



## Dr Kayla June McKinney Wiggins

August 27, 1955 - October 4, 2023

Dr. Kayla June McKinney Wiggins passed away Wednesday morning, October 4th, 2023, at her home in Giles County surrounded by her loving family. She was born in Big Spring, Texas on August, 27th, 1955 and was 68 years old.

She was a professor of English at Martin Methodist College. She was a life long lover of learning and teaching. She loved the theater and loved her family immensely. She had a very strong will and was not afraid to be outspoken.

A memorial celebration will be held at a later date.

Dr. Wiggins was preceded in death by, her parents, Mac McKinney and Billie Eskew, Brother, Randy McKinney.

She is survived by,

Husband, Mike Wiggins of Pulaski, Tennessee.

Daughters, Dahn McDonald of Pulaski, Tennessee.

Jennifer Lamberth of Pulaski, Tennessee.

Grandchildren, Tatiana Loggins, Amber (Will) Frank, Chris (Alanah) Wiggins

Great-Grandchildren, Aurora, CJ, Dee, Terrell, Ayden, Arlo, Maddie, and

Lilliana

Sister, Sandra McKinney of Texas.

Bennett-May & Pierce Funeral Home and Crematory is in charge of the arrangements for Dr. Kayla June McKinney Wiggins.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Kayla was always straight forward and blunt, a caring thoughtful lady.* ”



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**National Velvet Waits** - March 14 at 02:48 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Family* ”



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**Lovey McDonald** - June 21, 2025 at 12:27 PM

MW

“ Kayla June

*By: Mike Wiggins (4/1/1984)*

*The always friend  
By day or night,  
Comforting those  
Within her sight.*

*The tangent base  
Protecting me,  
Windmills to fight,  
Secure yet free.*

*All knowing one,  
Prodigal seeker,  
The glue of life,  
Strong not weaker.*

*Lifetime dancer,  
Different drum,  
Composite whole  
More than the sum.*

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**Michael Wiggins** - October 12, 2023 at 04:38 PM

TB

*Mike Wiggins im so sorry to hear of your loss. Prayers and love sent to you and your family*

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**Teresa Beddingfield** - October 12, 2023 at 09:40 PM

MW

*Thank you, Teresa*

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**Michael Wiggins** - October 20, 2023 at 07:21 PM



*Mike, I'm so sorry to hear about Kayla. My thoughts and prayers are with you.*

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**Karen Healy Payne** - October 29, 2023 at 01:58 AM



*Thank you, Karen.*

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**Michael Wiggins** - October 31, 2023 at 12:39 AM

MW

“ Thoughts

*By: Michael Wiggins*

*When safe within your arms loving circle  
With your lips kissing my hair,  
I feel the presence of love's great miracle  
For I am content with knowing you're there.  
Even in the deep recesses of my mind,  
As strife meets naught but disgrace  
And worry no frayed edges to bind.*

*As we walked together hand in hand  
Through the park in the cool night breeze,  
I saw just how happy and at ease  
This man could be when with the woman  
About whom his whole life is planned.  
Word, not from the mind but the heart,  
Were exchanged gladly when we had begun  
And hours turned to minutes on the run  
For we listened as teaching was no the aim  
And spoke to break walls keeping us apart.*

*To say goodbye is a very lonely thing  
Even if it's only for a few short hours,  
And each night this message must bring  
An end to the fleeting moments or ours.  
Yet, in the wake this word leaves behind,  
We have a chance to think about our day  
And to dream about what tomorrow will find  
As our love becomes stronger in every way.*

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**Michael Wiggins** - October 11, 2023 at 08:17 PM

MW

“ *To Everything A Season Is Due*

*By: Michael Wiggins*

*I cannot express what I feel when we're apart*

*For to say I miss you does not even start*

*To tell of that feeling that comes over me*

*When to the comfort of your arms I cannot flee,*

*Or the anguish that engulfs me at night*

*When half closed eyes behold you nowhere in sight,*

*Or the despair that weighs heavy on my head*

*When a sleep filled mind realizes I'm alone in bed.*

*All I can do is dream sweet thoughts of you*

*And remember to everything a season is due,*

*That for now we must be alone*

*To love from afar talking on the phone*

*All the while knowing this is for but a time*

*So that our love can come into its prime.*

*Soon this season too will pass and be done,*

*And we can come together and be truly one.*

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Michael Wiggins - October 11, 2023 at 08:09 PM

LM

“ 1 file added to the album Family



Lovey McDonald - October 11, 2023 at 07:53 PM

PP

“ So very sorry to hear about the passing of Dr. Wiggins. Praying for you all!

Pamela Pryor - October 09, 2023 at 01:10 PM

MI

“ How do you get to spend the rest of your life with the single person who most makes that life worth living? So few of us get that opportunity. I was one so blessed.

*Kayla and I fell in love. Or at least I fell in love. She was a beautiful redhead, and smart. Neither attribute ever changed during our 48+ years together. Nothing stood in the way of our love. Not even the Air Force could stand for long due to the feelings we brought to bear. Even major illness couldn't bring us down.*

Michael - October 07, 2023 at 06:37 PM

LM

“ 1 file added to the album Family



Lovey McDonald - October 07, 2023 at 01:34 PM

LM

“ There is an endowment to UT Southern (Martin Methodist College) in her name. Please feel free to donate and to share it.

<https://giving.utsouthern.edu/wiggins>

Lovey McDonald - October 07, 2023 at 08:36 AM

EM

“ Elizabeth Fry Maxwell lit a candle in memory of Dr Kayla June McKinney Wiggins



Elizabeth Fry Maxwell - October 06, 2023 at 01:59 PM

RR

“ Deepest condolences and sympathy to the family. Dr. Wiggins was such a powerful force in my life at Martin Methodist. She expected excellence from her students. As a result, I grew so much as a person. She will be greatly missed.

Rachel Perkins Rieger - October 06, 2023 at 10:57 AM

SM

“ *My deepest condolences to you all. I will never forget how she opened her heart and her home to a young mother and her children. Being pregnant, with a 2 year old, husband deployed and family thousand miles away, Kayla and her family became our rock. Best neighbors ever. Rest in peace Kayla.*

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**Suze Kane Mallernee(Briggs)** - October 06, 2023 at 10:27 AM

LM

“ *Lovey Dahn McDonald lit a candle in memory of Dr Kayla June McKinney Wiggins*



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**Lovey Dahn McDonald** - October 05, 2023 at 02:18 PM

“ Growing up with this amazing woman lent a wealth of knowledge and experience that can't ever be truly put into words. There are so many stories I could share, but none would ever truly touch the value of her love and her support over the years. Family and education were the two things she valued most in life and she did her best to instill those values in my sister and myself even if it meant banging her head against a wall repeatedly until we finally listened.

One of my fondest memories is time. Mom was always so busy. She did amazing things throughout our lives; sold Avon when we were very little, taught at the community college while in Grad School, kept the house nearly spotless, always had food on the table at dinner time, etc. But through it all she always did her best to make time for us. One of her favorite ways to do this was a Christmas Coupon Book (I have no idea if this is what she actually called it). Basically, she took time to make these little books with coupons in them that gave us her time, one hour per coupon. One coupon would be one hour doing anything we wanted to do; play Barbies, read a story, watch a movie, whatever. The rest would be specified activities, things she enjoyed doing with us that we might not have requested. But it was always time, which was more valuable to her than any amount of money.

In reading messages on the group chat and in memories of various plays and classes over the years, I realized that she never gave up that idea. The idea that time is the most valuable gift you could give to someone. We grew up, got into our lives, lost touch (in some cases), but she still always gave us her time. She may have expressed it in the countless Christmas and birthday cards she sent, or in phone calls and emails, but she still offered it even if we didn't take it. Her friends and her students were just as much family to her as her actual family, and she gave us all the same gift. I just hope, going forward, we remember that gift and give it to someone we care about. That would be the greatest testament to her life and the love she shared with so many people.

Lovey Dahn McDonald - October 05, 2023 at 02:17 PM

LM

“ 1 file added to the album *Friends*

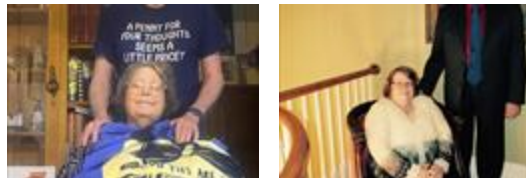


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Lovey Dahn McDonald - October 05, 2023 at 02:02 PM

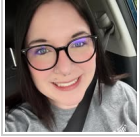
LM

“ 2 files added to the album *Family*



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Lovey Dahn McDonald - October 05, 2023 at 02:01 PM



“ I’ve been trying to find the words to say to express how I feel about hearing of Dr. Wiggins’ passing, but nothing profound or worthy has come to me. So I’ll simply say this:



*If I had to choose one person who changed my life the most at MMC, it would be Dr. Wiggins. I met her as a timid freshman in her First Year Experience class, which was focused on Storytelling. I was also lucky enough to have her for freshman literature, which is where my love and excitement for writing grew and matured.*

*I started as a psychology major, and I can still remember going to Dr. Wiggins’ office to change my major to English. She was so excited. Now an English major, I would have Dr. Wiggins for numerous literature classes, creative writing, and finally, my senior thesis course. She encouraged me to audition for my first play. She comforted me when I cried in her office, and laughed with me when I made jokes in the hall before class.*

*After graduation, our relationship continued to grow as I got deeper into theatre. She even let me be an assistant director on one show. I learned a lot from this woman: about literature, about theatre, sure, but more importantly about life. About how to be a strong, outspoken woman. About how to stand firm in your knowledge.*

*I was lucky enough to see Dr. Wiggins one last time. She was in and out of sleep, but when I said, “Dr. Wiggins? It’s Sky.” she looked at me and smiled. And I sat with her for what felt like forever, talking when she was awake, and being with her while she slept. I don’t know if she’ll remember that, but I always will.*

*“Thank you” doesn’t begin to cover it, but it’s all I really have left to say. Thank you, Kayla, for your wise talks, your contagious laughter, your love for the theatre, and your knowledge of literature. A bit of your legacy is carried on by every student whose life you touched, and that number must be in the thousands.*

*“Because I knew you, I have been changed for good.”*

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**Skylar Lovvo** - October 05, 2023 at 01:47 PM

CH

*"How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world."*

*From "The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare*

*Oh, how brightly her light shined!*

*In life, you meet people. They come and go. However, sometimes we come across a few who have lasting impacts. Dr. Wiggins is one of those who changed my life. She was my college professor, mentor, advisor, play director, and friend. At first, I was nervous. She had high expectations, and she let us all know as soon as class began. I'm so glad she had those expectations. Once she started teaching, you were transported to another world, her world. She was so knowledgeable and interesting. She definitely helped my love of literature increase ten-fold, and I now have a deep appreciation for Shakespeare. She was a wonderful professor.*

*When I met her, I was a young mother struggling with balancing work, school, and having a child. A teen mom, I always felt like I was a walking "failure." Dr. Wiggins helped me feel "smart" again. She helped me feel like a "somebody" for the first time in a long time during a very difficult time in my life. She always held me to those high expectations and lifted me up to help me get there. (Oh... and she was always so AMAZING to my little Emma).*

*I say all of this to share how big of an impact her life had on mine. During the last week or so... I've seen that there are so many other stories like mine. Dr. Wiggins impacted SO MANY lives... and I'm not even sure if she knew. I hope that during my teaching career and life I can even have half of the impact that she had on her students and those around her. She truly was a candle in a dark room for me and so many others. Her light led us to become the successful people we are today. Hopefully, we can follow in her footsteps and continue to light the paths of so many others, just as she would.*

*Dr. Wiggins, "Parting is such sweet sorrow, That I shall say good night till it be morrow."*

*From Romeo and Juliet*

*Until we meet again*

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**Christina Harris** - October 06, 2023 at 02:08 AM