



## Student Spotlight: Garrett Burch

### Taking “AIM” at His Future

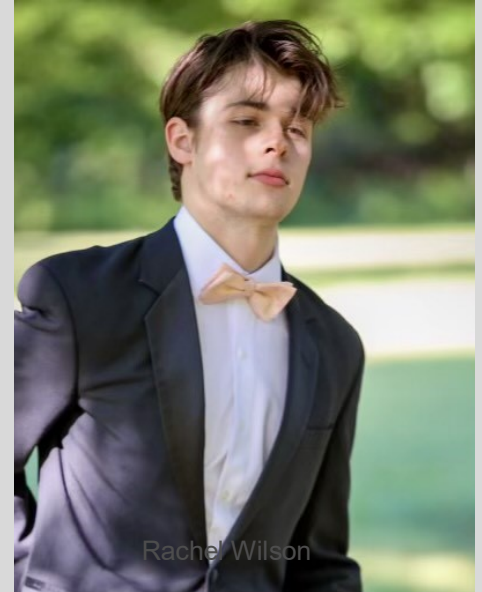
Submitted by Tad MacMillan, Foothills Alumni Coordinator

On Thursday, May 4, Barrow-Sims Foothills Charter High School hosted a Career Fair, and it was both well-staffed and well-attended. Representatives from 20 to 25 different companies, from Delta Airlines to the Barrow County Police Department to Kubota were there. Students asked questions, researched the great variety of employment opportunities, and learned how to apply. It was a great evening and participants all seemed to agree that it was very helpful.

One of the most exciting parts of the evening, though, was that a former Foothills student, Garrett Burch, a graduate of the Clarke Foothills site, was staffing one of the information tables. Garrett, who graduated in 2022, was staffing the Workforce Innovators of America (WIOA) table. He completed the Welding Program that WIOA offered through Foothills and currently works part time for them as he prepares for additional schooling.

Garrett is preparing to attend the Aviation Institute of Maintenance (AIM) in Duluth, Georgia. At this school, students learn the specialized skills necessary to work on structures, aircraft systems, flight and instrument controlled systems, electronic and digital systems. Students go on from AIM to work on helicopters to jets to unmanned aircraft, and they get jobs at many of the major airlines.

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Garrett Burch

## Message from the Superintendent

I never cease to be amazed and inspired by the wide range of educational and career choices our students pursue. And it is more than gratifying to know the key role that Foothills plays in helping to provide these options for our young folks. Garrett Burch, this month's Spotlight Student, is another great example.

Like Garrett, every student comes to Foothills for a different reason. We accept and celebrate every one of those reasons, and we are proud to be able to provide support to those unique pathways and avenues for success for every one of them. Read and enjoy yet another great story!

—*Sherrie*

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## **Student Spotlight: Garrett Burch, continued... Submitted by Tad MacMillan**

(At the career fair, Garrett's information table just happened to be next to the Delta information table, which afforded him the opportunity to talk about career options with Jonathon Hill, the Delta TechOps representative.)

Garrett started Clarke Foothills during the pandemic because he was searching for a school that had more flexibility than a traditional high school. He knew that knowing the nuts and bolts of all aspects of welding and mechanics would help him achieve his dream of being an aerospace engineer. So, Garrett learned the basics of welding, thanks to the WIOA classes offered through Foothills, and now plans to learn more about being an aircraft maintenance technician at AIM. Eventually, he hopes to land a job with Lockheed-Martin's legendary SKUNK Works program, a highly classified research and development branch of Lockheed-Martin. This is the division that designed many top-secret spy aircraft that are currently in use. Exciting work and a worthy goal!



Garrett has been very methodical as he works to achieve his goals. He sees each job and educational experience as getting him prepared for the ultimate goal of being an aerospace engineer. His sage advice to current Foothills students is "don't take other people's advice about rushing through school: Take your time, plan out what you want to do and then, find a career that is in line with what you want to do. Know what you want to do and then take courses that are correlated to your goal."

Garrett certainly seems to be heeding his own advice as he journeys toward his goals. He is prepared to work in the aviation industry in a variety of capacities so that he truly understands the basics before he gets into design. We certainly wish him the best and we thank him for coming back and supporting current Foothills students at our recent Barrow Foothills Career Fair.

EPILOGUE: Garrett wrote back to Tad MacMillan with these words—"Thank you so much for getting back to me! I loved your piece, obviously as you are such a talented writer. There's nothing in the piece that I want to change besides adding a thank you to Foothills and WIOA for giving me the opportunities I needed to succeed in my journey."



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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.*