

# -Sports-

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## Memphis Showboats roster takes shape after first round of player dispersal process



Teams each protected 42 foundational players, and selected up to 20 from their respective conference

ARLINGTON, TX – January 8, 2024 – The United Football League, the premier spring football league, has announced the results of its initial player dispersal process.

Each remaining XFL Conference and USFL Conference team protected 42 foundational players from its 2023 roster. Each team in each of the XFL and USFL Conferences then selected up to 20 players from the rosters of teams from their previous league that will not be moving forward in 2024. That

process was completed Friday. The Memphis Showboats used their full allotment of 20 selections from other USFL teams not moving forward in 2024, giving them a total of 62 players after Friday. Included in those 62 players are 31 on the offensive side of the ball, 29 on defense and two specialists. Of the 20 Showboats selected from previous USFL teams, 10 came from the New Orleans Breakers, five from the New Jersey Generals and two each from the Pittsburgh Maulers and Philadelphia Stars. Included in the foundational players protected by the Showboats were Jarron Jones, a two-time All-USFL offensive lineman; defensive lineman John Atkins Sr., who earned All-USFL honors last season; Derrick Dillon, the Showboats' leading receiver in 2023; Cole Kelley the team's starting quarterback in 2023; and safety Troy Warner, who led the team in tackles last season.

Please see sports page 3

## STATEMENT FROM AMY ADAMS STRUNK, TENNESSEE TITANS CONTROLLING OWNER

Earlier today [January 9, 2024], I spoke with Mike Vrabel and told him about my decision to make a change at head coach. As I told Coach Vrabel, this decision was as difficult as any I've made as Controlling Owner. I appreciate Mike's contributions to the Tennessee Titans both on and off the field. Anyone who has ever met him knows how passionate and genuine he is, and he's been a strong supporter of the Nashville community. We wish Mike, Jen, and the Vrabel family nothing but the best in the future.

As the NFL continues to innovate and evolve, I believe the teams best positioned for sustained success will be those who empower an aligned and collaborative team across all football functions. Last year, we began a shift in our approach to football leadership and made several changes to our personnel to advance that plan. As I continued to assess the state of our team, I arrived at the conclusion that the team would also benefit from the fresh approach and perspective of a new coaching staff.

I believe the Tennessee Titans can and will be a premier National Football League franchise. It's what our fans deserve, and there will be hard decisions along the way. My decision today is not only a reflection of my disappointment in our past two seasons, but also my recognition that further changes are necessary to fully achieve our vision.

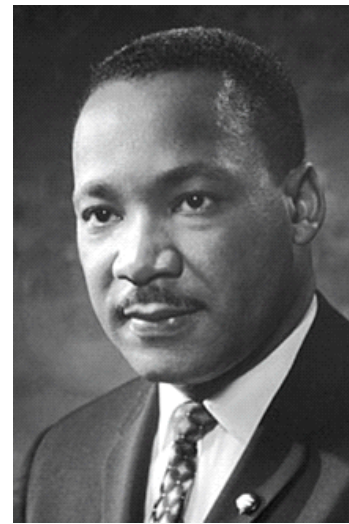
I will never shy away from acknowledging that I have unapologetically high expectations for the football team and every aspect of the Titans organization. Our vision is not simply to produce more wins than losses, it is to regularly compete for championships. While this season was disappointing, I see early signs of progress taking shape. Last year we added a promising young quarterback and several other talented players to our roster. With a coaching search, enviable cap space, and top-10 draft position, this offseason is as important as any in our history. I'm excited for the weeks and months ahead. We will meet the moment.

## Grizzlies present Sports Legacy Award at 22nd Annual MLK, Jr. Day Celebration Game on Jan. 15

Alex English, Calvin Hill, Renee Montgomery and Ozzie Smith to receive legacy awards; Memphis Grizzlies, National Civil Rights Museum, City of Memphis and Shelby County will host event.

– Tip-Off Scheduled for 5 p.m. CT, Monday, January 15 –  
– Side-by-side Telecast on Bally Sports Southeast and TNT –

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — On Monday, Jan. 15, the Memphis Grizzlies, National Civil Rights Museum, City of Memphis and Shelby County will host the 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Game, presented by Ford and your Mid-South Ford Dealers. The MLK Celebration Game concludes a collection of events honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Annual events include the FedEx Service Project, Sports Legacy Award presentation, annual Earl Lloyd Sports Legacy Symposium, the National Civil Rights Museum panel, and Youth Advisory Council TeenTalk. All events are to continue the ongoing conversations with the Mem-



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr (Jan. 15, 1929-April 4, 1968)

phis and Mid-South community to keep King's dream alive. Associate MLK Celebration Game sponsors include FedEx, Blue-Cross BlueShield of Tennessee and the Hyde Family Foundation. Fans can visit



grizzlies.com/MLK for a full list of this year's 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration events, as well as watch symposiums and discussions from previous years.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Game will tip off at 5 p.m. CT in a side-by-side telecast, broadcasting regionally on Bally Sports Southeast and nationally on TNT.

National Civil Rights

Please see sports page 4



## Grizzlies celebrate National Mentoring Month to help young people of Memphis

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The Memphis Grizzlies Foundation and MENTOR Memphis Grizzlies (MMG) announced their celebration of National Mentoring Month with multiple events throughout January as the organization strives to bring awareness to the mentoring movement, encourage participation within the community and highlight impactful mentoring relationships in the Memphis area.

Harnessing the power and promise of sport to transform lives through mentoring, the Memphis Grizzlies Foundation focuses on funding and developing youth mentoring programs to help students discover and meet their potential. Of the young adults who have a mentor in their lives, 58% have said their mentor has supported their mental health, 69% have felt their mentorship has improved issues related to their education and 74% have agreed their mentor contributed significantly to their success later in life.

MENTOR Memphis Grizzlies

tipped-off National Mentoring Month with the first Mentor Spotlight of the month on Tuesday, Jan. 2, when the Grizzlies hosted the San Antonio Spurs. Throughout January, selected mentors will be honored for their work in the community by being highlighted at center court during games and given a team-signed jersey. aptors.

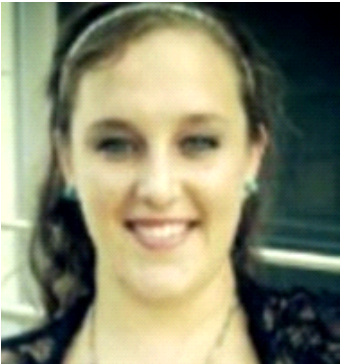
The Grizzlies will hold their annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Recruitment Fair at FedEx-Forum on Monday, Jan. 15, ahead of the Grizzlies' matchup against the Golden State Warriors. Beginning when doors open and ending at the start of the third quarter, volunteers from 20 mentoring programs in the Memphis Grizzlies Foundation network will be available at tables throughout the concourse to discuss their mentoring experiences and recruit potential mentors for their respective programs.

More than 250 mentors, mentees and staff members will Please see sports page 4

## Meet some of BIHMST sports correspondents



William M. Larsha, Jr.



Ashley Braun Gendek

BIH MST Travelers, join correspondents William M. Larsha, Jr. And Ashley Braun Gendek in their sports coverage of University of Memphis Tigers, Memphis Grizzlies, TN Titans, Southern Heritage Classic, FedEx St. Jude Championship, Soccer and more on The Mid-South Tribune and the Black Information Highway at blackinformationhighway.com Welcome, Travelers!

## MLK Day is January 15!

Remember the Dream! Visit the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

Watch for The Mid-South Tribune's 29th Annual Black History Month Edition. Coming in February 2024! Email your special events, news and photos to MSTnews@prodigy.net or BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net or MSTentertainment@prodigy.net

Sens. Blackburn and Tuberville Introduce Legislation to Benefit Veterans over Illegal Aliens see sports-Military 2 \*\*\*

Jim Shepherd Examines Wayne LaPierre's NRA Court Case see sports-Military 2 \*\*\*

Chicago Bears Get First Pick for 2024 NFL Draft see sports page 3 \*\*\*

NFL Announces Nominees for Don Shula High School Coach of Year; Titans' Nominee is Tony Brunetti see sports-Ent. page 5 \*\*\*

Jahvon Quinerly Named to AAC Honor Roll see sports-Ent. 5 \*\*\*

NFL Offers Free Admission to Military on February 7th see sports-Military 2 \*\*\*

Dylan and Carter Nutt of University of North Alabama Win MLF Abu Garcia College Fishing Tournament see sports page 3 \*\*\*



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