elementary schools, three parochial, five junior high and one senior high school.

"I would guess that a third of the elementary schools use our services," Spry said.

The students come mostly from educational psycho-

logy classes, which Spry speaks to at the start of the year. Working with the tutor program is a required part of that class.

"We've found that from this experience, people often decide if teaching is something they really want to do," Spry said.

"Every year, there have been three or four people who have been very fine tutors, but have just said that 'teaching is not for me.' It's convinced others that teaching is something they're positive they want to do," he said.

Several tutors also return to the program although they don't have to, Spry said.

"It's very interesting that we get the number of repeats we do. Each semester, four or five students will come back because they feel this is where they want to be," Spry said.

Less than 3 percent of the group are volunteers from

the University community, which could be a better figure, Spry said. The demand always exceeds the supply, and more student volunteers could help.

"We work with Title I schools, where many of the kids are from disadvantaged backgrounds," Spry said. "I've had students come to me and say one of the real rewards is it gives them a different perspective when they work with people from a different economic base," Spry said.

The program also refers tutors to other Lincoln tutoring services such as those as the Malone Center, the YMCA, Youth Services, and the pre-trial diversion program.

"I also write about 10 to 15 recommendation letters a semester," Spry said. "So students use this when applying for teaching jobs as recommendations."

Economy, energy, oil rank most interesting

The economy, presidential actions, energy and oil are the governmental and political topics of most interest to Nebraskans, according to a report by UNL's Bureau of Sociological Research.

The bureau's 1981 Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey report, titled "Nebraskans Interest in Government and Politics," was written by Susan Welch, professor and chairman of the Department of Political Science.

Areas ranked as second most interesting were topics such as local taxes and zoning, the defense budget and world affairs.

The survey revealed that at a third level of interest were the governor and state legislature, local school boards and city government. These ranked just above jury and court decisions and colleges and universities.

Welch said it seems that "Nebraskans, like most Americans, show the most interest in those aspects of politics that they potentially have the least control over."

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