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Law enforcement education program at U of Montana for first time

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LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM
AT U OF MONTANA FOR FIRST TIME

MISSOULA---

Law enforcement officials, including local and county police and parole officers, are eligible for the first time to receive financial aid for a college education at the University of Montana for the 1969-70 academic year.

Donald J. Mullen, director of financial aids at UM, announced that the U.S. Department of Justice has set aside appropriations of \$18,400 for the program for the incoming academic year.

Those eligible for financial aid at UM include those in, or intending to go into, police, corrections, probation or parole work, the courts or in any field which has primarily criminal law enforcement or correctional responsibilities on the local, state or federal level.

Mullen said program preference at UM is given to in-service Missoula officers, then to out-of-state employes.

Federal agencies involved in law enforcement duties include the Department of Justice, Treasury Department, Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Post Office Department and Bureau of Customs.

The Law Enforcement Education Program at UM is a result of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act enacted by Congress in 1968 to provide for and to encourage training, education, research, and development for the purpose of improving law enforcement.

Eligible participants must either be employed in the fields of law enforcement or intend to become so employed upon completion of college.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM--2--

The program consists of loans up to \$1,800 per academic year and for those currently employed within law enforcement a grant program which will pay tuition and fees. Aid is available for both undergraduate and graduate studies. It is possible for an in-service officer to receive both a loan and grant.

Upon graduation, the loan obligations of the student will be cancelled at the rate of 25 percent of the total for each year employed in law enforcement. After four years the total loan obligation is forgiven.

Mullen said that his office has already interviewed several applicants. According to Mullen, an applicant does not have to establish financial need for a loan up to \$1,400, but for aid in addition to that amount, a financial needs test must be applied.

Applicants accepted into the program may major in any field. However, students in law schools are not eligible, according to Department of Justice guidelines. Those eligible must take 24 credits of specifically required courses relating to law enforcement before they complete requirements for their degrees. Mullen says he expects most applicants will be majors of sociology or related fields.

Missoula Chief of Police Joseph E. Hood, said, "The program is a perfect way for members of law enforcement to advance their general knowledge; it will upgrade law enforcement and will stimulate the officers' ability to learn on the job.

"Had the program been in effect when I first came into the department," Hood continued. "I would probably have a degree now."

Anyone desiring information on the program should contact Mullen at the UM Financial Aids Office, Main Hall, room 209 by phoning 243-5373. Or contact Dr. Gordon Browder, UM professor of sociology, by phoning 243-4781.

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