

# Dr. Lawrence J. Shea

1913 -

*"My father taught me to always give something back to the community and always appreciate people who have been good to you."*

- Dr. Lawrence Shea

Dr. Lawrence J. Shea has been a central figure in the history of Waterbury for over six decades. He has had a major influence in the fields of health, higher education, sports and community service.

Born in Waterbury on March 29, 1913, he would achieve national and international success as a dentist. For 35 years he was on the dental staff at St. Mary's Hospital, was a member of several hospital Boards and was elected an emeritus member of the Board of Directors. Dr. Shea was selected as a representative to the International Dental Congress, appointed as a consultant in prosthetic dentistry to the State Veterans Administration, served six years on the Waterbury Health Board and is a member of the American Prosthodontic Society. He received many awards including the Centennial Award from the Connecticut Dental Association, the Distinguished Annual Award from the Greater Waterbury Dental Society, a citation and plaque from the Connecticut Dental Association and, as a Captain in the Korean War, was honored for "Outstanding Contributions to the Army" by the Army Dental Corps.

Dr. Shea was a strong supporter of higher educational opportunities in Waterbury and credits his drive and passion for that cause to his father, James Matthew Shea. He once testified before the state legislature on behalf of Waterbury attaining a four-year college. Dr. Shea was a founder of Mattatuck Community College and, in 1994, was a recipient of a "Certificate of Appreciation" from them for 25 years of dedicated service. He was a lecturer in anatomy and physiology at the Waterbury Branch of UConn, a member of their Advisory Board, and he served as scholarship chairman of the Exchange Club for 25 years.

His love for baseball led to his being named the first commissioner of Little League Baseball in Waterbury, sponsored by the Exchange Club. He received the Twi-Met Baseball Leagues' Prestigious Award and, in 1992, was appointed honorary chairman of the National Mickey Mantle World Series. Dr. Shea has also been honored by the Waterbury Olympian Club, Andersons Boys' Club and was elected to St. Francis Xavier's Sports Hall of Fame.



September 21, 2000 was designated "Dr. Lawrence Shea Day" by Governor John Rowland. On that day Dr. Shea received the Golden Deeds Award from the Exchange Club. He was their first President in 1948. He also was presented a Distinguished Alumnus Medal for outstanding service to the school by Villanova University.

He is as comfortable quoting baseball statistics as Socrates. Inspired by that philosopher's thought that, "Gratitude is the aristocrat of all virtues", Dr. Shea said "being grateful for what you receive is the most rewarding part of life."

Along with carrying on the hectic schedule of his profession, Dr. Shea was devoted to public service and promoting sports activities for young people. Dr. Lawrence Shea, always the gentleman, found the time to make Waterbury a better place in which to live.