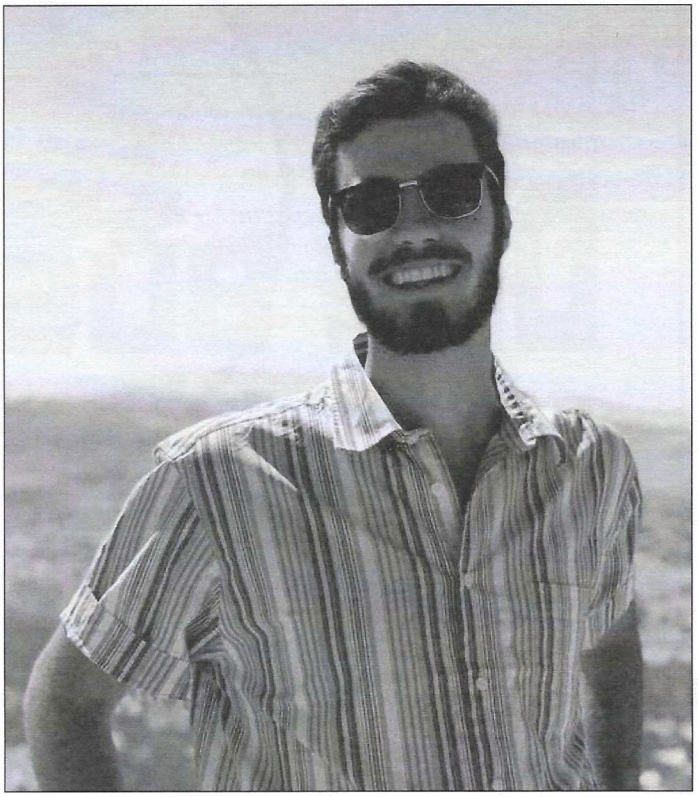
Westford Academy Athletic Hall of Fame

Dedication / Tribute

William R.H. O'Neal



The Westford Academy Athletic Hall of Fame is dedicating tonight's induction ceremony to William O'Neal, an accomplished student-athlete and graduate of the Class of 2016, who tragically passed away in 2024. Will's four years at the Academy not only showcased his inherent kindness and thoughtfulness, but also demonstrated his desire to live life to the fullest.

At Westford Academy, beyond loving to learn, Will was a true "Renaissance Man." He was bold, curious, industrious, and loved to travel. He was an artist at heart and an avid reader. He was a prolific writer who specialized in humanist poetry. He was an Eagle Scout and a lover of adventure and of the outdoors. He had a sense of humor, and he loved to laugh, and made friends everywhere he went. And Will was an athlete too! During his four years at WA, he participated in four different varsity sports: Volleyball, Track, Cross-Country, and Nordic Skiing. Some of his greatest athletic accomplishments happened outdoors, in the winter, and on skis. Will raced for the WA Nordic Ski Team for all four of his years at the Academy. He was voted Team Captain in 2015 and won the Team Sportsmanship Award in 2016. He qualified for the MIAA Championship Races in 2015 and 2016. And when he graduated in 2016, Will's 1,119 career Mass Bay West Points placed him 10th all time for WA Nordic skiers.

Will continued his education at Middlebury College, where he graduated with honors in 2020. At Middlebury Will was able to continue to develop his love of the outdoors and of helping people. He spent countless hours volunteering his time at the school's Organic Farm and as a Nordic Ski instructor where he taught members of the Middlebury community how to cross-country ski. After Middlebury, "Will began a journey that would take him around the world, that would strengthen his connection to others and to nature." A food bank in Idaho, post-grad work at the University of Wisconsin, teaching English to high school students in Spain, and exploring gardening opportunities in New York City were just some of the highlights of this journey. During the last year of his life Will found his happy place in Brooklyn, New York where he worked at Halsted Welles & Associates. Specializing in the design, installation and maintenance of high-end rooftop gardens, Will was able to pursue his passion for horticulture and botany perpetuating his life-long love of gardening, while still providing him time to write, which was another one of his passions and career goals.

Will left a lasting and positive impression on ***everyone*** he met and each person who had the chance to know Will has their own unique story or bit of wisdom or kindness that he provided. He was always true to himself and his beliefs – he was genuine, he was a special person, a really good person. The Westford Academy Athletic Hall of Fame Executive Board joins Will's family in dedicating the 2026 Induction Ceremony to Will O'Neal.