VISTA offers deferment, stipend to grads entering poverty service

By JOEL TAUROG
Thresher Reporter

VISTA, Volunteers in Service to America, has recently adopted a new policy for students who have received their bachelor’s degree or expect to receive them this year, where qualified students will now be able to enter VISTA training programs while on campus.

To explain the various implications of the new program for Rice students, William Holland, a national representative of VISTA, will be on the Rice campus Monday and Tuesday, March 13 and 14, to recruit volunteers for the program.

VISTA is a program of the Office of Economic Opportunity. Its volunteers serve in anti-poverty programs throughout the country in urban slums, rural areas, Indian Reservations, migrant camps, Job Corps centers, and mental hospitals. VISTA trainees may express a preference for location and type of assignment.

Volunteers train intensively for six weeks and serve for one year. They receive a monthly allowance to cover basic living expenses. At the end of service they receive a stipend of $50 for each month served, including the training period.

The Selective Service System has classified VISTA service “in the national interest,” and volunteers are generally deferred for their period of service. Married persons must apply and serve with their spouses.