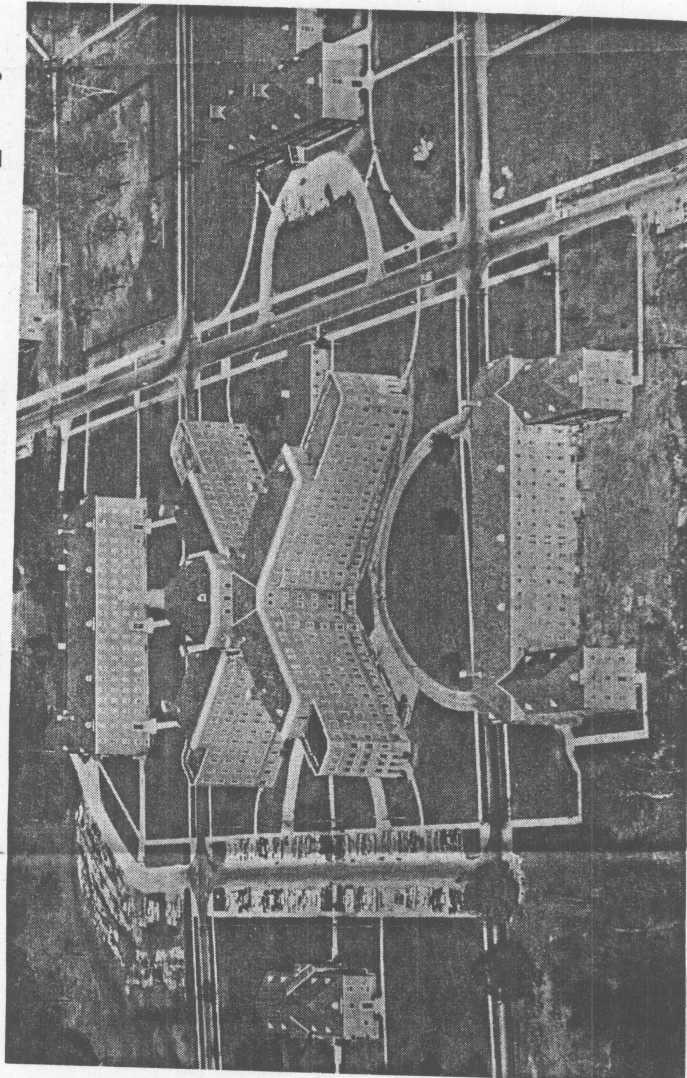


Willowbrook State School Now Island's Largest Employer



Willowbrook State School sprawls over 382 acres and houses a residential population of over 6,000.

By DR. FRANK B. GLASSER, ACTING DIRECTOR, WILLOWBROOK STATE SCHOOL

The main purpose of Willowbrook State School is to help the mentally retarded in need of institutional care.

The school covers 382 acres and has a residential population of over 6,000. Willowbrook is the largest single employer on Staten Island with about 2,000 professional and non-professional employees, most of them residing on Staten Island.

In many ways, Willowbrook can be viewed as a "community" within the community of Staten Island serving retardates from all walks of life from infancy through old age.

There are many degrees of mental retardation and our residents' needs range anywhere from caring for the helpless to need of medical attention, educational and vocational training leading to community living and self-support.

EACH APPLICANT and new admission is evaluated by our professional staff and an individual plan is made for the specific needs of the new admission.

All planning for the resident community school programs, is based on information secured from the resident's family, community agencies, and hospitals as well as a personal interview with the family or relatives and examination and studies of the patient.

Thus, each resident is served on the basis of his or her needs.

Willowbrook is utilized by the family and community agencies for short term, intermediate, and long term help. For example, last year Willowbrook admitted 871 and discharged 647.

This turnover in population highlights the concept that Willowbrook has a dynamic approach to the treatment of the retarded and that placement at Willowbrook is not an end in itself but a means toward providing care and training as long as it is needed.

Returning residents to the community involves the understanding and cooperation of the residents' families and members of the community.

Without this cooperation, the action of the resident to the community and his future adjustment is difficult. Willowbrook seeks the cooperation

of all members of the community and new volunteers are sought in the areas of physical and social development. This covers all forms of sports as well as dancing classes. Daily activity includes trips to the community for participation in community recreational facilities.

During the summer merry-go-rounds, ferris-wheel and kiddie rides, donated by the parents' organization known as the Benevolent Society for Retarded Children, are in operation affording fun for many of our children. The school ice cream truck makes rounds on the grounds dispensing thousands of ice cream cones to smiling youngsters.

OUR PSYCHOLOGY Department is oriented towards the training and ultimate return of the individual to the community. Toward this end the department is continually involved in clinical research.

The key to the prevention of mental retardation is research. We have personnel solely engaged in research searching for the causes of mental retardation and its prevention. Currently in cooperation with Bellevue Hospital studies are being made to prevent infectious hepatitis and German measles.

The nursing service is a dedicated discipline, caring for the nursing needs of our residents on a 24-hour basis. There is a School of Practical Nursing at Willowbrook training for this vital service. The shortage of professional nurses is ever present and the School of Practical Nursing has provided some relief.

THE REHABILITATION Department serves the handicapped children in the various buildings using all types of modalities. In addition, this department provides physical therapy for our general patient population as well as employees when needed.

Almost daily tours are held for various community organizations, schools, hospitals, medical personnel, and other visitors from various parts of the United States and overseas.

Willowbrook is not just mortar and bricks but a residential institution serving individuals with various degrees of retardation under the auspices of the Department of Mental Hygiene. Its dedicated staff works around the clock to advance the care, treatment and training of the individual who happens to be

retarded.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY affords treatment and training through purposeful activity. Ten well equipped shops and classrooms accommodate an average of 700 residents.

Creativity for the individual is stressed and realistic goals are set for the individual to develop his ability to his maximum potential.

The recreation department of-