

Six-year follow-up of W.A. grads shows value of scholarship awards

By Gordon B. Seavey

After reviewing the activities and careers of Westford Academy students who received scholarships along with their diplomas in 1978, Mary Westcott Academy guidance counselor has determined that financially aiding seniors who plan further education has proven its value.

Presenting results of a study to the trustees of the Academy at its 191st annual meeting, she appealed for a possible increase in financial help to graduates extending their education.

Citing a study made of the 49 recipients of scholarships six years ago, all members of the Class of 1978 she reported that 34 had completed bachelor degree programs at 19 schools of higher learning, of which seven of the universities were out-of-state.

Two continued with a master's degree program. There was not available data on four who had moved from the area.

Four others attended two-year programs at community colleges and another, a secretarial school. Two dropped out after having some further schooling.

Two seniors did not take their scholarships when they chose the armed services. The funds initially provided for them, which are paid for all directly to

the college pursers, were returned to the trustees.

Mrs. Westcott, reporting on a study made of an earlier class, 1973, said that of the 33 recipients 21 had completed a full, four-year program.

Bolstered by several new gifts to the scholarship program, and in particular, the major portion of the Frederic Fisher estate, the trustees were able to provide \$27,500 for 97 scholarships and grants to members of this year's graduating class. This was an all-time high.

"It was a timely increase," avows Mrs. Westcott, "in view of the rapidly expanding costs of higher education."

Through funds accumulated over nearly two centuries, and "prudently" managed, the trustees have been able to offer financial assistance to many hundreds over the years. The trustees also furnish career-oriented reference books of their choice to National Honor Roll students.

Whereas the Board of Trustees no longer participate in the management of the academy as it now is a public high school, they act as a center and clearing house for many funds. Other organizations and individuals, however, yearly have prizes and financial aid to present to worthy graduates.