

**The Importance of the Arts
to our Community's
Creative, Cultural and Economic Vitality**

**Cindi Fargo
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- **The fastest growing art regions in the United States are the South and the West. American Style Magazine, 09/08**
- **New Mexico has the greatest number of working artists in any one state. American Style Magazine, 09/08**
- **Artists are three times more likely to be self employed and managing their careers and their lives more creatively than others. American Style Magazine, 09/08**
- **Creative places are attractive places to live, work and visit, and this is true both north and south of Interstate 40 in New Mexico.**
- **This massive thrust of creativity calls us to action.**
- **Partnerships between state, federal, and local government, the business community, the non-profit sector and our cultural and educational institutions are essential to the success of our efforts to develop our creative economy.**
- **We must involve our creative community, our policy makers, our business community and our educational leaders in the effort to build and implement a strategic and practical plan to advance our creative economy.**
- **There are 3 major arts and culture nodes within Dona Ana County. They are: New Mexico State University, Mesilla and Downtown Las Cruces. In addition, we have many colonias and villages that have great opportunity for development of their creative economy.**

- **We have an immediate opportunity to develop an Arts and Culture District in Downtown Las Cruces in conjunction with our state and local Main Street program managed by the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership, in collaboration with the Dona Ana Arts Council, the City of Las Cruces and many arts/culture and creative partner organizations.**
- **Some of our creative economic development goals should include:**

Identification of partners

Building collaboration

Asset mapping

Needs assessment and research

Strategic planning - goal setting for development of the creative economy

Funding development

Program development

Continuing evaluation