

Mary Lou Moccio Memorial Endowment



Mary Lou Moccio was a lifelong Westfield resident who always put family first and her greatest joy was raising a loving family with her husband Jim. She taught in the Westfield Public Schools for 35 years, spending the majority of her career as a beloved kindergarten teacher at Juniper Park Elementary School before retiring in June 2009. She was a loving, kind, thoughtful and supportive Mom to her two sons, Tim and Brian, and she greatly enjoyed experiencing countless happy memories with her entire family.

Education was always important to Mary Lou. After graduating from St. Mary's High School here in Westfield in 1968, she went on to Westfield State and received her Bachelor's degree in Education and later on, her Master's degree. She set a great example for her own children and encouraged Tim and Brian to strive for academic success as well. After retiring from

teaching, Mary Lou identified a worthy cause that aligned with her values and began volunteering her time and talents for CSF Westfield Dollars for Scholars. She loved being involved in the scholarship selection process to help reward deserving students, and seeing so many smiling faces (including many of her own former students) at the annual CSF Awards Night ceremony.

Inside the classroom, Mary Lou was a caring, warm, creative and diligent teacher. She played a pivotal role by teaching her kindergarten students many important life lessons such as being kind to one another, telling the truth and trying your best, even when something is difficult. She always looked for creative ways to make school fun and one was by having a theme day every day in the month of June (such as Wear Your Pajamas to School Day or Beach Day). She also converted the classroom kitchen play area into a mini version of the Summer House restaurant, thanks to donations of order forms, cups, plates and plastic silverware when she had the children of the Summer House owner as students in her class. Several lucky students benefitted from a field trip to the Summer House for a few years, too!

Mary Lou understood that a classroom is not the only place that one can learn. Through some memorable family trips, she ensured that both she and her family were able to appreciate the world around us. In the late 1990's, the Moccio family visited Germany and Austria as part of an international soccer tournament for Brian's travel soccer team. Beyond playing soccer, her family enjoyed sightseeing and shopping in Munich's central square called Marienplatz and experienced an exhilarating salt mine tour near Salzburg. Another fascinating trip was a visit to Ireland in 2012. This was particularly meaningful for Mary Lou because she had done extensive genealogy work in the years preceding the trip and was able to visit some parts of Ireland where her family came from.

Following her passing on July 1, 2020, this scholarship was established to allow Mary Lou's lifelong support of students and their education to continue. She would be very proud of each and every student that receives her scholarship!

Written by: Jim, Tim and Brian Moccio, October 12, 2020