

Fred & Rose Placzek Scholarship Endowment

Written by: Jane (Placzek) Borsetti, daughter, January 2016



Westfield Technical Academy provided Fred Placzek with the knowledge and training to pursue an entrance into the industry of tool and dye working as a machinist. Fred began his path in his field employed in machine shops in the 1940's and 1950's. Torrington Needle Company in Westfield, where surgical needles were manufactured, was where Fred worked for ten years.

In the early 1960's Fred changed employment to Berkshire Tool, which began a new direction towards a career change. Fred continued evening schooling while he worked, to become a vocational teacher. In 1961, Fred obtained his first teaching

position as the wood shop teacher at Westfield Junior High School. Three years later his tenure continued with a position of machine shop teacher at Westfield Vocational. He remained at that position until his retirement in 1989.

Fred and his beloved wife Rose, a proud graduate of Westfield High School in 1940, were lifelong residents. They took pride in the home they built and shared with their two children. Together they shared similar interests in gardening, bee-keeping, watching baseball, and vacations linked to fishing and lakes in Vermont and Maine.

Rose and Fred shared a remarkably long marriage of 71 ½ years. Rose valued her husband's commitment and involvement in education. Fred never stopped having a fascination with ingenuity, invention and education.

Years after his retirement, former students frequently visited Rose and Fred at their home, feeling comfortable sharing their lives with keen listeners, Rose and Fred. Fred always stressed finding "something you like" as he felt blessed with his chosen career.

Fred Placzek passed away at 94 years old, on July 31, 2014. Rose continues to live at their home. It was always Fred's wish to establish a scholarship to help Westfield students, so Rose honored her beloved husband by fulfilling that wish in late 2014.