

73 Complete Willowbrook Summer Jobs

By MAXINE SITTS

Choosing a career will be a little easier for 73 college students, who recently completed a summer work-training program at Willowbrook State School.

The students, mostly Staten Island residents, took part in a program sponsored by the State Mental Hygiene Department which employed 1,000 students at institutions throughout the state.

The department's aim was to enrich patient care and to stimulate pursuit of mental health careers.

One summer attendant at Willowbrook, Carl Schneider, 20, of Brooklyn, substantiated the value of on-the-job training.

"I am convinced," he noted in an evaluation of the program, "that there isn't a psychology book in existence that could possibly substitute for the knowledge of the mentally retarded that I have gained. . ."

Miss Peggy Bentsen, 49, of 325 Demorest Ave., Westborough, served as a recreation aide at Willowbrook. In her report of the summer, she observed, "My work with the retardates has helped me to develop confidence and leadership; it has given me experience in dealing with many different kinds of people and it has pointed out the value of patience and understanding, all of which will be invaluable to me in the future."

The students were employed in various capacities in the ward, in recreation and occupational therapy programs, and in clerical and laboratory work. All were given the opportunity to work directly with patients.

Inservice training through the summer acquainted them with hospital programs and problems, and many, according to a report from the Mental Hygiene Department, have chosen to work in the mental health field.



Miss Catherine Kelleher of 398 Manor Rd., West Brighton, worked in the children's ward as a physical therapy trainee.