

400 attend Willowbrook chief's farewell



Dr. and Mrs. Milton Jacobs, left, and Dr. and Mrs. Jack Hammond, center, greet Dr. Alan D. Miller, commissioner of the state's Mental Hygiene Department, at a farewell party for Dr. Hammond, leaving as director of Willowbrook State School.

S.I. Advance Photos by Robert Parsons

A farewell party last night for Dr. Jack Hammond, retiring director of embattled Willowbrook State School, capped his eight-year tenure with a happy note.

Sharing in the reception in the Shalimar, New Dorp, attended by more than 400 professional associates and friends from the community, was his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Hammond, director of volunteer services at Willowbrook.

It was an informal occasion, in which expressions of confidence from high places mingled with good wishes from scores of Willowbrook employes, on all levels.

In recent months, Dr. Hammond, as its director, had been beleaguered by a nationwide furor about the quality of service at Willowbrook, New York State's largest institution for the mentally retarded.

Last night, however, telegrams from President Nixon and Governor Rockefeller were read, wishing Dr. Hammond well in his new post at Rome State School. He had come from there to Willowbrook in 1954.

Officialdom in person was represented by Dr. Alan D. Miller, commissioner of the state Department of Mental Hygiene, and some of his staff.

Representing the Hammond family were a son, David Hammond, Yale graduate, and a daughter, Miss Susan Hammond, a Smith College alumna. Another son, Dr. Robert Hammond, who sent congratulations, was unable to attend because of his assignment as a surgical resident at Bellevue Hospital.

Guests were introduced and messages read by Dr. Milton Jacobs of the Willowbrook staff, who served as master of ceremonies and chairman of the party.

He was assisted by 16 representatives of various departments on the general committee.