

Alfred University Professor Hits Double Jackpot With Book and Fulbright

6/22/99

Alfred, NY -- Fortune is smiling this year on Dr. David Kowalewski, professor of social science at Alfred University. Not only did he recently sign a contract for his fourth book, *Deep Power: The Political Ecology of Wilderness and Civilization*; he was also awarded his second Fulbright fellowship. A member of the Alfred University faculty since 1988 and full professor since 1995, Kowalewski said the new book, due out this year from Nova Science, is a study in deep ecology. "Deep ecology is the view that human beings need to reconnect more deeply with wilderness for the sake of the healing of the earth," he said. "Part of the reconnection is a return to ancient ways of honoring the earth with the ceremonies of indigenous peoples: the Kalahari Bushmen in Namibia, the North American Indians, the Australian Aborigines." The book grew out of his notes from a deep ecology course he devised and taught in the fall of 1996 and '98. Although accessible to lay readers, the book is aimed chiefly at an academic audience in environmental studies, political science, anthropology, and sociology. The Fulbright is a travel fellowship in which scholars travel abroad, temporarily exchanging nations. Kowalewski plans to use it to go to Kenya at some point in the 1999-2000 academic year to study the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), an international government organization in the UN system and the only UN organization with headquarters in the Third World. Although many private environmental groups around the world are well-known, Kowalewski said, UNEP is the key international governmental organization to deal with the environment. "I'll be looking at the relations between UNEP and private environmental groups, with the idea that if non-governmental groups supported it, it could get more clout. I'm hoping to figure out ways UNEP can be more effective." UNEP is already an impressive outfit, he said. "They do an incredible amount of stuff on a very limited budget -- they maintain a comprehensive pesticide data base, for instance. I want to look at the question: How can they get so much bang for their buck?" As it becomes increasingly obvious that environmental problems are global, "the United Nations is really the only game in town," he said. In Kenya, he also plans to spend time tracking wild elephants and lions. Tracking -- in which he gives a course at Alfred University -- is another one of his many interests. Kowalewski is one of some 2,000 U.S. Fulbright grantees who will travel abroad in 1999-2000. Sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, the program has sent more than 70,000 Americans abroad in its 52-year history and has brought more than 130,000 scholars here from other nations.