



Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243
Kenji Matsudo, Superintendent
Emily Hauser, Treasurer/CFO
Dave Bergan, Assistant Superintendent
Diane Nichols, Public Relations
November 9, 2023

Madeira Grads on the Cutting Edge

Over 20 years after graduating from Madeira High School (MHS) in Cincinnati, Ohio, Chad Nichols (Class of 2000) and Kevin Shane (Class of 2001) discovered they were both working at the same electric aviation company - 800 miles away from their hometown! Located in Burlington, Vermont, the company is BETA Technologies - an electric aerospace company developing electric vertical take-off and landing, and electric conventional take-off and landing aircraft, as well as a network of multimodal charging infrastructure. The planes are used in the cargo, medical passenger, and military aviation industries.

Chad Nichols believes that the strong community he grew up in and the teachers he had going through Madeira schools taught him that no one had any preset track in life and that anything was possible. That belief helped him earn an undergrad degree in Construction Management and a Masters in International Business - garnering experience in construction, manufacturing, renewables, and procurement along the way. Nichols' long-time passion for sustainable solutions paired with a love for aerospace and technology drew him to BETA and the field of electric aviation.

Like many high school students, Kevin Shane wasn't sure what he wanted to do while he was a student at Madeira, and in retrospect said he'd probably tell himself to study harder and pursue more STEM classes. After a few years in college, he knew he wanted to fly airplanes and work in aerospace. He graduated from college with a degree in Aeronautical Science and completed grad school with the intention of getting into an aircraft manufacturer role. After an internship at an aerospace company, he was hired as a full-time employee at BETA. "I looked at the company's website and some BETA YouTube videos and decided I wanted to be part of the culture, the product, and the mission."

Unbeknownst to each other, they both started working for the company in early 2023. It was when Kevin arrived in Vermont for his orientation at the company's headquarters that Chad discovered a fellow Madeira High School alum had joined the BETA team. Kevin was putting together a presentation for the new supply chain employees when he saw Chad's name.

Nichols leads the company's Indirect Procurement as part of the Supply Chain group, supporting their aircraft charging systems, manufacturing, and production equipment - as well as facilities and training fleet. Shane reviews aircraft production parts and migrates them so the procurement team can issue a PO to a supplier, and helps decide whether older parts can be reworked to a new configuration, scrapped, or used for internal training.

BETA Technologies is at the forefront of a global push to develop commercially viable electric planes that can take off and land vertically like helicopters, and fly like jets. The company's flight school offers every team member the opportunity to get a pilot's license which gives them a common language, a deep understanding of what they are designing, and an important empathy for future operators. Both of these young professionals on the cutting edge of technology were "Made in Madeira".

Shane expressed his thoughts about working at BETA saying, “The idea of being at a company that is truly revolutionizing an industry is very cool and alluring. I also never had the opportunity to fly airplanes at work!” Nichols stated, “I’ve never experienced such a large group of rockstars working to accomplish something so impactful while maintaining such an amazing culture and open lines of communication.” He added that if he could talk to his Madeira High School self he’d tell him, “Just wait until you hear about this...”



Pictured (l to r) Chad Nichols, Kevin Shane, and an ALIA aircraft which has a 50-foot wingspan and will carry up to 5 people and a pilot.