

School-hospital program helps handicapped

By CHRISTINE KEENE
 the hospital by the state insti- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Manhattan for thing from solving their finan- hiring physically handicapped cut time finding personnel now finding and filling a job. In said that all Willowbrook Rehabilitation, run by the state's Education Department, operates special workshops where mentally disadvantaged individuals learn manual dex- terity and good work habits.

Dr. Jack Hammond, the ad- ministration at Willowbrook Rehabilitation, said that all Willowbrook Rehabilitation, run by the state's Education Department, operates special workshops where mentally disadvantaged individuals learn manual dex- terity and good work habits.

Such employables have at- tained "concrete status" though Willowbrook encourages employment, according to its patients to attain workable years and personal officials Hammond, and may eventually skills whenever possible, only at the hospital have found it be able to live and work outside a small percentage of Willow- brook people are ever able to reward for both the hospital Willowbrook.

"We employ some of our own progress to living and working and the handicapped. Many of the disadvantaged ex-patients on the Willowbrook munity. At Staten Island Hospital, there are currently about seven Willowbrook men filling jobs as plasterer's helpers and plumbers' helpers, porters and dishwashers.

"The seven Willowbrook peo- ple we have working here now is actually a low number for us," said Mrs. Cecil Commalle of the hospital's personnel staff. "We generally average about 10 or 11 permanent em- ployees from Willowbrook.

"Our staff tries for flexibility with our mentally disad- vantaged people by giving them plenty of understanding and room to learn. We're free to rotate them to different parts of the hospital to whatever jobs are most suitable for them."

Hospital officials often find that mentally handicapped persons begin in a relatively unskilled position in the main- tenance department and soon show an aptitude for more specialized work.

"We have one man who is planning go to a plumbing school in the fall while a second man developed a good talent for handling audio-visual and equipment," Mrs. Commalle said.

Since the first person from Willowbrook began working at Staten Island Hospital eight years ago, the hospital has taken the place of family, counselor and employer for most of its disadvantaged workers.

"Our ex-Willowbrook people



A handicapped employe at Staten Island Hospital re- ceives on-the-job training under the experienced eye of Frank Knapp. Program is a joint effort by the hospital and Willowbrook State School.



Another "student" learns plumbing from Joseph A. DiGiovanna, left, while still another on-the-job trainee finds a spot in the hospital's laundry room. Right

