



Celebrating the Mountaintop: Graduation Notes

It is one of our favorite seasons at Foothills, as we hold graduation ceremonies at each of our sites. These ceremonies remind us of why we do this work. We celebrate with our students, many of whom have overcome obstacles and challenges along their journey toward graduation. We celebrate with these students who have persevered. Many of our faculty and staff have supported them on their journey—their climb. And, now we get to celebrate with them on the mountaintop. We have included highlights in this newsletter of a couple of our 2019 graduates and their success stories.

This is not the end of the journey. Our graduates are poised to take their next steps into careers or postsecondary education. Some of them have worked to complete their high school credits *while* working or earning postsecondary credits through dual enrollment. We hope that Foothills has taught our graduates that while life's journeys and obstacles may be daunting, there is no feeling like getting to the mountaintop and looking back on what you have accomplished.

Our hats are off to you, 2019 Graduates. We are proud of you, we wish you well as you move forward, and we hope the greatest lesson that you have learned at Foothills is that "it is never too late to be what you might have been."

She Did It For Me: Barrow Graduate



Our Barrow site held graduation on Friday, May 31st and 19 of 32 graduates walked to receive their diplomas. One of these graduates, Allyson Deaton, was recognized for having the 2nd highest GPA. In her speech, she mentioned the importance of her daughter Aubrey seeing her complete this milestone in her life. Aubrey is all smiles and her shirt says it all: "My Mommy did it and she did it for me!"

Spirit of Foothills: Clarke Graduate

For the first time this year, Foothills presented one graduate with the Spirit of Foothills award, which is awarded to someone who embodies the mission and vision of Foothills. Students wrote essays about their journey as part of the award process. Shaquida Smith was awarded the first Spirit of Foothills award, and she participated in the graduation ceremony at the Clarke site on May 29th. Now age 32, Shaquida shared in her essay that at the age of 18, she became pregnant and became a mother to her sister's children when her sister passed away. Graduation during her senior year became an impossible goal. While working to complete her diploma at Foothills, Shaquida worked multiple jobs, took care of her sister's children and her own children, and kept up with her studies. She described the support of the Foothills staff, and her own determination, in her essay:

[L]eaving my kids was very hard on me. It hurt me financially going back and forth to school, always tired but I knew I had a goal to meet . . . I have no help from family or friends, so I carry all the weight on my shoulders. Some nights I cry with tears flowing . . . [A]ll my supporters weren't having it! They were hard on me in order to motivate me to complete my goal until the end . . . I worked hard day and night for this diploma and can't wait to shout it from the rooftop.

Shaquida plans to pursue a real estate license in the short-term, and she will be enrolling at the University of North Georgia in January to begin work on her degree in nursing. Her spirit is contagious for us at Foothills!



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Compete to Complete: Site-Wide Incentive Program

Foothills has an exciting new incentive program for our sites and students! Student Services Director Melanie Brittain was “inspired last fall by Morgan’s ‘Compete to Complete’ competition among students for credit completion.” She brought the idea of a system-wide “Compete to Complete” competition to the administrative team.

Now Foothills has a regional “Compete to Complete” competition with three categories: credit completion, average attendance, and End of Course assessments scoring 2+. The sites compete for top honors, but Mrs. Brittain says the ultimate goal is to “motivate and encourage students to surpass the leading systems in all three categories.”

The program has “definitely brought out the competitive spirit among our students and staff,” explains Brittain.

Congratulations to our Compete to Complete site winners for Spring Semester!

Percentage of 2+ EOCs:
Jackson and Phillips

Average Credits Per Student:
Morgan and Arrendale

Average Nightly Attendance:
Oglethorpe and Burruss

Foothills Education Charter High School 2019 Graduation Dates/Times/Location

May 29 th	Clarke Foothills	Mell Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
May 30 th	Walton Foothills	Grace Church/Monroe	7:00 p.m.
		Now called 1025 Church (Same location)	
May 30 th	Social Circle Foothills	Grace Church/Monroe	7:00 p.m.
		Now called 1025 Church (Same location)	
May 31 st	Barrow Foothills	Bethlehem Church	7:00 p.m.
June 1 st	Madison Foothills	MCHS Auditorium	2:00 p.m.
June 1 st	Oglethorpe Foothills	MCHS Auditorium	2:00 p.m.
June 3 rd	Baldwin Foothills	BCHS Auditorium	6:00 p.m.
June 4 th	Morgan Foothills	Madison FUMC	7:00 p.m.
June 6 th	Jackson Foothills	EJCHS Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
June 13 th	Burruss Graduation	Burruss	10:00 a.m.
June 20 th	Arrendale Graduation	Arrendale	10:00 a.m.
June 27 th	Phillips Graduation	Phillips	10:00 a.m.

Regional Graduations

August 29 th	Walton Foothills	Grace Church/Monroe	7:00 p.m.
		Now called 1025 Church	
December 5 th	Walton Foothills	Grace Church/Monroe	7:00 p.m.
		Now called 1025 Church	

All Youth ChalleNGa Graduations will be posted on the school website.

Message from the Superintendent

One of the privileges of having 16 Foothills sites is that you get to attend many graduation ceremonies. Each event is an honor to attend. As of this writing, Foothills has awarded 876 high school diplomas since we opened August 2015. Each year we are stronger and more accessible for students. Each diploma represents a student who has a new beginning and promise in life. We are collectively very proud.

As we continue to grow we want to make sure students have a plan in place as they transition from Foothills. We want to make sure that we know what Foothills alumni are doing - career choice, training, college, military, family care. We want to know and we want to make sure they have the tools they need to succeed. Transition support will be our focus for next year.

Today, we are proudly celebrating each and every student. So far, 288 students have earned a high school diploma in 2018-2019 - we think we will pass our 300 mark goal. Thanks for sharing this moment with us.

In gratitude,

Sherrie



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The Foothills Vision

Foothills Education Charter High School strives to be an accessible, high-quality high school option that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the People of Georgia and its communities.