

Arts and culture, once considered luxuries that follow prosperity, are now understood to be conditions of prosperity. Yes, art and culture are big business and among the fastest growing sectors of the economy, but their economic importance extends far beyond the value of their receipts. Today, a vibrant art and cultural sector is crucial to attracting and retaining a talented labor force and creating an environment conducive to innovation. In this sense, the rich and distinctive cultures of cities such as San Francisco, Seattle, Austin, and Boulder are not so much evidence of these cities' economic prosperity as they are factors that give rise to it.

The importance of arts and culture is not news to Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. Our area has always taken great pride in its unique heritage and traditions, and there is a general feeling that the word is getting out about our cultural assets. The arrival of the movie industry, the renown of the city's many festivals, the strength of property values associated with the region's quality of life, and the number of laudatory references in national publications are testimony to the city's growing reputation as a national center for arts and culture.

It would be a mistake, however, to rest upon these achievements. During recent years, cities across the U.S. (and the world) have begun to invest heavily in arts and cultural industries. Every day the competition for talent and cultural capital grows more intense. To offer a single example: in 1978, when the City of Albuquerque established its 1% for the Arts program, there were only three such programs in the country; today, there are nearly five hundred, with many of the newer programs allocating one and a half to two percent. While money is an essential element of cultural-economic policy, the practice is becoming more and more sophisticated. As in other sectors of the economy, the arts and cultural industries have become deeply segmented as cities seek to match their unique resources with the many narrow niches that comprise the market. In this context, effective cultural economic policy necessarily begins with a careful inventory of a community's strengths and weaknesses, including its physical infrastructure, institutions, and most importantly, the capability of its people.

With this in mind, representatives of some of the region's leading cultural and economic institutions contracted with the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) to undertake an ambitious study of Albuquerque-Bernalillo County's arts and cultural industries (A&CIs). The project, conducted over the period 2006–2007 by Dr. Jeffrey Mitchell, has resulted in findings that will guide the formation of policy that will contribute to an environment of creativity and innovation and establish arts and cultural industries as a key element in the growth of the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County economy.

THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

OF THE

ARTS & CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

IN

ALBUQUERQUE AND BERNALILLO COUNTY

A QUICK LOOK

AT A REPORT BY

UNM'S BUREAU OF BUSINESS
AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

THE ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN ALBUQUERQUE AND BERNALILLO COUNTY ARE MAINSTAYS OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

- Arts and cultural industries annually generate \$1.2 billion in revenues, \$413 million in wages, and 19,500 jobs, totaling 6% of all employment in the County
- Half of this activity is funded by dollars from outside the region, generating economic growth and opportunity

THE ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES HAVE DEPTH AND DIVERSITY

- For-profit design, architecture, digital, media, spectator sports, tourism, and retail companies that serve both local and national markets
- Thousands of artists and artisans, many of them self-employed
- Non-profit organizations that educate, entertain, and create jobs
- Public institutions engaged in education, training, and economic development
- World-class scientific and technical resources that contribute to the creativity of the community

THE ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES FACE CHALLENGES

- To improve the connectivity between people and institutions in order to enhance innovation
- To coordinate public and private support in order to minimize redundancy and create a more competitive focus for the arts and cultural economy
- To strengthen the ties between the study of arts & culture and economic development at both the K-12 levels and in higher education
- To establish a sustainable funding source for arts and cultural organizations, particularly for small and medium sized organizations

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS, THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE, BERNALILLO COUNTY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO CAN . . .

- Protect and enhance the cultural resources that make our region unique
- Create cultural nodes across the region that stimulate arts participation
- Distinguish artistic and cultural offerings of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County while building a more profitable partnership with Santa Fe
- Establish a lasting niche for cultural tourism and creative industries in a rapidly evolving national and global economy

THE BBER REPORT DEMONSTRATES THE NEED FOR AN ALBUQUERQUE-BERNALILLO COUNTY ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES ACTION PLAN THAT CAN . . .

- Play to our strengths
- Develop funding and marketing instruments that reflect the governmental and institutional characteristics of our region
- Stimulate a vibrant high-visibility arts and cultural sector in the region

THIS STUDY WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS:



McCUNE
Charitable Foundation

This report, by the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), is the result of a unique collaboration between the University of New Mexico, the City of Albuquerque and the County of Bernalillo, local non-profit arts and cultural organizations, and members of the business community.

An Advisory Committee was formed in October 2005 and has now spent nearly two years advising the staff of BBER as they prepared the report that is now being available to the public.

The committee agreed that its role was to assist BBER in preparing a report that was comprehensive in its scope, objective in its analysis, and balanced in its conclusions. From the start, the committee saw this report as the necessary first step to a new **Arts & Cultural Industries Action Plan** that could unite the city, the county, and the university with the local non-profit and business communities around a shared agenda for developing the economic potential of the arts and cultural industries in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

THE *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY* IS AVAILABLE FROM:

Christopher Mead
Dean and Professor
College of Fine Arts
MSC04 2570
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131
505-277-2112
cemead@unm.edu

Jeffrey Mitchell
Senior Research Scientist
Bureau of Business and
Economic Research
MSC06 3510
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque NM 87131
505-277-5993
jeffm@unm.edu



THE *COMPLETE REPORT* IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

http://www.unm.edu/~bber/pubs/UNM_BBER_AbqBCo_A&CIs.pdf

On the cover

Sandia Mountain: Albuquerque's Icon

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