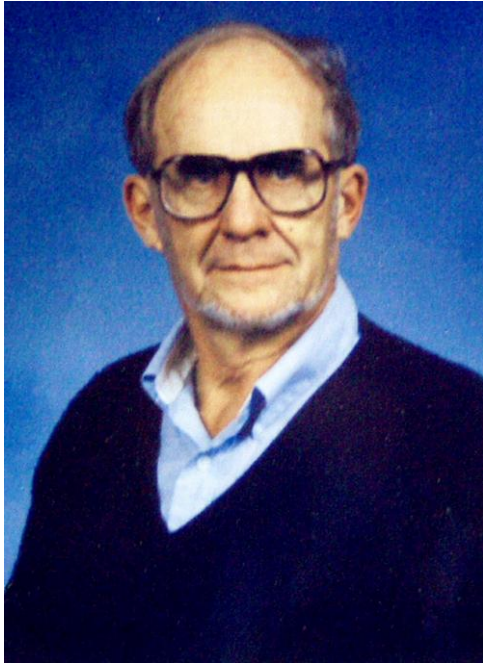


David Modena Memorial Endowment



David M. Modena loved his hometown of Westfield. Born in 1925, he was raised here by his mother, Alice (Osden) Modena and his father, Ralph Modena. Both parents were Westfield natives. David took great pride in knowing the connections among the many Westfield people he befriended throughout his life. He was a member of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society. David Modena was a descendant of George Phelps, one of the founders of Westfield.

David attended the Westfield Public Schools and graduated from Westfield High School in the class of 1943. Like many of the World War II generation, he went into the service directly out of high school and served in the Navy. After the war, he used the GI Bill to become the first in his family to graduate from college. He earned his BA from Westfield State College.

While studying at Westfield State, David met Mary Russell from Holyoke. They were married, and eventually had a son, James Modena, who was born in 1954. David, with the help of his father and older brother Robert, built his house on Park Drive in Westfield. In 1963, David and Mary completed their family with the birth of their daughter, Anne.

David and Mary were both teachers for the Westfield Public Schools. David started his career as a junior high school science teacher. Soon after receiving his Master's Degree from American International College, he became an assistant principal at Westfield Junior High School. When the old Westfield High School became a middle school, David Modena was appointed as its first principal. He served as principal of the North Middle School until it was closed and the students and staff were transferred back to South Middle School. David finished his career as an assistant principal and retired in 1986.

David Modena was active in the Westfield community. He was a member of the Episcopal Church of the Atonement. He served as a trustee for Noble Hospital, a corporator of Woronoco Savings Bank, a member of UNICO, and as a trustee of the Westfield Athenaeum. When people remember David Modena, it may be as an educator, as a friend, or as the owner and operator of Friendly Fences. Many Westfield teachers and family members spent summers building fences. Look carefully on the black and silver signs on many fences in Westfield and you will still see "Friendly Fences of Westfield."

Education was very important to my mother and my father. They spent a lifetime helping young people. As my father grew older, he wanted to give something back to his beloved hometown. He established this scholarship to help a graduate of Westfield High School who is interested in becoming a teacher. David Modena wanted to be remembered as a good citizen of Westfield and as a person who would always help his neighbor.

Written by: James Modena

October 1, 2005