

Lemon Bay HS Student Takes Flight

Incoming JR. Academic Top Student Joshua Gilliland Is Focused On Flight



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Joshua Gilliland has accomplished a lot for a young man turning 16 next week. He never had it easy. His father lost his job and his mother's small business shuttered during the 2008 banking crisis. As a young boy, he would make paper and model airplanes while his father was on the phone wrangling with creditors and banks, working odd jobs, and selling wares in local markets and streets to provide for him, his newborn brother, and wife. Joshua excelled in all aspects of academics as a young boy and had a keen interest in science, technology, and computers. He was a charter member of his elementary school computer club. He studied for 1 year at the American Christian School leased to the family's parish of St Mary's Catholic School. He then went on to McKinnon Middle School taking all advanced classes. Covid hit during the summer of 8th grade and families were able to sell their houses and relocated to Rotunda West Florida. Joshua enrolled in the Honor AP program and JRROTC at Lemon Bay HS and finished his freshman year with a 4.5 GPA. He just finished testing and he is confident he will be moving into his Jr. year with over a 4.0 GPA as well. He also joined the Young Eagles Program with the EAA and volunteers introducing children and teens to Aeronautics. He has hours in his Log book already having taken an introduction flight and lessons. He recently passed his 3rd class FAA medical exam and studied and is ready to take his ground school exam. He hopes to have a private pilot in air hours complete and licensed this summer.

The young man had this to say. "I would like to thank God, my parents, mentors, including school teachers and coaches for inspiring me along the way. One thing I learned is that life is not easy and if you want anything you need to work for it."

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