



arts & culture

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



table of CONTENTS

- 3 Letter from the Director
- 4 Our Places & Programs
- 5 Map
- 6 ABQ BioPark
- 7 Albuquerque Museum
- 8 Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum
- 9 CABQ Media
- 10 Community Events
- 11 Public Art | Urban Enhancement
- 12 The Public Library – Albuquerque/Bernalillo County
- 13 Key Arts and Culture Initiatives
- 14 Spotlight On – Explora
- 16 Budget and Impact

from the DIRECTOR

Reflecting on the achievements and milestones of the past year, I am delighted to share the remarkable progress and diversity of projects throughout the Department of Arts & Culture. From the grand opening of the breathtaking Asia exhibit at the ABQ BioPark Zoo to the unveiling of a new gathering space at Tony Hillerman Library, each endeavor reflects our commitment to serving and enriching our community.

In an ongoing commitment to enhancing user experience and accessibility, we have invested in software and online systems across our operations. The Public Library replaced its decades-old system with new software ensuring that patrons can seamlessly navigate our extensive collection of books, materials, and resources. Additionally, we upgraded our point-of-sale ticket system, streamlining transactions and interactions for our visitors to our venues. These advancements bolster efficiency and convenience and also underscore our dedication to providing exceptional service and fostering a welcoming environment for all.

I am truly grateful for the incredible talent and dedication of the public servants who work throughout Arts & Culture programs and facilities, and I look forward to the continued growth and enrichment that lies ahead.



Dr. Shelle Sanchez

our places & PROGRAMS



The mission of the Department of Arts & Culture is to enhance the quality of life in the city by celebrating Albuquerque's unique history and culture, and providing services, entertainment, programs and collections that improve literacy, economic vitality, and learning in state of the art facilities that enrich life and increase tourism to Albuquerque.

In essence, we pride ourselves on curating an eclectic array of fascinating items and orchestrating engaging events. Our collections span the spectrum from sculptures to plants, while our activities encompass everything from hosting poetry readings to presenting popular bands. It's all part of the daily routine for our dedicated team of 400+ Arts & Culture employees.

At the heart of these endeavors lie our seven divisions and numerous partnerships with arts and cultural organizations throughout the city. Every day, they bring our mission to life, infusing our work with excitement and relevance. They're the reason why we love what we do.

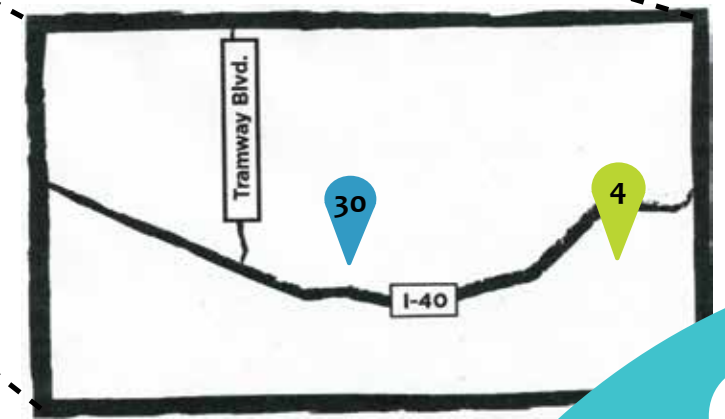
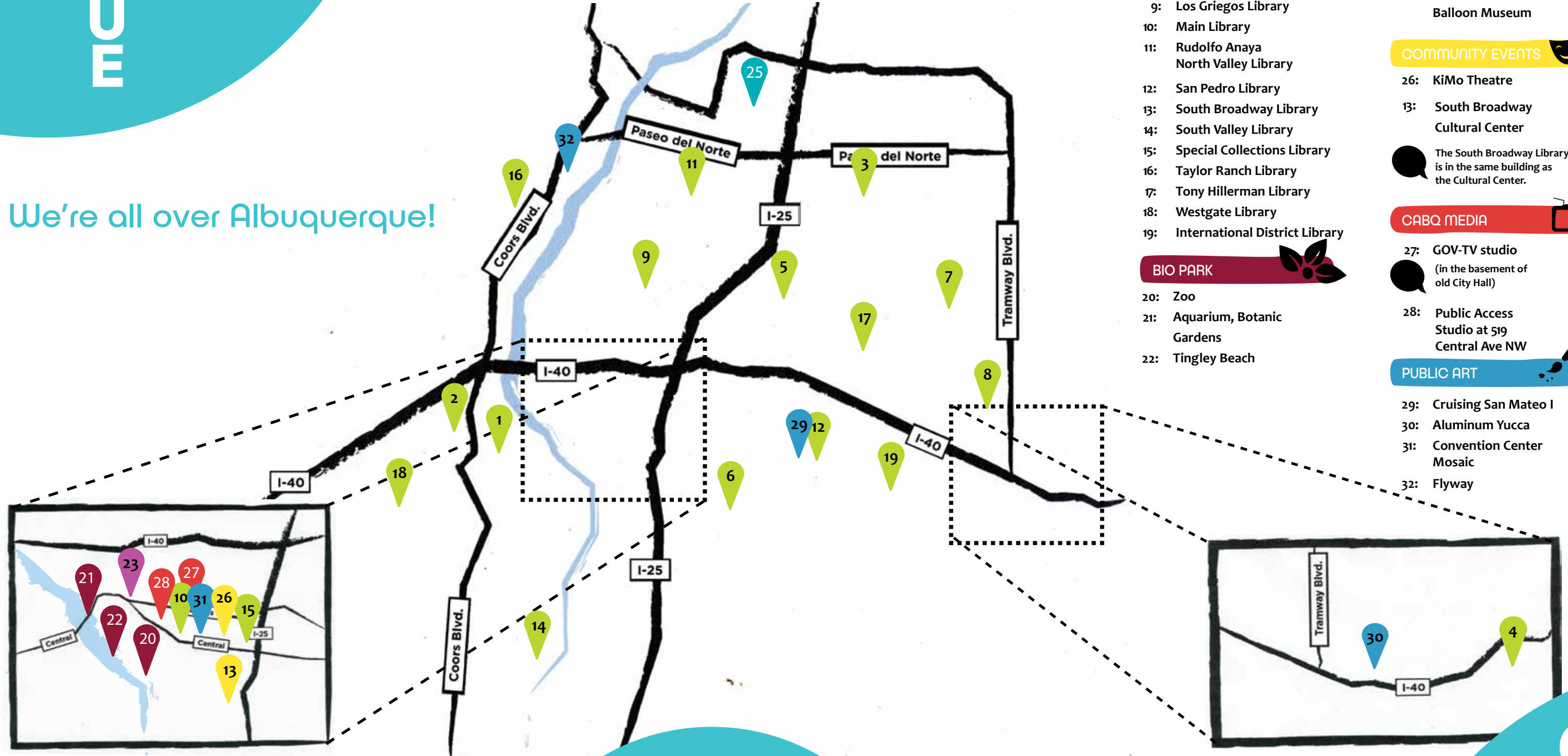
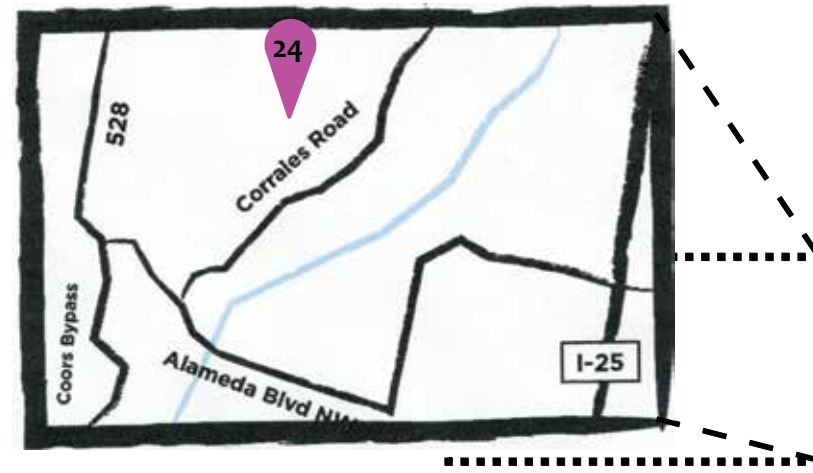
In addition to offering a glimpse into the impactful utilization of your tax dollars, we hope this report serves as an invitation for you to immerse yourself in these enriching community resources. Come and discover something remarkable firsthand.



ONE ALBUQUERQUE

arts & culture

We're all over Albuquerque!



LIBRARIES

- 1: Alamosa Library
- 2: Central & Unser - Patrick J. Baca Library
- 3: Cherry Hills Library
- 4: East Mountain Library
- 5: Erna Fergusson Library
- 6: Ernie Pyle Library
- 7: Juan Tabo Library
- 8: Lomas Tramway Library
- 9: Los Griegos Library
- 10: Main Library
- 11: Rudolfo Anaya North Valley Library
- 12: San Pedro Library
- 13: South Broadway Library
- 14: South Valley Library
- 15: Special Collections Library
- 16: Taylor Ranch Library
- 17: Tony Hillerman Library
- 18: Westgate Library
- 19: International District Library

BIO PARK

- 20: Zoo
- 21: Aquarium, Botanic Gardens
- 22: Tingley Beach

ALBUQUERQUE MUSEUM

- 23: Albuquerque Museum
- 24: Casa San Ysidro in Corrales



BALLOON MUSEUM

- 25: Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum



COMMUNITY EVENTS

- 26: KiMo Theatre
- 13: South Broadway Cultural Center



The South Broadway Library is in the same building as the Cultural Center.

CABQ MEDIA

- 27: GOV-TV studio (in the basement of old City Hall)
- 28: Public Access Studio at 519 Central Ave NW



PUBLIC ART

- 29: Cruising San Mateo I
- 30: Aluminum Yucca
- 31: Convention Center Mosaic
- 32: Flyway





ABQ BioPark

In 2023, the ABQ BioPark achieved significant milestones that underscore our commitment to excellence and conservation. The grand opening of the brand-new Asia habitat at the Zoo marked a monumental achievement, representing the largest project undertaken in nearly two decades. Spanning 4.5 acres, this expansion introduced new areas for a diverse array of species, including Steller's sea eagles, snow leopards, orangutans, siamangs, and the critically endangered Malayan tiger.

Among the notable additions was Arya, the Malayan tiger, whose arrival prior to the opening serves as a poignant reminder of the BioPark's dedication to species preservation. With as few as 150 Malayan tigers remaining in the wild, Arya assumes a crucial role as an ambassador for her species, raising awareness and advocating for conservation efforts. As a testament to our dedication to innovation and enrichment, the new Asia area boasts several groundbreaking features. From flex habitats shared by diverse species to specially designed sway poles that encourage natural movements, our commitment to providing enriching environments for our animal residents remains unwavering.

Additionally, the BioPark welcomed a host of new inhabitants, including western gray kangaroos, Frisco the ocelot, a Bali mynah, cuttlefish, a red-legged seriema, Von der Decken's hornbills, and our new Associate Director, Matthew Peterson!

Reflecting on BioPark's achievements, we are immensely proud to have earned the esteemed Global Humane Certified™ seal of approval in August of 2023. This recognition underscores our unwavering commitment to the ethical treatment of animals and steadfast dedication to conservation initiatives. As one of only 23 facilities worldwide to receive both accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and Humane Conservation™ certification from American Humane, your ABQ BioPark is committed to excellence in animal welfare.

Moreover, our commitment to conservation extends to encompass endangered plant species as well. Through our participation in a plant rescue effort, we succeeded in safeguarding the Chihuahua scurf pea and the Lordsburg noino, both of which faced imminent threat due to new construction in southwestern New Mexico. Notably, the Botanic Garden now proudly displays the endangered noino species, distinguishing itself as the sole garden in the country to do so.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we anticipate exciting developments on the horizon. With the forthcoming opening of Australia at the Zoo, as well as the debut of the new event pavilion and renovated Heritage Farm at the Botanic Garden, 2024 promises to be a transformative period for the ABQ BioPark.



Albuquerque Museum

The Albuquerque Museum welcomed two exceptional professionals to its team in 2023 with the additions of Dr. Alicia Romero and Dr. William Gassaway, both native to Albuquerque and alumni of the University of New Mexico. Dr. Romero, who earned her PhD from the University of California, Santa Cruz, previously served as the lead curator at the New Mexico Museum of History in Santa Fe. Meanwhile, Dr. Gassaway, with a doctorate from Columbia University in New York City, brings seven years of experience as the Associate Educator in Academic and Professional Programs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Throughout 2023, the museum curated compelling exhibitions and publications, showcasing stories of history and art from diverse origins:

- A spotlight on the renowned artist and Bernalillo-based photographer, Danny Lyon, delving into his lesser-known New Mexico images within the broader context of his six-decade career.
- An insightful exhibition and accompanying book shedding light on the rise and fall of dictatorships in the southern cone of South America, titled *Dictators and the Disappeared: Democracy Lost and Restored*.

The museum also secured significant national grant support totaling \$250,000 over two years from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This funding aims to facilitate the cataloging,

photographing, and online accessibility of a more extensive portion of the museum's permanent collection, spanning art, history, and historic photographs. Additionally, generous grants from the Andy Warhol Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, amounting to \$90,000 and \$27,000 respectively, were allocated towards the museum's upcoming major exhibition of contemporary art, *Broken Boxes: A Decade of Amplifying Artists, Action, and Dialog*, slated for 2024.

Anticipating the year ahead, the museum is gearing up for an array of exciting exhibitions celebrating the richness and diversity of artistic expression:

- Showcasing Indigenous art from Canada, highlighting its cultural significance and artistic brilliance.
- Presenting masterworks of United States painting spanning the 18th to the 20th centuries, offering insights into the nation's artistic heritage.
- Introducing audiences to some of the most dynamic contemporary artists from across the nation through an engaging exhibition and accompanying book.



Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum

The Balloon Museum witnessed several exciting developments that underscored our commitment to innovation and community engagement in 2023. One of the standout achievements was the completion of the museum's roof cladding project, a meticulous endeavor that spanned almost a year. Just in time for Balloon Fiesta 2023, we proudly showcased our newly paneled roof, adding a touch of modernity to our beloved building. It may not sound too exciting, but when you house delicate artifacts, a new roof is something to celebrate!

We introduced three captivating new exhibits: *Dirigible Dreams*, *Focusing Beyond Balloons*, and *Pushing the Envelope*. Each of these exhibits offers visitors a unique perspective on the rich history and boundless possibilities of ballooning, further solidifying our museum's position as a premier destination for enthusiasts and curious minds alike.

The Balloon Museum celebrated a significant milestone in October 2023 as the museum marked its 18th anniversary. As the museum reached legal adulthood, we commemorated the remarkable progress and impact it has made since its inception. Serving as a beacon of ballooning history and culture, our museum

continues to inspire visitors from around the globe while fostering a sense of pride within our local community.

Amidst the excitement, we encountered a thrilling challenge during the Balloon Fiesta season, as an annular eclipse coincided with the second Saturday of the event. Leveraging this rare celestial event to our advantage, we hosted a live broadcast by NASA, garnering nearly 9 million views worldwide. Additionally, our museum served as the backdrop for four temporary art installations supported by the Public Art Program, further enriching the visitor experience. Notably, we also played host to the prestigious Gordon Bennett gas ballooning race, solidifying our reputation as a hub for ballooning excellence.

Looking ahead to the coming year, we are eager to reboot our Field Trips and Volunteer Program. This initiative will see the return of school groups to our museum, where they will partake in guided tours and hands-on STEAM activities, fostering a deeper appreciation for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics.



CABQ Media

CABQ Media made significant strides in 2023, expanding our reach and enhancing our services to better serve the community. Our commitment to amplifying diverse voices and narratives remains at the forefront of our efforts, as evidenced by the exciting developments and milestones achieved throughout the year.

Building upon the umbrella rebrand of Albuquerque Community Media (ACM), we worked diligently on expansion, broadening our scope to encompass a diverse array of community-related and community-produced content. Collaborating with various teams, we expanded our offerings to include locally produced films, poetry readings, music shows, and more. Additionally, we undertook a comprehensive redesign and upgrade of the ABQToDo event website and the Departments of Arts & Culture's social media channels. This overhaul aimed to streamline the process for community members to share their events seamlessly, enhancing accessibility and engagement.

At CABQ Media, empowering our community members to create content effortlessly is paramount. We continued to make strides in this area by expanding our technical delivery operations to include podcasting. ACM now boasts multiple podcasts, each dedicated to telling the stories of Albuquerque and its vibrant culture. This milestone underscores our commitment to providing platforms for diverse voices and narratives within our community.

While last year presented its share of opportunities, one notable challenge was meeting the increasing demand for podcasting options from both City departments and the community. Responding to this need, we took proactive steps to make two dedicated podcasting studios available, ensuring accessibility and ease of use for all interested parties. By listening to the feedback of our stakeholders and adapting our resources accordingly, we successfully navigated this challenge, solidifying a year of growth and innovation.

As we reflect on our achievements and lessons learned, we remain steadfast in our commitment to serving the Albuquerque community. Looking ahead, we are excited to embrace new challenges and opportunities, guided by our unwavering dedication to excellence and inclusivity. Together, we will continue to elevate the voices and stories that make our city truly exceptional. A leader in community-driven media.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we are particularly excited about the prospect of a long-overdue technical upgrade of our control operations. This enhancement promises to significantly improve our workflow, facilitating smoother collaboration with City public boards and the community at large. With this upgrade, we anticipate further streamlining our processes and delivering even higher-quality content to our audiences, strengthening our impact and relevance within the community.



Community Events

Last year, the Community Events division made significant enhancements to its events, ensuring memorable experiences for the community. For the first time, the Aquarium was open for Family Picnic Night and Harvest Festival at the BioPark, creating additional performance spaces and expanding the footprints of the popular events. Additionally, the Special Event Permitting process that is managed by the division was streamlined, and now encompasses permits from other departments, to offer users a smoother and more efficient experience.

A huge milestone worth celebrating in 2023 was the successful implementation of a new point-of-sale system across all Department of Arts & Culture sites. Following more than a year of rigorous training, the system was launched in the fall, marking a significant advancement in our operational efficiency and customer service capabilities.

To overcome staffing challenges, Community Events implemented cross-training initiatives, allowing our team to cover all aspects of events, from parking to ticketing to stage management. Our dedicated team of six event staff showcased their versatility by successfully managing various events across the city, from festivals to

performances, ensuring seamless experiences for attendees.

The Community Events staff eagerly anticipates the unique experiences each event will bring in 2024. From national touring bands to new local talent, evolving vendor selections, and diverse entertainment options, we embrace the excitement and adventure that each event holds, ready to create unforgettable memories for our community.





Public Art | Urban Enhancement

2023 was a big year for Public Art Urban Enhancement. The standout accomplishment was the completion and installation of the Sawmill project, marking one of the most substantial endeavors undertaken in many years.

In 2017, the City of Albuquerque Public Arts Board joined forces with the Sawmill Community Land Trust to embark on a collaborative initiative aimed at commissioning a compelling work of public art. This partnership led to the inception of the Sawmill Public Art Project, which serves as a poignant exploration of the intersection between terrain, climate, culture, and lifestyle, particularly through the lens of water usage.

Renowned artist Thomas Sayre was chosen to spearhead this endeavor, bringing his internationally recognized expertise to the project. Employing the innovative technique of earth casting, Sayre intricately crafted four distinct vessel forms inspired by our rich historical and contemporary contexts, each symbolizing the diverse cultures and time periods that have contributed to our city's narrative. These vessels, ranging from ancient storage containers to modern water bottles, serve as potent symbols of life's celebration across various cultures. Despite encountering minor setbacks, including pandemic-related delays, the project reached its culmination in March 2023 with the completion and installation of *Water Standing*, inviting the Sawmill Community and visitors alike to engage with and contemplate

the profound symbolism embodied by these four remarkable installations.

Two other notable initiatives include our partnership with the Albuquerque Sunport to manage its \$3 million public art acquisition program as part of the Sunport Renovations project and the collaborative launch of the Public Art Census with Bernalillo County and Rokh, a multidisciplinary, cultural equity, research & design studio.

One exciting challenge our team faced with the relocation of our office space, twice! Despite the logistical complexities, we settled into our new public facing offices on the first floor of City Hall next to the new Gallery One.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are excited about programming our newly established gallery space and the forthcoming completion of the Public Art Census. We anticipate a large-scale community town hall-style rollout of the Census findings, fostering meaningful engagement and dialogue within our community.



Public Library – Albuquerque/Bernalillo County

In 2023, the Public Library embarked on a significant upgrade by implementing a new Integrated Library System (ILS) software. This upgrade encompassed the catalog, customer database, and purchasing systems, offering improved searching capabilities, enhanced features, increased reliability, and broader access to our extensive collection of books, materials, and resources. This migration, after more than 25 years with the previous system, demanded meticulous preparation, including data cleanup, policy and procedure updates, and extensive staff training. Despite the complexities, the transition ultimately resulted in a more user-friendly experience for customers, with enhanced search functionalities and access to up-to-date information from our extensive databases.

In addition to the successful transition to the new ILS, the Public Library achieved several notable milestones including celebrating the renovation of the iconic Caravan East sign with a retro design that pays homage to the International District Library and the International District community. We also dedicated a meeting room space within the Tony Hillerman Library, providing a separate venue for children’s storytimes and community gatherings; conducted the first all-day, all-staff training session since 2019, ensuring that library

personnel remain well-equipped to serve the community; collaborated with BookWorks and the Albuquerque Public Library Foundation to host acclaimed author Colson Whitehead, fostering literary discussions and engagement within the community.

In the coming year, the Public Library anticipates the launch of a mobile app, representing the final phase of the software upgrade. This app will offer users a more intuitive and accessible experience, providing convenient access to the library’s vast collection of books, materials, and resources from their phones, tablets, and other devices.



key arts and culture INITIATIVES

In addition to the multifaceted efforts of its seven divisions, the Department of Arts & Culture extends its support to the creative economy through various initiatives and special programs, including sponsored initiatives and non-recurring contracts, as well as youth-focused endeavors. Here are a few examples:

In 2023, Arts & Culture participated in a groundbreaking research study by Americans for the Arts which detailed the economic influence of \$271 million generated by the nonprofit arts and culture sector in Albuquerque. The comprehensive study, **Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6)**, also revealed that the economic activity supported 3,902 jobs, provided \$144.4 million in personal income to residents, and generated \$40.1 million in local, state, and federal government revenue. A breakdown of that activity would include \$129.1 million in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and \$141.5 million in event-related spending by their audiences. The full report, a map of the 373 study regions, and a two-page economic impact summary for each, can be found at www.AEP6.AmericansForTheArts.org.

The **Mayor's Creative Youth Corps** stands as a beacon of professional development, offering a six-week paid summer mentorship program tailored for youth with a passion for arts-based leadership opportunities. Open to rising high school juniors, seniors, and recent graduates residing in the Albuquerque metro area, this program provides a secure and enriching platform for young creatives to hone their skills, establish valuable connections, and prepare for their future endeavors.

The **Creative Bravos Awards** celebrates individuals and endeavors that significantly impact the lives of residents, neighborhoods, and communities. These annual awards, bestowed annually, honor individuals, youths, teams, events, programs, organizations, and businesses that embody the rich tapestry of creative work within the city. With a storied history spanning nearly four decades, the Creative Bravos Awards underscore Albuquerque's thriving art community and its profound positive influence on our city. Over the years, these awards have celebrated the works and achievements of hundreds of local artists and supporters.

Last year, Arts & Culture hosted its first **Circo Globo** circus arts camp at the Balloon Museum. Students ages 8 to 12 trained with national and international circus professionals from basic to advanced circus arts in a bilingual, physically intensive, and artistically rigorous curriculum. Curriculum includes juggling, stilt-walking, clowning, aerials, acro-balance, music, and dance, in addition to the exploration of compassion, collaboration, tenacity, inclusion, leadership, environmental stewardship, and more.

In 2023, the Department of Arts & Culture administered over **\$1.5 million in contracts** to support more than 100 local arts and culture organizations and initiatives, further nurturing the vibrant creative ecosystem of our city.



Spotlight on Explora

Explora is an outstanding example of a mutually successful public-private partnership. From its inception, Explora has embodied a synergy of visionary collaborations. Originating around 1983, two distinct groups, unaware of each other's existence, harbored similar concepts: one envisioned a “children’s exploratorium,” while the other conceived of a “science and technology exploratorium.” Since the union of these two ideals in 1995, Explora has remained steadfast in its mission to serve as a vibrant learning hub for individuals of all races, ages, genders, abilities, and backgrounds. Explora champions a culture of lifelong, inquiry-based learning, recognizing that it may pose challenges at times. Our ethos values curiosity, hands-on experimentation, and the intrinsic growth that accompanies both failure and success.

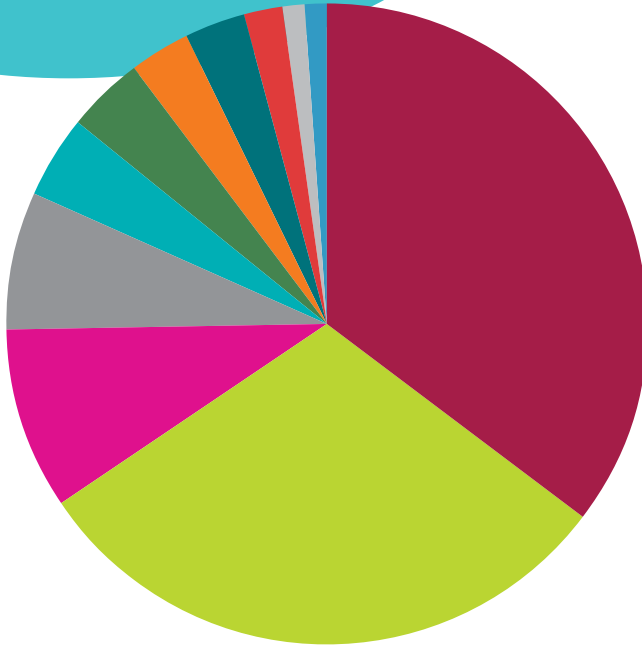
Within its walls, families and individuals of all ages embark on a journey of discovery through more than 250 interactive exhibits spanning science, technology, and art. For adults, the museum has curated special events like Adult Night, complete with personalized at-home kits. In the wider community, Explora offers semester-long camps, seasonal programs, and engaging educational initiatives such as Family Science Nights and our esteemed Youth Intern Program. Educators are also encouraged to participate in our workshops tailored to their needs, seizing opportunities for professional development and growth.

Just last year, Explora celebrated the opening of X Studio, an 8,000-square-foot teen center: a place to hang out, experiment, create, and learn. X Studio brings teens and their dreams together with cutting-edge tools, technologies, and mentors—all with a focus on STEAM.

Explora’s mission has always prioritized hands-on engagement that puts people’s learning in their own hands, and now, X Studio will customize that mission for our society’s next great minds. Big challenges lie ahead—from climate change to global pandemics; we also know that the next generation of thinkers and artists will come up with even bigger, braver solutions.

X Studio is defined by the visions and dreams of teens, community members, STEM educators, and STEM employers—all of whom worked together to co-develop and build this new teen center and the STEM in the Burke exhibition that will be featured in the main exhibition gallery. As phase One of Explora’s Cradle through Career STEAM Learning Campus expansion, X Studio will support more than 6,000 students each year, in an effort to close opportunity gaps and connect teens to the tools they need to succeed.

budget and IMPACT



Total FY 2023
Operating Budget
\$50,943,000

ABQ BioPark	\$18,070,000	35%	Explora	\$1,793,000	4%
Public Library Albuquerque and Bernalillo County	\$15,065,000	30%	Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum	\$1,647,000	3%
Albuquerque Museum	\$4,284,000	8%	CABQ Media	\$1,101,000	2%
Community Events Division (Special Events, KiMo, SBCC, Old Town Events, Railyards)	\$2,791,000	5%	Public Art/Urban Enhancement	\$ 689,000	1%
Sponsored Events and Partnerships	\$2,784,000	5%	Youth Initiatives	\$335,000	1%
Strategic Support (admin)	\$2,384,000	5%			