In 2012, Eastford entrusted 13 scholarships dating back to 1954 to the care of the Community Foundation. In a school with only one class per grade, so students are with the same classmates for up to 10 years, “community” has an “Our Town” feel. The scholarships and awards similarly represent more than face value.

Do you know the play ‘Our Town’? Eastford School Superintendent Linda Loretz asks. “That’s where I work. We are the quintessential small New England town.”

“Strength is not just educating the students. We’re understanding the community!”

“The town asked all the right, tough questions,” reports Kip Parker, CFECT Division Director. “They wanted clear answers about management, investment, reporting, funds transfer, you name it.”

“Happily, the Community Foundation has a track record of managing more than 75 scholarships that distributed more than a quarter million dollars last year. We’ll have a great partnership with Eastford,” Parker says.

“Eastford doesn’t want to regionalize,” Loretz says. “Residents have certainly investigated the option, but turned it down. Having our own school is an important source of place and pride.”

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“The scholarships are wonderful for lots of reasons,” she says. “Of course, they provide welcome assistance to Eastford graduates for their college expenses. We’re also able to provide extra honors to 8th graders as an incentive to keep working hard, to let them know their effort was appreciated. “But the scholarships also give us an opportunity every year to honor the people they’re named for, all of whom served the town in one way or another,” Loretz notes.

In fact, the names on the scholarships are a veritable ‘Who’s Who’ of community service. They date from 1954 with the Eleanor K. Lewis Memorial Fund, established by former pupils, neighbors, and friends at the passing of a teacher and principal whose tenure lasted 34 years.

Similarly, the William S. Warren Academic Award memorializes a town leader who served on the Board of Education for 39 years. The newest fund remembers Dennis Barlow, who recently passed away at only 51, after nine years on the Board. Others have held town office, served on committees, and reflected the best Eastford has to offer, Loretz says. “In that way, the scholarships and awards are so much more than just the dollars,” she concludes.

The Eastford scholarships

For higher education
- Dennis S. Barlow Scholarship Award
- Harold Carpenter Fund Scholarship
- Esther & Lucy Harmon/Leta Sabin Trepal Scholarship Fund
- Eleanor K. Lewis Scholarship
- Mary King Sharpe Memorial Business Scholarship
- Edith Wheaton Smith Memorial Scholarship
- Emil Vaida Scholarship

For 8th graders
- Allen James Day Memorial Award
- Roger Mason Day Memorial Award
- Olivette Koze Art Award
- William Shand Memorial Award
- William S. Warren Academic Award

Mrs. Baccio’s 6th grade classroom spells out a word. Can you guess it? It’s at the end of this story.