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DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Isolated Tribe May Offer Medical Insights

By David Williamson

In 1956, the Aucas, a primitive and unpacified group of South American Indians attracted the attention of a world they never knew existed by spearing five male missionaries on a riverbank at the headwaters of the

Amazon in the trackless rain forest of eastern Ecuador.

Since that sad day, the sister of one of the slain Americans has succeeded in meeting most of the Aucas and persuading them to stop killing outsiders and each other.

An international team of scientists, headed by a medical student from Duke, has recently returned from a six-week research expedition to the land of the Aucas and has reported some observations on a people literally lost in time.

people on earth, according to the team's evaluation.

In addition to the medical examinations, the scientists collected blood samples and data for a number of research projects to be conducted in coming months.

Extremely Healthy People

"We shortened our full medical exams after we'd seen 160 people, about a quarter of the population, because everyone was just extremely healthy," said James Larrick, the project coordinator who is working toward doctoral degrees in both medicine and immunology at Duke.

"With the exception of poor teeth and a few complaints related to parasites, we didn't find any pathology - virtually no heart disease, malnutrition, obesity, hypertension, social diseases, allergies and only one or two individuals with psychiatric problems," Larrick said.

Unlike almost every other population in the world, he said, the Aucas have blood pressures that stay the same or go down with age.

The Indians, who call themselves "Woags" in their own language, are probably among the healthiest

Genetic Research

Larrick said the Aucas, who hunt with blowguns and poisoned arrows and generally wear no clothing, are particularly interesting to geneticists because they have been isolated from other Indian tribes in the Amazon Basin since before the Spanish conquistadors first entered Ecuador in 1542.

"Aucas have what we call 'cross-cousin' marriages arranged from childhood, and as a result, they have become very inbred," he said. "Inbred populations, instead of having unmatched gene pairs, have matched pairs of genes which are easier to study and to trace."

By recording the family relationships of the people from whom blood samples were taken, Larrick said he and his colleagues hope to get a better idea of how the

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A Message from Medical Center Administration

Important Vote Tuesday

Next Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2,025 Duke Medical Center employees will make a very important decision. These employees will vote in an election to decide whether or not they will be represented by a labor union. The election will be decided by a majority of those who vote. Anyone eligible, who does not vote, will allow someone else to determine whether or not he or she will be represented by the union. If a majority of those voting choose the union, all those eligible will be represented by Local 77 AFSCME in all issues related to their jobs, wages, fringe benefits, and working conditions whether or not they have actually joined the union.

Employees who may vote have been individually notified of their eligibility. Any questions regarding eligibility may be directed to a supervisor or to the Labor Relations Office 684-3129. The medical center encourages each eligible employee to examine the issues carefully for himself or herself. Each person has individual needs and should decide whether or not the union will contribute positively to the relationship which he or she has with the medical center and in the individual's job situation.

The medical center believes that the presence of a union would make it more difficult for employees to get real satisfaction from their work. We believe that employees who care about doing a good job and who want satisfaction from a job well done, will vote NO on Tuesday.

Employees in the following classification are those eligible to vote:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Administrative Secretary | Laboratory Technician |
| Artist Illustrator | Library Assistant |
| Audiovisual Technician | Library Assistant, Sr. |
| Autopsy Technician | Library Clerk |
| Bus Drivers | Mail Clerk |
| Cashier | Mail Clerk, Sr. |
| Cashier, Sr. | Medical Laboratory Clerk |
| Central Supply Room Aide | Medical Records Clerk |
| Chapel Receptionist | Medical Records Clerk, Sr. |
| Chauffeur | Medical Secretary |
| Class & Coding Clerk | Medical Supply Assembler |
| Class & Coding Clerk, Sr. | Medical Supply Assembler, Sr. |
| Clerk Typist | Medical Technician |
| Clerk Typist, Sr. | Medical Transcriptionist |
| Clinic Assistant | Medical Transcriptionist, Sr. |
| Clinic Assistant, Sr. | Messenger |
| Cook | Office Clerk |
| Cook, Advanced | Offset Pressman |
| Corsetiere | Offset Pressman, Sr. |
| Cytology Preparatory Tech. | Surgical Attendant (Operating Room) |
| Data Terminal Operator | Operating Room Technician |
| Deliveryman | Parking Lot Attendant |
| Dietetic Assistant | Patient Care Assistant |
| Dining Hall Cashier | Patient Care Assistant, Advanced |
| Duplicating Machine Operator | Patient Care Technician |
| EKG Technician | Patient Escort |
| Electron Microscopy Tech. | Pharmacy Aide |
| Electron Microscopy Tech., Sr. | Physical Therapy Assistant |
| Equipment Room Clerk | Plastic OR Assistant |
| Facilities Analyst | Plastic OR Aide |
| Food Service Aide | Radiological Safety Technician |
| Food Service Aide, Sr. | Research Aide |
| Gift Shop Coordinator | Secretary |
| Inventory Records Clerk | Unit Service Aide |
| Instrument Maker | Unit Service Aide, Sr. |
| Laboratory Assistant | Vectorcardiogram Technician |
| Laboratory Assistant, Sr. | Ward Clerk |
| Laboratory Preparator | X-ray Equipment Repairman |
| Laboratory Research Assistant | |

The election will be held in the Courtyard Cafeteria from 6-10 a.m. and from 2-6 p.m.

All eligible employees are urged to vote.



SCIENCE IN THE AMAZON—Duke medical student James Larrick prepares a needle for drawing blood from an Auca boy while the child's mother assures his continued presence with a firm grasp.