

## 'On Our Own Time' Art Exhibit, Now Open to Phoenix Artists, Celebrates 10 Years

University Communications  
January 2020

The "On Our Own Time" art exhibit, which showcases the artistic talents of University employees, is marking two milestones: its 10th anniversary and the first time that University employees working in Phoenix have been able to enter.

The exhibit will be on display in the lobby of the Bioscience Research Laboratories from Feb. 3-15.

The exhibit is a partnership between the University and the [National Arts Program](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, which works with organizations in more than 30 states to showcase the creative talents of those organizations' employees and their immediate family members. Organizations must have at least 3,500 employees to be eligible for support from the National Arts Program.

That support provides monetary prizes, which are awarded at a reception on the final day of the exhibit. The program accepts submissions in the classifications of amateur, intermediate, professional, youth and teen and manages the artist registration system through its website.

The University provides the venue and a coordinator for the exhibit. **Pamela Wagner**, an administrative associate in the [Department of Family and Community Medicine](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, has served as coordinator since 2017.

The exhibit, Wagner said, provides employees on and off campus with an opportunity to connect over their common passion for art.

"Seeing them make the connections and have a common ground, to me, takes down so many silos," Wagner said, adding that continuing to grow employees' connections through art was the impetus for including Phoenix employees this year.

The suggestion came from **Cynthia Standley** <sup>[3]</sup>, director of the [Program of Art in Medicine](#) <sup>[4]</sup> at the College of Medicine – Phoenix, which helps medical students sharpen their skills in observation and description and improve critical thinking and communication. Standley is coordinating COM-P employees' participation in "On Our Own Time."

**Ruslan Rafikov**, an assistant professor of medicine at the College of Medicine – Tucson, entered the exhibit for the first time last year in the amateur classification. "Small Talk," a black-and-white photograph taken at White Sands National Park in southern New Mexico, earned him Best of Show, the exhibit's top prize. Rafikov said he was surprised to win, adding that not much preparation goes into his photos; he takes pictures when he sees something "that's beautiful or extra interesting."

Stimulating employees' creativity by allowing them to showcase their artwork, he added, can allow them to be more creative in their jobs.

**Jennie Norris**, a graphic designer for Facilities Management and a [professional watercolorist and painter](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, has entered her work in "On Our Own Time" for the past five years. Her painting "Jimmy," a portrait of a Native American man, won Best of Show in 2018, and the painting "Honor: Life and Death (Puma Skull)" earned second place in the professional classification in last year's exhibit.

Norris often finds inspiration to paint or draw by looking at others' work, she said. She likes the idea that the "On Our Own Time" exhibit might provide the same inspiration for her colleagues.

Winona Esher, the daughter of **Melanie Esher-Blair**, senior program coordinator for the Arizona Telemedicine Program, has won the exhibit's art education award twice, once in 2018 for her drawing "Caught in the Moment," a portrait of a cat, and again last year for a drawing titled "Water Glass." The award's monetary prize is intended to support training for the winner.

"Having my work recognized in an exhibit with other artists is pretty cool because there are so many other talented artists' work and it feels like all the hard work is being recognized in a fun way," said Esher, a high-school senior.

One of the best aspects of the exhibit, Wagner said, is the wide range of experience and ages as well as the mediums they work in.

"Everyone has their own version of art," she added. "This show has everything, and it's really fun to see it all in one place."

*The "On Our Own Time" art exhibit will run Feb. 3-15 in the lobby of the Bioscience Research Laboratories building, 1230 N. Cherry Ave. An artists' reception will run from 1-3 p.m. on Feb. 15. The deadline for submitting artwork is Jan. 27. More information and registration is available on the [National Arts Program website](#) <sup>[6]</sup>.*

---

**Source URL:**<https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/our-own-time-art-exhibit-now-open-phoenix-artists-celebrates-10-years>

**Links**

[1] <https://www.nationalartsprogram.org/venues/university-of-arizona> [2] <https://www.fcm.arizona.edu/> [3] <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/professor-finds-balance-between-art-and-medicine> [4] <https://phoenixmed.arizona.edu/departments/bioethics-and-medical-humanism/program-art-medicine> [5] <https://jennienorris.net/> [6] <https://www.nationalartsprogram.org/university-of-arizona/university-of-arizona-az-2020-registration-form>