

# Engaging Non-Traditional Youth in Your Workforce Pipeline

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Northeast Georgia



Connecting Talent with Opportunity  
A proud partner of the American  Job Center network

Kim Meadows, Project Manager

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# Topics of Discussion: The 6 P's

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Partnership

Program

Participants

Performance

Path  
Forward

Pursuing  
Excellence

# Partnership...



# Training Trailer

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# Partnership...

## What is Foothills?

Foothills Education Charter High School is North-Middle Georgia's answer to the dropout problem. We offer a unique opportunity to any student who wishes to earn an accredited Georgia High School Diploma.

We have 16 locations across the North-Middle Georgia region, offering a full range of high school courses in a convenient, flexible, self-paced format. All Classes are held in the evening so you can work during the day and attend school at night. Tuition is 100% FREE for students who enroll at Foothills full time.

All courses are mastery-based, which means you cannot fail a course. There are no deadlines, so you can take as much or as little time as you need to successfully complete your coursework. To better meet the different learning styles of students, Foothills offers a variety of course formats including textbook and web-based instruction. All methods provide self-paced, individualized mastery learning.





# Partnership...

Foothills approached WorkSource NEGA about providing access to welding training to Foothills Students...

WorkSource NEGA provided:	Foothills provided:	Area Employers provided:
Training Trailer	Student Recruitment	Jobs!
Funding (\$1,700) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pays for wire, gas, metal, prep of materials, gas for generators, PPE for each student, operational support</li></ul>	Funding (\$1,300) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FTE pays for Instructional Costs</li></ul>	Work Based Learning Opportunities

# P rogram...

- 10-week Course
  - M-Thurs 5-8 pm
- Certifications Earned
  - AWS, OSHA 10, Forklift, Lean 6 Sigma White, First Aid
- Provides 1 CTAE Credit
- GeorgiaBEST Soft Skills
- Each Cohort has 8-16 Students





# Participants...

## WELD READY

**FOOTHILLS BARROW CAMPUS  
SIMS ACADEMY -**

**985 AUSTIN RD  
WINDER GA 30680**

**INFORMATION NIGHT - AUG 12  
7 PM AT BARROW SITE**

*The Foothills welding program positions students to earn American Welding Society welding certifications that align closely with local employers needs. Other certifications earned: OSHA 10, CPR/AED/First Aid, Fork Lift, Lean Six Sigma White Belt and professional skill training. Only 8 seats are available - information night attendance strongly encouraged.*

**COURSE  
AUG. 23 - NOV. 5, 2021**

- 10 week course
- 5-8 PM | Mon.-Thurs.
- Must be 16 years or older (preference to 18 and over)
- STUDENTS MUST COMMIT TO ATTEND CLASS EVERY DAY
- Receive CTAE credit





# Application Process

## Customer Information Sheet

Please complete the following information as detailed as possible. We need this information on file. Enclosed is a self-addressed, stamped envelope for you to return this to the WIA office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

|

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address that you check regularly, so we can communicate with you via email.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list 3 contacts with addresses and phone numbers:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

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City/State/Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship

School You Are Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Program of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

# P

## erformance...

3 Completed Cohorts in 2 Counties

39 participants

### Success

- Job Placement
- Average Wages of \$17-\$20/hour
- Value Added Relationship with Employers
- Work Based Learning Opportunities
- Exposure to Welding for Students
- Furthered Education at Technical College



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# WeldREADY Program Offers a Fast-Paced Road to a Welding Career

*This boot camp training program helps students become successful in their personal and professional lives*

BY ROLINE PASCAL

What happens when public secondary charter schools, public workforce agencies, and private training institutions collaborate?

Foothills Education Charter High School, a public charter school located in Winder, Ga., and serving a 15-county area in Northeast Georgia, including Barrow County; The Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board/Regional Commission, which provides oversight of and administers the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds allocated to the region; Lanier Technical College, a

post-secondary education campus in Barrow County; and Workforce Innovators of America (WIOA), a welding training provider, are focused on how to prepare students for the workforce. This is how these organizations came together to help develop the WeldREADY program.

## The Inception of the WeldREADY Program

WIOA is an organization that provides the 160-h WeldREADY boot camp welding training program for

students to learn welding skills as well as soft skills that appeal to manufacturing employers. The brainchild of Pete McGill and Clay Evans, the organization came about after McGill moved to Athens, Ga., in 2015 and noticed a lack of welders with basic skills in local industry.

After McGill relocated, he took a position with the Athens Technical College Economic Development Office as the director of corporate customer relations. During his tenure, he came to realize that local industry needed gas metal arc welders for production.



Fig. 1 — The 53-ft-long mobile welding lab is equipped with eight welding stations, each of which contains a welding table, fixture stand, multiprocess welding machine, and stocked toolbox.



The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission mobile training lab brings its tools and classroom to students in areas that need it. (All photos courtesy of Matt Brewster and Workforce Innovators of America.)

"Although the college offered a two-year degree and a one-year diploma in welding, it became apparent that, even though this program was provided, it was difficult for some students to complete due to the long duration of the program, especially for those who were experiencing additional barriers, such as a low income, family difficulties, past offenses, being in recovery, having a disability, being a veteran, and other factors," McGill said.

With that in mind, he approached Evans with the idea to launch an organization that would bridge the gap between those searching for training that will quickly lead to sustainable employment and employers searching for skilled, prepared, and effective employees.

"After discussion, we also realized the need for welders to have a background in soft skills, too, because employers stress the importance of being on time, being at work every day, dressed in the correct personal protective gear, having a positive attitude

in the workplace, and handling difficult people and situations," McGill recalled.

## Welding Program Extends Its Reach with Mobile Lab

The WeldREADY program takes someone who has never welded before and helps them master the basics of gas metal arc welding in four or ten weeks. It also emphasizes the importance of other skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and resilience.

Through close relationships with employers in the area, the organization is able to teach its students the skills needed to be employed locally immediately after completing the training program.

"Our goal is for each student to have a job offer before graduation," McGill explained. "We do emphasize to students that our fast-tracked training program does not substitute for a two-year welding degree... Our philosophy is to help students first mas-

ter a skill or trade, get a job, and then, if they wish, transition to a post-secondary world that helps them hone the finer points of that trade."

McGill and Evans offer training at no cost if students fall into one of the following categories: low income; individualized education plan recipient; foster child; drop out; veteran; unemployed; underemployed; disabled; parent; ex-offender; and supplemental nutrition assistance program recipient.

"Additionally, we have a nonprofit called WorkForce Helpers, which assists our students with costs of childcare, transportation, or other living expenses as needed to help them complete job training and improve their lives," McGill said.

The program has also partnered up with Lanier Technical College and Athens Technical College to help students who were in the WeldREADY program and are ready to pursue a two-year degree.

In February 2020, McGill and Evans extended the program into a

# Path Forward...

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Additional Grants Received	Submitting Applications For
USDOL WORC ARC Grant (awarded \$618,000)	Good Jobs Challenge
United Way Grant (awarded \$100,000)	Georgia ARPA Funds
GA Chamber of Commerce Foundation (awarded \$5,000) for STEM Awareness	OTHERS???



# Pursuit of Excellence...

- Best Practices
  - Establish and maintain relationship with partners
  - Utilizing several different funding sources
- Lessons Learned
  - Ensure students are available for work upon completion
  - Flexibility (Pandemic/Funding Availability)
- Being Proactive for Upcoming Classes
  - Coordinate location for trailers and begin recruitment months before class starts



# Questions/Comments...

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