



Student Spotlight: Remesis Muñoz, Madison Submitted by Michelle Garrison, Madison Site



Remesis Muñoz, who will soon graduate from the Madison Foothills Site, was recently named an Advanced Placement Scholar with Honor by the College Board. Remesis is the first Foothills student to receive this designation, a distinction earned by those who have passed 4 or more AP exams with an average of 3.25 across exams taken.

Remesis has inspired the Madison Foothills staff with his hard work and dedication. He entered the doors of Foothills with one goal in mind—to graduate early. Remesis recalls his initial feelings about enrolling at Foothills: “I was unsure that I had made the right decision, but once I started my classes here, I knew this was going to be a good fit for me, and I can finish.”

Remesis recalls the biggest challenge that he faced in his 10th grade year. He missed many days of school due to illness and fell behind. These absences also affected his grades. Yet, Remesis refocused and decided that he needed to “buckle down” and catch up with his coursework: “I try to be self-aware, and asked myself, ‘What would make me happy?’” . . . I knew what I was capable of, and I need to graduate.”

With his mind made up and his academic career as a top priority, Remesis also decided not to sell himself short. He enrolled in several AP and Honors courses to safeguard his goal of graduation and his future. While Remesis’ grades and coursework would allow it, he will not pursue postsecondary studies at a major university. Instead his desire is to be an electrician, and he will enroll at Athens Area Technical College this spring.

Remesis attributes his work ethic to his parents, particularly his dad. Remesis beams with pride when talking about his father: “I admire my dad. He is very well balanced, has great work ethic, is extremely patient, and is always happy. He inspires me to do the best in whatever I do. My father also tells me, ‘You don’t need to go to college to be successful; what people need is someone to be committed and hard-working and honest.’ This integrity comes from a man who did not start school until he was in the 5th grade in Mexico. My father had to work before he was able to start school.” Neither of Remesis’ parents graduated from high school, yet they have a very reputable small business.

During his free time, Remesis likes to listen to music and play piano; he is also very involved with his church. He is committed to working as a missionary and helping with disaster relief. Community service takes up much of his time. In addition, Remesis takes great pride in his sidekick, Sky. Sky is an 11 year-old, black miniature schnauzer, whom Remesis describes as “spoiled.”

As Remesis, our very first AP Scholar with Honor at Foothills, prepares to graduate, he shares the following words of wisdom with his Foothills classmates: “You only accomplish what you work for. Work hard and don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

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Compete to Complete

Last January, we began a competition between our Foothills sites. The sites are competing in three categories:

- Average Credits Earned Per Student
- Average Attendance
- End-of-Course Tests with Scores of 2+

Our regular sites compete and our corrections sites compete in their own category. Our 2018-19 Winners were as follows:

- Average Credits per Student: Morgan and Arrendale
- Average Attendance: Oglethorpe and Burruss
- EOC Tests with Scores of 2+: Jackson and Phillips

As we start the 2019-20 school year, we plan to announce the monthly winners and will share the overall winner in May of 2020. The overall winners will receive \$500 to use for a student celebration.

August leaders are as follows:

- Average Credits per Student: Baldwin and Burruss
- Average Attendance: Greene and Burruss
- EOCs with Scores of 2+: Not reported due to small numbers. Will report in November.

A Foothills Contribution to the State of Education

Mentors who take time to share their experiences and listen to the struggles of the students. Administrators who dig deeper to find out why a student isn't at school. Teachers who work one-on-one with students to help them be successful . . .

On September 13th, four Foothills graduates and the mother of one of our graduates participated on a panel at the University of Georgia's State of Education Conference in Athens. The main focus of this year's conference was enhancing social and emotional learning through safe and welcoming schools. The above examples are just a few of the stories that the four graduates shared with an audience of teachers, principals, superintendents, and board of education members at the conference.

Dr. Gibney-Sherman, Foothills Superintendent, introduced the panel, giving background on the Foothills mission, and sharing that many of the graduates, "didn't ever, in their wildest dreams, think they would ever get a high school diploma." The panel was then moderated by Russ Cook from UGA's Carl Vinson Institute for Government and Melanie Brittain, Regional Director for Student Services for Foothills.

The graduates focused on the importance of caring adults and the relationships that staff worked to build with students at Foothills. Allyson Deaton, a graduate of the Barrow site who has a daughter in kindergarten, spoke of an administrator at Foothills who took the time to understand why she wasn't coming to school. Warner Fuller, a graduate of the Jackson site, spoke specifically of a mentor who supported him and made him "feel important": "Even if I didn't believe in myself, and I felt like no one else did, my mentor cared. It really helped me having that one person who I knew cared."

Cairo Allah, who graduated from Foothills while at the Phillips Correctional Institute, and Shaquita Smith, a single mother of four, also spoke of the influence that Foothills teachers and staff had in their lives. Allah remembers a teacher who helped him just by checking in when he had his "head down and didn't really care about anything." Smith shared that "teachers made us feel like it was worth coming."

These four graduates—who at one time did not believe that they would graduate—now have plans to become a nurse, a radiologist, a teacher, and a business owner. Their shared experiences are a reminder of the importance of the relationships that we build with our students—one at a time.

Pictured from Left to Right:

Cairo Allah, Phillips/Burruss Foothills Graduate; Sherry Lewis, mother of Phillips/Burruss Foothills Graduate; Shaquita Smith, Clarke Foothills Graduate; Allyson Deaton; Barrow Foothills Graduate; Warner Fuller; Jackson Foothills Graduate



Foothills Education Charter
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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.