



Student Spotlight: Laye's Story

Foothills Education Charter High School serves just over 900 students, many of whom faced obstacles while in a traditional high school setting. One such student is Laye, who attends the Barrow Foothills site. Laye was born in the United States and returned to his home country at an early age where French became his native language.

Two years ago, Laye moved to America to live with cousins hoping he would one day be able to attend a university in the United States, his life-long goal. Laye came to America as an above average student in his home country of New Guinea, Africa. His obstacles were learning to speak English and having to attend four different high schools. Laye's parents and three of his siblings are still in Guinea.

Laye's last high school told him he would not be able to graduate on time in the traditional setting. He was encouraged to try Foothills Education Charter High School. Laye is working his way rapidly through course material at the Barrow Foothills site. With his contagious smile and determination, Laye has endeared himself to the Foothills staff.

Laye has never wavered in pursuit of his goal of attending a university in the U.S., but not just any university. Barrow Foothills site director Dr. Bill Kruskamp shared Laye's lofty goal—to attend Columbia University when he graduates!

“There are a thousand reasons why a student might not otherwise graduate. At Foothills, we remove obstacles that keep people from graduating.”

*Dr. Andy Felt
Madison Site Director*

A Message from the Superintendent

Foothills Education Charter High School opened August 2015, and so much has happened with the help of so many people to make Foothills a reality! At this writing we already have 22 graduates, and we are anticipating 150-175 by the end of June 2016. We have 350 part-time staff positions held by a combination of retired educators, community members, and full time teachers. We are serving over 900 students from Baldwin, Banks, Barrow, Bibb, Clarke, Elbert, Franklin, Gwinnett, Greene, Jackson, Jones, Long, Lumpkin, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Putnam, Walton, Wilkinson, and two state corrections facilities. We have already made a difference in the lives of many students, families, and communities. Collectively we are focused on serving students who need a second chance, like our spotlight student this month, Laye. When the traditional high school model closed a door for Laye, Foothills opened a window!

We are excited to begin sharing our story through [The Foothills Review](#). There are many more amazing stories like Laye's. In “Transformational Tuesdays,” you will also read just one example of how the local community is supporting the work of Foothills.

We welcome students to enroll everyday. Please encourage students who need a second chance to earn an accredited high school diploma to make an application now - it is never too late. Please contact the Foothills site that is closest to you for more information (www.foothillscharter.org).

With pride and hope for the students we serve,

Dr. Sherrie Gibney-Sherman, Foothills Superintendent



In This Issue

- Student Spotlight: Laye's Story, Barrow
- Message from the Superintendent
- Transformational Tuesdays, Jackson

Supportive Communities

The concept of “Transformational Tuesdays” at the Jackson Foothills site grew out of a desire from the community to support the work of Foothills. One of the site directors, Rachael Parr, mentioned the Jackson Foothills site on her personal Facebook page, never knowing that it would lead to stronger partnerships with the community.

April Sorrow from Leadership Jackson saw one of the posts and contacted Rachael wanting to know how they could get involved. The idea of “Transformational Tuesdays” was born.

Rachael praised the support that the Jackson County community has provided to Foothills. The community sees the value of the work that is happening at Foothills. “It’s a community effort to pick the kids up and get them to the finish line,” she said. “There is such excitement” about what Foothills is doing for the Jackson community.



Dr. Kelly Anderson, owner of Galilee Veterinary Hospital, recently spoke to students at the Jackson Foothills site.

Transformational Tuesdays

Foothills Education Charter High School sites are open from 4pm to 9pm Monday to Thursday for students to come and make progress on earning credits toward a high school diploma. While the focus is on graduation, all of the sites do recognize that students also need some preparation for what lies beyond the finish line.

The Jackson Foothills site has partnered with the Leadership Jackson class at the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce to host “Transformational Tuesdays” once a month at the Jackson site. Each month Leadership Jackson prepares a presentation that highlights a specific topic of interest to the students at Foothills. To date, they have presented on Scholarships and Financial Aid for college and Careers in Law Enforcement. Later this spring, they will present information on Careers in the Medical Field, Working as a Team, and Getting the Job. The session in May on “Getting the Job” will focus on writing resumes, interviewing, and dressing for an interview. These skills will be very relevant to Foothills students as they approach the graduation date in May.

Leadership Jackson and the concept of “Transformational Tuesdays” is one example of how Foothills sites are partnering with communities to support students as they work toward graduation. April Sorrow from Leadership Jackson says it best: “They are not alone on this journey. We are here to help.”



**Foothills Education Charter
High School**
www.foothillscharter.org
706-795-2191 x 1476

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.