

Escape Poverty?

U.S. Opens Many Doors

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There are so many Great Society programs aiding the nation's poverty stricken that it may soon become a status symbol to be poor.

Federal agencies stumble over themselves competing to take the hands of the underprivileged and lead them onto the path of responsible citizenship.

For young people especially, the choices are many. A youngster from the slums of a big city or the more respectable poverty of a rural area can select a program as carefully as other youngsters choose a college.

If he wants to stay in high school, for instance, there is the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which provides work experience and job training through neighborhood centers.

If he is a high school graduate who can't afford college, he can enlist in the "Upward Bound" program, which is designed to motivate children from low-income families toward college.

If he is a high school dropout and has trouble finding a job, he can enroll in the Manpower Training Development Act, and receive a small government allotment while attending a free trade school run by local school systems with federal money.

And finally, if he wants to learn a trade in a hurry and get away from home, he can join the largest of all the vast train-

ing programs, the Job Corps.

The Job Corps is a system of residential centers for school dropouts who lack the skills necessary to get good jobs.

Simply defined, the goal of Job Corps is to transfer the children of poverty from welfare rolls to the tax rolls by making them employable, productive citizens.

There are three kinds of Job Corps Centers: men's urban, women's urban, and men's conservation. The urban centers, which provide advanced technical training, are run by private industry, and totally financed by the government. The smaller conservation centers are also financed by tax monies, but administered by government agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Forest Service.

There are 113 Job Corps centers scattered throughout the nation with a total combined enrollment of 28,473 young men and women. Since the program started in 1965, there have been 27,746 youths who have either completed training or dropped out somewhere along the way.

Utah has two 200-man conservation centers in Price and at the mouth of Weber Canyon, and a 1,300-man urban center at the Freeport Center in Clearfield. Although there has been talk of establishing more Job Corps camps in the state, it is unlikely at present because of a

cutback in appropriations for domestic programs.

Selection of Job Corps enrollees is made through state employment offices, and is entirely voluntary. A candidate must be between 16 and 21 years of age, from a low-income family, a high school dropout (although there are some cases of high school graduates being accepted), and either unemployed or under-employed.

A check is made into the youth's background to determine whether he has answered the screening application truthfully, and to see whether or not he has a police record.

The state then sends the information, along with the applicant's reading test, to the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C. The OEO, which is sort of a Pentagon for the War on Poverty, makes the final decision on whether the youth will be accepted and where he will be sent.

The poorest readers are sent to one of the 93 conservation centers, where the average reading level is about the 4th grade. Better readers are sent to one of the 20 urban centers. (Women all go to urban centers).

The government pays for transportation to the center and transportation home if a youngster drops out of training or graduates. Almost as soon as the new corpsman arrives, he

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