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### INVENTORY

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier          ICU.SPCL.NAESDUMONT
Title               Native American Educational Services. Robert V. Dumont, Jr. Papers
Date                1942-2000
Size                8 linear feet (14 boxes)
Repository          Special Collections Research Center
                    University of Chicago Library
                    1100 East 57th Street
                    Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract            The papers in this collection belong to one of the initiators of the Native American Education Services (NAES) College, Robert V. Dumont Jr. Most notably, this collection includes Dumont’s field notes from several research projects conducted around issues of Indian education in the United States, mostly dating from the 1960s, prior to his involvement in the NAES. Also included are papers connected to his education, his work with various Indian organizations in addition to the NAES, his manuscripts and publications, his research, NAES and its Community Archives, as well as some personal papers.

Information on Use

Access              Series 7, Box 14 contains personal materials restricted for 80 years from the date of creation. The remainder of the collection is open for research.

Citation            When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Native American Educational Services. Robert V. Dumont, Jr. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note   Robert Vaughn Dumont, Jr., a member of the Fort Peck Tribes (Sioux), described as a “giant” in the field of American Indian Education, was involved with NAES College from its inception. Dumont was born June 29, 1940 in Poplar, Montana. He received his early education in the Wolf Point Public School System, graduating from Wolf Point High in 1958. During the summer of 1960 Dumont attended the Workshop on American Indian Affairs at the University of Colorado with Murray and Rosalie Wax, and for three months in 1961 he worked for the American Friends Service Committee, Overseas Work Camps in France and Poland. He received a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from the University of Montana in 1962. He was
a John Hay Whitney Fellow from 1963-64 and worked in South Dakota at the Pine Ridge Reservation during this period. After completing his Master’s degree in Education at Harvard in 1966, he moved to Chicago and dedicated his life work to promoting leadership among Native communities and challenging those outside institutions which limited the capacity of tribal peoples. In the late 1960s he began working with other Native American leaders including Faith Smith toward the creation of the NAES. The College submitted its first application for candidacy for Accreditation in 1978, receiving full Accreditation in 1984 as the first and only Private Native American Baccalaureate Degree Granting Institution in America. Dumont was a respected educator and much of his work focused on research and promotion of Indian education. Dumont also served as a policy analyst for the Fort Peck Tribes for much of the last two decades of his life. He passed away on May 29, 1997.

During his career, Dumont held many leadership positions. He was a founding member of the National Indian Youth Council (1961) and founder of Native American Educational Services (1974). Other positions included assistant director of the Ft. Peck Tribal Department of Labor; Tribal Health Director for the Fort Peck tribes; faculty for Antioch, American and Northeastern Universities, and the University of Minnesota; and special consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Education for American Indians Office. He was involved in several research projects and published several articles on Indian education. He was an education planner for the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) overseeing a Ford Foundation program in educational planning for eight Indian communities and a Carnegie Corporation Indian education study. At the time of his death, he was the Vice President for Academic Affairs for NAES College.

“[Dumont’s] work exemplifies one of the early proponents of tribal specified knowledge and learning as the focal point for development. . . . He challenged those around him to think, and to act in the best traditions and interests of Native people; not to accept failure as an end but as a beginning of new learning and a vision of dynamic social change for a Native peoples.”

Source: “Robert Vaughn Dumont Jr.” Obituaries Column, Billings Gazette, Sunday, June 1, 1997, p. 8a

Scope Note
The Robert Vaughn Dumont Jr. papers span the years 1942 to 2000, with the bulk covering the years 1962 to 1971. The collection reflects his involvement in Native American educational projects and professional organizations during the period of his life between college and NAES. Mr. Dumont had organized his papers prior to donation to NAES; this organization has been retained, with processing consisting largely of refolding and grouping of series. Two additional series have also been added: NAES Archives and Personal Affects.
The strengths of the collection lie in Dumont’s original field notes and classroom observations from the Indian education projects, as well as administrative paperwork and correspondence related to his involvement with the National Indian Youth Council and the United Scholarship Service.

The materials here represent roughly the first half of Dumont’s professional activities. Researchers should be aware that there may be another collection of Dumont’s papers at the Fort Peck Tribal Archives. The holdings in this collection do not include any NAES institutional papers.

There are seven series in the collection. Series I: Education contains papers, research data, degrees and diplomas, and photographs associated with Dumont’s schooling from his secondary education at Wolf Point Public School in Montana, to his Bachelor’s education at the University of Montana and his Master’s degree at Harvard University.

Series II: Indian Education Research Projects, 1962-1968 documents three projects conducted in conjunction with other institutions. The Pine Ridge Education Study, 1962-1964, was a collaboration with Emory University. Included are field notes, interviews, background research and correspondence. The Oglala Community School Project, 1964-1967 was done with the Harvard-Radcliffe American Indian Project. Some related correspondence may be found in the Pine Ridge and Cherokee subseries. The Cherokee Indian Education Research Project, 1967-1968 conducted with the University of Kansas. The materials include field notes, observations, research materials, and interviews.

Series III: Manuscripts and Publications contains manuscripts and publications connected to Robert V. Dumont. Many arose out of the Cherokee Project. Some publications and manuscripts are co-authored with Murray Wax and Rosalie Wax; others are Dumont’s own projects, including “Requiem for Wolf Creek”.

Series IV: Professional Organizations contains materials including minutes, financial statements, project proposals, and activities related to Dumont’s work with American Indian Organizations outside of the NAES. It is divided into three subseries. Subseries 1 documents the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) of which Dumont was a founding member in 1961 and board member from 1963 to 1968. Subseries 2, United Scholarship Service (USS) contains material related to Dumont’s service on the USS board of Directors from 1968 to 1971. The materials include administrative paperwork, such as financial statements, by-laws and minutes from board meetings, as well as documentation on several projects. Subseries 3, Coalition of American Indian Citizens (CAIC) contains a small amount of material related to the organization, an outgrowth of the Poor People’s Campaign. The materials span the years 1968 to 1969.
Series V: Research Materials is divided into three subseries. The series is composed of materials Mr. Dumont collected in the course of his work. They were grouped together based on common themes. The subseries are Education, General Files and Indian Policy.

Series VI: NAES Archives contains documents related to NAES including several folders dedicated to the creation of the Community Archives of NAES College.

Series VII: Personal Materials contains newspaper clippings, photographs, scrapbooks, and personal financial papers of Robert V. Dumont Jr. as well as some papers of his father, Robert V. Dumont Sr.

**Related Resources**
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

**Subject Headings**
- Dumont, Robert V.
- NAES College
- Indians of North America
- Indians of North America -- Education (Higher)
- Indian universities and colleges -- United States

**INVENTORY**

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"Federal Legislation Affecting American Indians," Laura Wittstock, Civil Rights Digest,  
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Veteran BIA educator finds that truth is a fragile thing, Navajo Times, September 24, 1970
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Indians Trapped in Squalor -- And Too Few Understand, Sunday Telegram, April 2, 1964
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Wassaja: The Indian’s Signal for Self Determination, Volume 2, No 10, November-December 1974
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Series VIII: Restricted

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