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Downtown “Sharing” Mural Honors Jennifer Riordan and the Importance of Community

Albuquerque, NM – Downtown Albuquerque is about to become a lot more colorful. The Jennifer Riordan “Sparkle” Fund and Albuquerque Community Foundation are partnering with Working Classroom and visual artist, PAZ, to create the first of four major murals across the City. The mural, which will live on the Albuquerque Community Foundation’s east-facing external wall, overlooking St. Mary’s School, is titled “In the Garden of Sharing.” Based on a natural landscape of fauna, flowers, vines, trees, birds and insects, the mural will represent the idea of sharing resources to create a vibrant ecosystem full of growth, opportunity and connectivity.

“As a community foundation, the concept of sharing is at the heart of everything we do,” said Randy Royster, President & CEO of the Albuquerque Community Foundation. “We exist to share resources with nonprofits and our community-at-large. These resources can grow and intertwine with others in our City to create a stronger Albuquerque.”

Lead artist, PAZ, developed the concept with input from Michael, Averie and Josh Riordan, along with Albuquerque Community Foundation staff. Working Classroom, a nonprofit organization that provides new media, theater and visual arts programs to young artists and arts apprentices is managing the project. High school student apprentices from Working Classroom are working with PAZ to prep the wall, project the design and paint the final product. “Working Classroom carefully selected an artist who we felt could truly capture the essence of this mural,” said María Gallegos, Executive Director of Working Classroom. “Through this project, our student apprentices will learn every step of creating a mural of this scale.”

“Identifying the concept that will make a mural come to life can be the most challenging aspect of the creative process,” said lead artist, PAZ. “Fortunately, we were gifted with a theme that is simple yet profound; sharing. This project is an excellent example of talented youth and the greater community sharing in the creative process to produce a work of art that is visually stunning and meaningful.”

“In the Garden of Sharing” kicks off a larger public art project. Four murals, each representing one of Jennifer Riordan’s belief in being “kind, loving, caring and sharing,” will adorn walls throughout Albuquerque in the future. The goal is for the murals to showcase the goodness and kindness in Albuquerque, while encouraging residents and visitors to explore the City through public art. “The

Riordan Family is excited to work with PAZ, Students from Working Classroom, and Albuquerque Community Foundation on this mural,” said Michael Riordan. “The artwork is a beautiful interactive representation of Sharing. We look forward to working with other community partners to have a mural in each of Jennifer’s core values to be Kind, Loving, Caring, and Sharing spread around the City.”

“In the Garden of Sharing” will take four months to complete from concept development to the final painting. It is on-track for full completion by the end of September. The Albuquerque Community Foundation is located on the corner of 6th Street and Tijeras Ave. NW. The mural, which will stand over 30 feet tall, will be visible throughout Downtown.

The Albuquerque Community Foundation administers a permanent community endowment comprised of many gifts, large and small, and uses the earning from that endowment to make grants to other nonprofit organizations. Since its establishment in 1981, the Foundation has distributions of nearly \$52.5 million through its grant and scholarship programs.

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