



Media Release

**07/01/2008 - ARCA Presents Symbol of Appreciation to Albuquerque
Mayor Martin J. Chavez**

<http://www.ARCASymbolofAppreciation.org>

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ARCA Clients Love the City of Albuquerque.

Albuquerque, NM – In an effort to express appreciation to Mayor Martin Chavez for his longtime support of their organization and the people it serves, the ARCA Foundation this past Friday morning presented Mayor Chavez with a piece of original artwork painted by local Artist and ARCA resident Paula James.

“We wanted to make sure the Mayor knew just how much we appreciate his continued support”, said Katherine Martinez, ARCA Foundation Board member. “Our core mission has been to open doors for individuals with developmental disabilities in this community, and Mayor Chavez has taken it upon himself to truly embrace that mission. We just want to express our gratitude for all he’s done for ARCA.”

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ARCA sent a request to its nearly 600 clients asking for original artwork symbolizing the City of Albuquerque. The response was overwhelming and included paintings of our desert vistas, double rainbows, herds of buffalo, hot air balloons and our Bosque gloriously depicted in the unique beauty of each season. The Foundation's Board of Directors then made the final selection - the winning piece, called *Bosque by Moonlight*.

"I am an artist and have lived with ARCA for over 20 years," said Paula, who was born and raised in Georgia. "I submitted my painting because I wanted our Mayor to know that I love ARCA and I love Albuquerque."

Mayor Chavez has been an integral partner in creating opportunities for the citizens of our community with developmental disabilities on many levels. His support has included touring ARCA homes and facilities, providing guidance and support to ARCA residents, encouraging job placement within the City's workforce and donating the use of the City's Suite at Isotopes Park.

"ARCA is the largest service provider of its kind in the State of New Mexico," said Elaine Solimon, ARCA Executive Director. "We are grateful for the long term partnerships we have with our local government, businesses and the wonderful private citizens of our community. It is through these partnerships that we have been able to create individualized opportunities for the people we are so privileged to serve."

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Presenting the painting to the Mayor were Paula James, artist; ARCA Foundation Board members Marianne Bennett, Chief Privacy Officer, Affiliated Computer Services, Inc.; Betty Valdez, Housing Director, Bernalillo County Housing Department; Katherine Martinez, Director of Government Affairs for the Home Builders Association of Central New Mexico, Briscoe Consulting; Tony Pedroncelli, Boards and Commissions/Constituent Service Coordinator, City of Albuquerque; Elaine Solimon, Executive Director, ARCA and Michele Cody, Development Director, ARCA Foundation.

ARCA is a nonprofit organization founded in 1957 by a group of Albuquerque families who had children with developmental disabilities. The mission of ARCA has remained constant for 51 years: opening doors for people with developmental disabilities to be valued members of our community. For more information, please call 505-332-6803 or visit our web site at www.ARCAOpeningDoors.org.

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