'Dreams' Exhibit Showcases Work Created Through UA Outreach Program

Department of Family and Community Medicine
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Artworks portraying the wishes and life goals of 29 artists with intellectual and developmental disabilities are being exhibited through ArtWorks, an outreach program at the Department of Family and Community Medicine.

The collaborative exhibit, titled "Dreams," is on display at the Mary T. Paulin Gallery, 1509 E. Helen St., through July 26. The exhibit also includes works by six artists from the Hozhoni Gallery in Flagstaff. The gallery is operated by the Hozhoni Foundation, which provides services for people with disabilities.

ArtWorks is an outreach program within the Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities, which is part of the Department of Family and Community Medicine. The program promotes community and mutual learning through creative and expressive arts interactions between adults with disabilities and UA students.

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The program left a major impression on one of the artists, who made it the subject of his piece.

"My piece is about my ArtWorks dream house with my ArtWorks family," Jack McHugh said. "I like this piece because it's like one big family coming together in my picture. And for me, ArtWorks is my second family."

ArtWorks operates from a cluster of two small buildings, which house the Sister Jeanne Carrigan Art Studio, which provides safe space for expression, connection and growth for the artists, and the Mary T. Paulin Gallery, where ArtWorks artists exhibit their work and help run the gallery, learning professional business skills with vocational assistance from UA students and community volunteers.

"Mutual respect and learning is the center of every activity at ArtWorks," said Yumi Shirai, director of ArtWorks and an assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine.

"We encourage our artists to practice their strengths and talents," she said. "What's more, we've developed traveling shows as part of our gallery program. We partner with organizations, businesses and other programs, to display our artists' work in other locations."

The works on display at the Mary T. Paulin Gallery are a glimpse into the creative minds of ArtWorks participants.

"The unique imaginations and layered thoughts of our artists are captured in brilliant colors
and varied media," Shirai said.

The Mary T. Paulin Gallery is open Monday-Friday from 8-11 a.m. and 12:30-3 p.m.

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