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BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS Hart - 34-39431

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ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY EXPANDING ON NAVAJO RESERVATION

A $700,000 contract to provide on-the-job training for 1,481 Navajo Indians has been signed with the Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp., the Bureau of Indian Affairs announced today. The training will take place at Fairchild's Semiconductor plant at Shiprock, N. Mex.

The largest of several electronics plants now located in Indian areas, Fairchild currently employs 366 Navajos in the operation at Shiprock which commenced 14 months ago.

Negotiations are now in process between the company and the Navajo tribe for construction of a $1.5 million permanent facility in the same location. Officials of the corporation have expressed considerable satisfaction with the work of their Navajo employees.

"Fairchild's experience in training Navajo employees clearly indicates that they quickly learn the skills of transistor assembly and have a high productivity level," the firm's publication, LEADWIRE, reported.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs was instrumental in finding the Navajo location for the California-based international firm, which had been seeking a new location for expansion.

Recruiting of more Navajo workers is under way, following the signing of the on-the-job contract. In addition to financing training, the Bureau will provide transportation to the job for Indian applicants hired by Fairchild.

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