

## Submit Your Artwork for Employee Exhibit

University Communications  
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By day, Mary Lor cruises campus streets as a Cat Tran shuttle driver. But when she's not behind the steering wheel, you might find her behind a spinning wheel, or perhaps a potter's wheel.

Lor is just one of many University of Arizona employees with a hidden artistic talent, and the [UA Staff Advisory Council](#)<sup>[1]</sup> is looking for others like her to showcase the work they do "off the job" at the annual "On Our Own Time" employee art exhibit.

Lor's metal sculpture of a trash can took first place in the sculpture category in last year's exhibit, which showcases artwork of talented UA classified staff and appointed personnel.

The exhibit brings together members of the UA family with a shared interest that might not be a part of their daily professional lives.

"It adds another dimension to your fellow employees that you don't know about," said Lor, who has dabbled in metalwork, basket weaving, fiber art, sculpture and painting in her free time. Â

Lor said she is still thinking about what she might submit as an entry for this year's exhibit, which opens May 8 at the Student Union Memorial Center's Union Gallery.

Submissions for this year's exhibit are due May 4, and all staff and appointed personnel â€“ whether they wield a paintbrush, a camera or a lump of clay â€“ are invited to bring up to two creative entries to the Union Gallery between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. that day.

Entries from all artists will be accepted, and experience or professional training in art is not necessary, said Jose Solorzano, who chairs the SAC committee that organizes the exhibit.

"There are a lot of staff out there that might work in administration or accounting or anywhere, but they also have an artistic side, and generally that's how they reduce stress," Solorzano said.

The "On Our Own Time" exhibit started in the early 1990s and generally features between 50 and 80 pieces from 40 to 60 artists, Solorzano said.

This year's exhibit is open to artwork in the following seven categories: painting, drawing, crafts, mixed media, sculpture, photo realism and photo art. Judges will award first-, second- and third-place ribbons in each category and name a winner of best in show.

"There's a great variety of work. All the time, there's really interesting stuff," Solorzano said.

Exhibitors may be hobbyists just exploring their creative sides or may have formal training in art.

Betty Valencia, a research aide in molecular and cellular biology, has shown pieces in the employee exhibit for the past five or so years.

An oil painter with a lifelong interest in art, she earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in studio art from the UA in 2007. It was a big leap from the bachelor's degree in chemistry that launched her professional career, but it was something she'd always wanted to pursue, she said.

Valencia has shown her artwork in Arizona and Mexico and says she appreciates that the "On Our Own Time" exhibit accepts all artists, without pressure.

"It's a great experience for people from the University," she said. "It's motivational, and it's a luxury. It's a treat."

Valencia's painting "Overwhelming Leftover," which she says depicts a female body that's been distorted by pregnancy and age, won first place in the painting category last year. Much of her work focuses on body image issues.

She said she want to send a message that "beauty can be found in this kind of body too. Beauty's not just about women in magazines and airbrushing."

Employees interested in submitting work for the "On Our Own Time" exhibit can download an entry form from the [SAC](#)<sup>[2]</sup> Web site.Â

An opening reception for the exhibit will be held May 8 from noon to 2 p.m., and awards will be presented then. Artwork

will remain on display through May 29.

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