



Valarie Esguerra, a Jacksonville, Florida native, is an accomplished writer, educator, and creative consultant. From her youth, she immersed herself in storytelling by writing, directing, and producing plays for her church and taking an active role in community theater. She participated in Atlantic Beach Experimental Theatre's debut season and received a Pelican Award for portraying Beneatha in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* at Players by the Sea.

Esguerra was among the four artists selected from Jacksonville to participate in the inaugural Lift Every Student program, a collaboration between Any Given Child

Jacksonville, the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, and Duval County Public Schools.

Additionally, she was commissioned to write an original poem in honor of Jacksonville native Eartha M.M. White for the Eartha M.M. White Historical Museum.

In Jacksonville's 2022 bicentennial writing contest, Jax Next 100, which sought reflections on the city's past and visions for its future, Esguerra swept first place in all three categories: Essay, Poetry, and Spoken Word.

With a rich experience spanning over a decade, Esguerra has contributed as a creative, writer, and screenplay consultant for TeleNext Media and Flyover Studios, which produced family-friendly movies. Moreover, she was an integral part of the writers' room for TB Media's Los Angeles-based television series, *QT: Second Shot*.

Her screenplays have garnered acclaim, being officially selected in the Faith in Film International Screenwriting Competition and reaching the quarter-finals in the esteemed Austin Film Festival Screenwriting Competition.

Esguerra's passion lies in crafting stories that not only entertain but also touch the heart and inspire hope. She holds dear the words of Frederick Buechner, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."