

Colleen Shea Memorial Scholarship



Colleen Shea was a devoted wife to her husband, Jim Shea, and she was the loving mother of six wonderful children. Caring for her family was first and foremost in Colleen's life. Growing up in Westfield, she graduated from St. Mary's High School in 1958 and continued her studies at Westfield State College. Colleen married Jim Shea in 1961, but she completed the requirements for her elementary education degree and graduated from Westfield State in 1962.

Colleen happily focused all her energy on raising her six children before she accepted a teaching position years later. She was a communicant of St. Mary's Church and she did teach religious education classes when her children were young. She was passionate about the importance of reading for personal pleasure, to her own children, and with her students. Once her children were grown, Colleen did accept a teaching position with

the Westfield Public Schools. She began her career in the early 1980's, and she worked at Abner Gibbs Elementary School for many years.

Sadly, Colleen Shea passed away in 1995 after a long battle with cancer. She was a wonderful wife and mother, so this scholarship was established to honor her memory. Although this award is named after Colleen, many friends made contributions to it after her daughter, Tara (Shea) Creamer, was killed in 2001. Tara was a passenger on the American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston which crashed into the Twin Towers on 9/11.

Even with tragedies in life, it is important to look back on a happier time and reflect on the gifts we were fortunate enough to receive as a family. One of those gifts was being the parent of children who benefited directly from CSF scholarships. As a father, I try to repay in a small way the kindness my own family has received.

On behalf of the Shea family, we greatly appreciate the countless hours and dedication of so many people who have contributed to Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of Westfield. It is truly a wonderful organization.

Written by: Jim Shea
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