

FAMU

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
**ESSENTIAL
THEATRE**



2025-2026 SEASON | February 25 - March 1, 2026
Maintstage Series | Charles Winter Wood Theatre



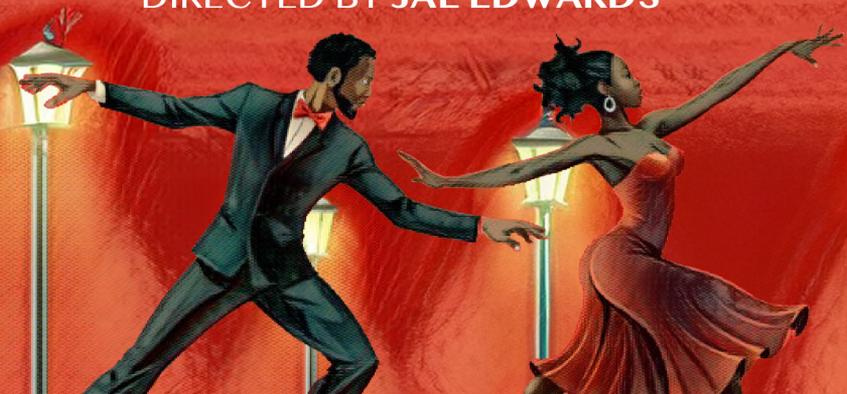
Echoes

OF THE HEART

A MUSICAL REVUE

CONCEIVED BY RYAN PETTAWAY

DIRECTED BY JAE EDWARDS



Echoes

OF THE HEART

A MUSICAL REVUE

CURATOR AND BOOK WRITER

RYAN PETTAWAY

DIRECTOR

JAE EDWARDS

SHYA LEE CHOREOGRAPHER

MICH'ELE BARRINGTON MUSICAL DIRECTOR

ZHARIA PATTERSON CREATIVE DIRECTOR

CLARKE DENNIS SET DESIGN

OKSANA SUN COSTUME DESIGN

KEITH WESLEY LIGHTING DESIGN

KYNDAL JONES STAGE MANAGER

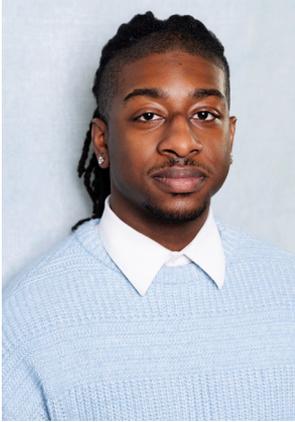
This production is a student-devised project, with students taking charge of writing the book, designing the movement and choreography, and overseeing all aspects of its visual and artistic design.

WARNINGS: Smoke, Strobe and moving lighting effects

Cameras and recording devices of any kind are absolutely prohibited in the theatre. Please turn off or set to silent mode, your cell phones and any alarm watches before the show begins. The house manager reserves the right to ask disruptive audience members to leave without a refund.

Director's Notes

Jae Edwards



Love is something I believe is interwoven through most, if not all, things in life. Whether it's the platonic love you have for a best friend you've known since kindergarten, the familial love for family members and fur babies, or even the practical love you feel for your craft—love is essential to the way of the world. However, I do believe that romantic love is one of, if not the strongest of them all. We see love reflected in so many examples of art—paintings, sculptures, and, most importantly, music. I believe some of the best songs have been born from love -its joy and its pain. Unfortunately, love isn't always linear; it has its ups and downs, which is portrayed in the show.

In the club Smoke & Honey, the owner and MC have one goal, that is: to make sure everyone in the club leaves in love—or at least be hopeful that love will find them. In his quest, he takes us through the four stages of a relationship: euphoria, attachment, complications, and devotion—each separated into acts. As the director, I'm very excited to take everyone on this journey of love with him.

When I first pitched the idea of creating a musical for our theatre program to our professors, I was told to come back with a proposal. I reached out to two classmates I believed were talented and dedicated enough to help bring this vision to life: Ryan Pettaway and Zahria Patterson, both of whom worn many hats on this project. We initially pitched it as a small student-led production to be produced in the Ronald O. Davis Acting Studio. However, our professors encouraged us to devise a show that could potentially be on the mainstage. They had enough confidence and faith in us to believe we could aim higher, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow through this experience. After six months of conceptualizing, planning and hard work, we're proud to present to you, *Echoes of the Heart: A Musical Revue*.

Enjoy!

Curator's Notes

Ryan Pettaway



Smoke & Honey is not merely a nightclub—it is a sanctuary disguised as seduction, a temple hidden inside basslines and shadow. The MC has spent years building and curating this space with obsessive care, shaping it the way an alchemist shapes a potion. Every detail, the smoke, the honeyed glow, the sound, the flow of bodies exists to soften defenses, to draw people in and make them fall. The club is alive. It breathes and responds. Its magic is not only the MC's, but also drawn from the energy of those inside it: longing, regret, hope, lust, grief. Love leaves residue, and Smoke & Honey absorbs it, amplifies it, and reflects it back through music and movement. The audience should feel that the room itself is listening.

The MC has a magic that assists in his hosting/ownership, a romantic who is also a curator, a man hiding a wound behind beauty. He tells everyone this place is about escape, about pleasure, about the night, but there's something he's been keeping to himself. The truth is quieter and heavier: Smoke & Honey was built to hold a love story he has not yet learned how to tell. Every night becomes a rehearsal for confession. Every song carries a fragment of something he lost.

Each song in the club represents a different archetype of love, not as clean chapters but as emotional states people move through, sometimes in order, sometimes all at once. Infatuation burns fast and loud. Desire seduces and consumes. Devotion offers warmth and stability, yet remains fragile. Doubt creates distance and silence. Loss brings weight and regret. Self-love demands honesty and exposure. Mature love arrives not as fantasy, but as a choice—intentional, steady, and earned. Love evolves in this space. It mutates, it fails, it returns changed. The audience should see themselves reflected in these stories, even when it is uncomfortable.

By the end, the audience should understand that Smoke & Honey was never built simply to make people fall in love for a night. It was built to teach them how to love without losing themselves—and to give the MC the courage to finally tell his story out loud.

ECHOES OF THE HEART A MUSICAL REVUE FEATURING:

D.J. Cruel	Shya Lee
Julius Davis	Jade Livingston
Michael Defreitas	Corynne Moss-Brewer
Jae Edwards	Zahria Patterson
Kristiana Holland	Ryan Pettaway
Jacoby Jenkins	Briney Rojas

Deanne Williams, Guest Vocalist
and Joshua Lyons as the Club Owner, MC

MUSICIANS

Conductor/Keyboard: Mich'ele Barrington

Keyboard: Noel Stewart

Bass Guitar: D'Arthur Godwin

Lead Guitar: Isreal Campbell

Drums: Amir Hernandez

Saxophone: Allen Martin

Trumpet: Kazah Dixon

PIT SINGERS

Deanne Williams: Soprano

Kenisha Lockhart: Alto

J'Mareah Jackson: Tenor

SETTING

Smoke & Honey Night Club. Present Day.

ACT and MUSICAL SELECTIONS

This production is performed without an intermission

Act 1: Rose-Tinted

“You’re Nobody ‘Til Somebody Loves You” - Joshua
(Russ Morgan, Larry Stock, James Cavanaugh)

“Sway” - Michael and Company
(Pavlo Beltfán Ruiz, Luis Demetrio, Norman Gimbel)

“Sweet Love” - Briney, Kristiana, Michael, and D.J.
(Anita Baker, Gary Bias, Louis A. Johnson)

“Unforgettable” - Julius and Briney featuring Corynne, Cellist
(Irving Gordon)

“Love You I Do/This Will Be” - Deanne with Zahria, Kristiana, and Jade
(Henry Krieger, Siedah Garrett/Chuck Jackson, Marvin Yancey)

Act 2: Spellbound

“Naughty Girl” - Briney, Corynne, Zahria, Kristiana, and Shya
(Beyoncé Knowles, Scott Storch, Robert Waller, Angela Beyincé)

“Hot in Here” - Julius, Michael, Jacoby, D.J. with Female Dancers
(Nelly, Pharrell Williams, Chad Hugo, Chuck Brown)

“Love On the Brain” - Kristiana
(Fred Ball, Joseph Angel, Rihanna)

“Attachment Issues” - Jae featuring Musicians
(Sam Scriven)

Act 3: Out of Tune

Poem “Untethered Love” - Joshua: Performer, and Shya, Dancer
(Ryan Pettaway)

“Where is My Husband” - Briney, Jade, Corynne, Zahria, Kristiana, and Shya
(RAYE, Mike Sabath)

“In Love with Another Man” - Jade
(Jazmin Sullivan, Anthony Bell)

“At This Moment” - Jae
(Billy Vera)

“Forget You” - D.J.
(CeeLo Green, Bruno Mars, Philip Lawrence, Ari Levine)

“Ain’t No Way” - Jade
(Carolyn Franklin)

Act 4: Love Affair

“Golden” - Deanne, Kristiana and Ryan
(Jill Scott, Anthony Bell)

“You’re All I Need to Get By” - Corynne and Michael
(Nickolas Ashford, Valerie Simpson)

“Ain’t No Mountain High Enough” - Briney, Julius and Company
(Nickolas Ashford, Valerie Simpson)

“As” - Joshua, Julius, Kristiana, Jade, DJ and Company
(Stevie Wonder)

Company Profiles



MICH'ELE JOYE BARRINGTON (Musical Director / Conductor) is an educator, musician, vocalist, songwriter, and producer. She has collaborated and continues working with chart-topping artists all over. She studied Choral Music Education at The Florida State University. Barrington has served as Music Director for several FAMU Essential Theatre productions including *The Wiz*, *S.T.E.A.M.*, Bob Marley's *Three Little Birds*, *Paul Robeson*, and award-winning *Sweet Mama Stringbean*, which received national recognition from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. She is a national recording artist, with albums including *I Want to Please You*, and her latest single entitled *Connected*. Barrington is the founder of *Vociano with Joye*, where she provides professional vocal, piano, guitar, and drum lessons for youth and adults, as well as, studio sessions for up-and-coming artist. Mich'ele has been an educator for 17 plus years and continues to impart and impact those around her.



LAYLA BROWN (Props) is an Electrical Engineering major and Theatre minor. She has participated in over 18 theatrical productions as both cast and crew and has competed at the Southeastern Theatre Conference. This is her third production with FAMU Essential Theatre.



KENISHA CALHOUN (Pit Singer) performed in *Fences* (Rose Maxson) with Theatre Tallahassee; *Memphis* (Felicia Farrell) with Quincy Music Theatre; *The Amen Corner* (Odessa) with Essential Theatrical Associates; and *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery* (Aunt Mae) with the FAMU Essential Theatre. She also served as Pit Singer for the Essential Theatre's production of *The Wiz*.



D.J. CRUEL (Cast) is a junior Theatre Performance major, Liberal Arts minor, from Panama City, FL. His credits with the Essential Theatre include *Fat Ham* (Juicy), *Confederates* (Assistant Stage Manager), and *Thoughts of a Colored Man* (Vocalist/Love Alternate).

Company Profiles



JULIUS DAVIS (Cast) is a second-year Theatre major from Tampa, FL, who has appeared in the Essential Theatre productions *Thoughts of a Colored Man* (Depression) and *Confederates* (Malik/ Abner). His other credits include *Godspell* (Jesus), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Mitch), and *How the Moon Would Talk* (Dwayne). He has worked with American Stage and several community theaters.



MICHAEL DEFREITAS (Cast) is a fourth year Mechanical Engineering scholar from Orlando, FL. He is credited with *Drowsy Chaperone*, *Tuck Everlasting*, and *Aida*. This is Michael's first Essential Theatre Production.



CLARKE DENNIS (Set Design) is a second-year Architecture scholar from PG County, MD. This is Clarke's first production working with the Essential Theatre as Set Designer.



JAE EDWARDS (Director / Cast) is a Senior Theatre Performance Major with a Minor in Music from Port St. Lucie, FL. Jae has been in numerous shows with the Essential Theatre: *Chicken and Biscuits* (Rivers/Reginald U.S.), *Change it Up: Gen Z Explained* (Vocalist), *Romeo and Juliet: A Miami Love Story* (Tybalt), *Two Trains Running* (Memphis U.S), *The Wiz* (Vocalist/ Tinman U.S.), *Thoughts of A Colored Man* (Happiness), and a valued member of the FAMU Connection.



KRISTIANA HOLLAND (Cast) is a junior Theatre Performance major from Tallahassee, FL. She has performed in *Dreamgirls* (Stepsister/Ensemble), *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery* (Maggie/Ms. Rosa), and *Day of Absence* (Operator 3, Club Woman). Her backstage credits include Assistant Stage Manager for *Pipeline* and *Thoughts of a Colored Man*; Sound Designer for *Good Times: The Windfall* and *Wrestling with Angles*; and Soundboard Operator for the FAMU Connection.

Company Profiles



J'MAREAH JACKSON (Pit Singer) has competed nationally as a vocalist. She currently serves as Alto Section Leader at her church and is an alumna of the renowned FAMU Gospel Choir.



JACOBY JENKINS (Cast / Male Swing) is a Technical Theatre major from Gainesville, FL. He has performed in *The Wiz* (Ensemble) and served as Assistant Director in *Thoughts of a Colored Man* and *Two Trains Running*. Jacoby directed his first comedy sketch in *Change it Up: Gen Z Explained* here at the Essential Theatre and as his senior project he directed a live interpretation of the televised sitcom *Good Times*.



KYNDAL JONES (Stage Manager) is a fourth-year Theatre Performance major from West Palm Beach, FL. Kyndal debuted on the Essential Theatre stage in *Chicken and Biscuits* as Simone Mabry (U/S), and since appeared in *Single Black Female* (SBF#2), *The Wiz* (Ensemble), *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery* (Miss Mary/Shine), *Good Times "The Windfall"* (Wilona Woods), *Dearly Departed* (Suzanne), and *Sibling Rivalry* (Host/ Dominique, Lisa Johnson/Dot). Behind the scenes Kyndal has been Co-Assistant Stage Manager for *Romeo and Juliet* and *Disappearing Acts*. Kyndal was also the Vice President of the Essential Theatre Union (24'-25').



SHYA LEE (Choreographer / Cast) is a third-year Theatre Performance major at Florida A&M University from Miami, FL. Her performance credentials include Superior rated twirling at Miramar Highschool, *Flyin' West* (Ms. Leah), *One Monkey Don't Stop No Show* (Beverly), FAMU's *The Wiz* (Dancer/ Ensemble), FAMU's *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery* (Fannie Mae), *Disappearing Acts* (Swing/Operator/Picketer), *Dearly Departed* (Delightful), *Zooman and the Sign* (Ash), and *Sibling Rivalry* (Sister, Vera Johnson, Storyteller).

Company Profiles



JADE LIVINGSTON (Cast) is a fourth-year Theatre major from Quincy, FL. Her Essential Theatre credits include performances in *Sweet Mama Stringbean* (Waters) in the Fall of 2021, *Chicken & Biscuits* (Beverly) in the Fall of 2022, *Romeo & Juliet: A Miami Love Story* (Stori) in the Fall of 2023, *Change It Up! Gen Z Explained* (Singer) in the Spring of 2023, *Single Black Female* (SBF1) in the Fall of 2024, *The Wiz* (Addapearle) in the Spring 2024, and “*Fat Ham*” (Rabby) in the Fall of 2025.



JOSHUA LYONS (Club Owner / MC) is a senior Theatre Performance major from Miami, FL. His Essential Theatre credits include *Fat Ham* (Rev & Pap), *Thoughts of a Colored Man* (Lust), *Pipeline* (Xavier), and *Two Trains Running* (Sterling). His other theatre credits are *Fences* (Lyons) at Theatre Tallahassee, *Henry IV Part 1* (Hotspur) with the Southern Shakespeare Company, and the Urban Film Festival’s Best Local Short Film “*Pound Cake*” (Shakur).



CORYNNE MOSS-BREWER (Company Manager / Cast) is a senior Theatre Performance major with a minor in music from Baltimore, MD. She performed in the production of *Fat Ham* as Tedra U/S. *Single Black Female* as SBF #2 and served as Assistant Stage Manager in *Shakin’ the Mess Outta Misery*. She also served as House Manager for *Thoughts of a Colored Man*, and assisted with props, costume, and set design in *Romeo and Juliet: A Miami Love Story*, *Two Trains Running*, and *Poof!!/ Day of Absence*. She performed as the Principal Cellist in FAMU’s production of *The Wiz* and is classically trained in both piano and cello.



ZAHRIA PATTERSON (Asst. Choreographer / Asst. Director / Cast) is a second-year Theatre Performance major from Charlotte, NC. She performed in *Poof!* (Florence) and *Pipeline* (Jasmine) here at the Essential Theatre. Behind the scenes Zahria as acted as Dramaturg and Projection Operator for *Single Black Female* and served as the Wig Stylist for *The Wiz*.

Company Profiles



RYAN PETTAWAY (Book Writer/ PSM/ Intimacy Coordinator/ Asst. Director/ Cast) is a third-year Theatre Management major from Wesley Chapel, FL. Her Essential Theatre credits include Stage Manager for *Single Black Female* and *Confederates*, Assistant Stage Manager for *The Wiz*, and swing ASM for *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery*. She also served as Intimacy Coordinator for *Confederates* and *Fat Ham*. Beyond her work at FAMU, Ryan was a production assistant for Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, Stage Manager for *Beauty and the Beast* (Summer at Sem) and *Cinderella* (Carrollwood Players), as well as Assistant Stage Manager and Intimacy Coordinator for *Fences* (Theatre Tallahassee) and *When Scythe Met the Stone* (FSU Fringe). She also directed *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* at her high school and worked as a costume changer for *Grease* (New Tampa Players Community Theatre).



BRINEY ROJAS (Cast) is a Florida State University alumna from Jacksonville, FL. She performed in NST's *Songs for a New World or a Reefer Madness*, *Legally Blonde* (Pilar), *Rent* (Joanne) and *Hairspray* (Motormouth Maybelle). Briney has also appeared in several new short films, including *The Boy Who Fell From Heaven* (Sam) and *Phantom Pain* (Dr. Bryn Hawthorne).



KENDALL SMITH (Asst. Stage Manager 2) is a first year Theatre scholar at Florida A&M University, hailing from Jacksonville FL. He performed with the Essential Theatre in *Sibling Rivalry* as Terrel, Kevin Johnson and Marcus, as well as Bill Cooper in *Ode to Mariah*.



OKSANA SUN (Costume Designer) Is a third-year Theatre Performance scholar from Atlanta, GA. Her Essential Theatre credits include Tedra in *Fat Ham*, and Sara (Understudy) in *Confederates*. Behind the scenes Oksana served as Company Manager for *Fat Ham*, Ushered *Thoughts of a Colored Man*, *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery*, and *Disappearing Acts: Poof! & Day of Absence*. Oksana also was the Special Effects Makeup Technician for *Confederates*.

Company Profiles



JUSTIN TROUPE (Assistant Stage Manager 1) is a second-year Theatre Performance major from Miami, FL. Justin debuted on the Essential Theatre stage as Jackson in *Disappearing Acts: Day of Absence*. He has also served as House Manager for *Fat Ham* and *Sibling Rivalry*. Justin is glad to be working with the Essential Theatre again.



KEITH WESLEY (Light Design) is a senior theatre performance student with a minor in journalism from Stockbridge, GA. Keith has performed in a variety of productions with the Essential Theatre and across North Florida. His managerial credits include the Essential Theatre's production of *Pipeline* (Stage Manager), *Confederates* (Assistant Stage Manager), and the student-directed *Sunday Dinner* (Stage Manager). Technical credits include *The Wiz*, *Wrestling With Angles*, and the FAMU Connection (Light Board Operator). Currently, he serves as the Assistant Director for Theatre Tallahassee's *The Mountaintop*, running from February 26 through March 15.



DEANNE WILLIAMS (Guest Vocalist / Pit Singer) is a singer, songwriter, and actress from West Palm Beach, FL and a graduate of Florida A&M University. Her theatre credits include Shug Avery in *The Color Purple* (Essential Theatre), Radio #2 in *Caroline, or Change* (Quincy Music Theatre), Lena Horne in *Dark Legends in Blood* (Essential Theatre), and featured vocalist in *Me Against the World* (MLG Productions, Inc.). While a student at FAMU, Deanne was a part of the FAMU Marching 100 and FAMU Concert Choir. She was also a cast member in the 22nd Edition of the FAMU Connection and is a founding member of Tallahassee Nights Live, and currently travels throughout the Big Bend performing with the Bay Kings Band.

Production Staff

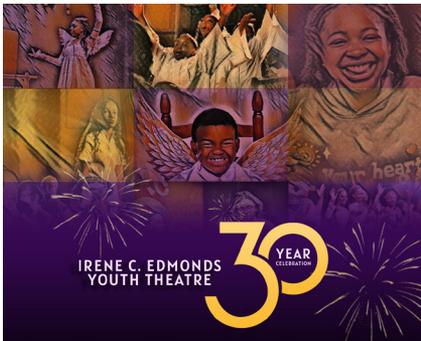
Productions Manager	Luther D. Wells
Technical Director	C. Bacote Robinson
Faculty Mentor, Directing	Luther D. Wells
Faculty Mentor, Visual Storytelling	Anedra Small
Faculty Mentor, Script Development	Kimberly K. Harding
Production Stage Manager	Ryan Pettaway
Stage Manager	Kyndal Jones
Asst. Stage Managers	Justin Troupe, Kendall Smith
Vocal Captains	Jade Livingston, Michael DeFreitas
Choreographer Mentor	Janelle Williams
Asst. Choreographer/Dance Captain	Zahria Patterson
Company Managers	Corynne Moss-Brewer, Azaria I. McCants
Faculty Mentor, Lighting Design	C. Bacote Robinson
Light Board Operator	Desmond Lewis
Spot Operators	Tommye Campbell, Jakyra Estiverne
Sound Board Operator	Laylah Holloway
Faculty Mentor, Props	Evelyn D. Harris
Faculty Mentor, Scenic Design	Ruben Arana
Asst. to Mr. Arana	Jania Sparrow
Set & Properties Crew	Clarke Dennis, Layla Brown
Set & Paint	Julius Davis, Maesa Anderson, Shiane Sullivan, Shya Lee, Michael Royals
Stage Hands	Clarence O'Neal Jr., Timothy Johnson
Faculty Mentor, Wardrobe Supervisor	Edith Carnley
Costume Assistants	Jordan James and Cadence Smith
Costume Construction Crew	Nylah Berkely, D.J. Cruel, Kristiana Holland, Jordan James, Kara Mullings, Neveah Sylvester
Wardrobe Crew	Jalia Dunbar
House Managers	Jordan James, Nylah Berkely
House Staff	Jordan Noland, Unica Magnus Brianna Bell, Anya Brown, Richard Brown II, Jaila Dunbar, Kara Mullings, Brandon Charles, Sion Brown, Dana Ladd
Distribution Manager	Joshua Lyons
Director of Ticket Sales and Patron Services	Kimberly K. Harding
Box Office Manager	Monica R. Woods
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Marketing Assistants	Layla Richardson, Amir Burgess, Oluwamodupe Oloyede, Jakyra Estiverne, Skyla Stephens, Chase Johnson, Kyndal Jones,
Publicity Graphics, Program Layout	Willis Fedd
Photography/and Videography	Willis Fedd, Brianna Bourjolly, Amir Burgess, Layla Ricahrdson, Oluwamodupe Oloyede
Project Documentarian	Sterling Smith

Faculty & Staff

Valencia E. Matthews	Director of Theatre Dean, College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities
Ruben Arana	Scene Design
Edith Carnley	Costume Design
Willis Fedd	Director of Marketing
Kimberly K. Harding	Management Theatre History Sound Design
Evelyn D. Harris	Performance Properties Special Events
C. Bacote Robinson	Technical Director Lighting Designer
Anedra Small	Performance Vocal Coach Criticism Recruitment
Luther D. Wells	Associate Director of Theatre Performance Recruitment

Acknowledgements

A. Thomas Cavano, Ph.D., Director, Venue Management, Alfred Lawson Jr. Multipurpose Center, FAMU Office of Communications, FAMU Parking Services, FAMU Plant Operations and Maintenance, FAMU Police Department, Sarah Price, Ph.D, Dean of the College of Education, FAMU TV 20, FAMUAN, Tallahassee Democrat, WTXL ABC 27



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In loving memory of Curtis and Trudi King
Phillip and Abigail Madison
Doris Maloy
Carolyn Anita McGriff
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Blondenia T. Gibson
Nancy Godette

Mary Lafitte Grayson
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Wendell E. Kimbrough II
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Mavis LaBounty
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Brigitte Marshall
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