

# NAVAJO TIMES

DINÉ BI NAALTSOOS

## COMMUNITY

**THE MASTER:**  
Pascua Yaqui guitarist Gabriel Ayala says education is key. **C4**



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# Capturing a community

Photographers travel around area in mobile photo studio

BY DONOVAN QUINTERO  
NAVAJO TIMES

**G**ALLUP — Be sure to have something special with you if you want Axle Contemporary Art to photograph you.

It could be your keys or your cellphone, but make sure it's special to you, said Jerry Wellman, co-owner of the mobile art gallery.

Axle Art's "photo van" was in the area for the past two weeks, which included the 70th annual Navajo Nation Fair. The van was at the fair from Thursday through Saturday at Gorman Hall. During that time, Wellman and gallery associate Matthew Chase-Daniel took portraits of fairgoers who wished to partake in their "E Pluribus Unum: Dinétah," which means "From Many, One," in Latin. The pair said the photos would then be published in a book sometime in 2017. Chase-Daniel said they hope to distribute the book at the Navajo Nation Museum.

Wellman and Chase-Daniel spent part of Sept. 6 in front of the University of New Mexico-Gallup branch waiting to photograph students and faculty members. They didn't have to wait long.

Andrea Todachine from Window Rock, who is majoring in human services with a focus on substance abuse, curiously walked by the photo-covered van with her lollipop in hand. Wellman approached her and asked if she was interested in having her photo taken. She smiled and acquiesced.

Todachine signed a waiver and walked inside the van where Wellman got behind the camera rigged to the ceiling and took the stance and started photographing her. He asked her to hold her candy a little higher as he took the pictures. Within less than three minutes, Wellman was done. His partner Chase-Daniel began to edit Todachine's photos, which were electronically sent directly to a laptop that was set up on the dashboard. A couple of minutes later, her photo was printed and given to her as a memento for her involvement.

"I think it's a really fun thing. I've read about their project — about bringing something that's really important with you," Todachine said.

She added that the candy was not what she would have posed with. She said she would have chosen to have her photo taken with her daughter.

"Then they can decide if they want the sucker or my daughter in their book," she laughed as she started making her way to her next class.



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**Jerry Wellman, along with Matthew Chase-Daniel, spent some time photographing local community members in Window Rock and Shiprock areas.**



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**A University of New Mexico Gallup branch student walks by the E Pluribus Unum: Dinétah van Sept. 6 in the college parking lot in Gallup.**



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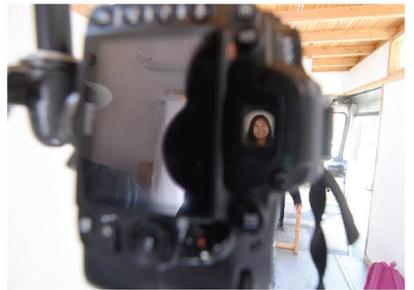
**A van covered with portraits taken by Jerry Wellman and Matthew Chase-Daniel sits outside the University of New Mexico Gallup branch Sept. 6 in Gallup.**

According to Wellman, the purpose for the project was to try and capture different communities in New Mexico. He added that a person's eyes intrigued him because of the innocence he saw in them. The van made a stop Monday in Shiprock to photograph more portraits of local community members. They made their last stop on Tuesday, at Orchard Park, in Farmington.



**Jerry Wellman with the E Pluribus Unum: Dinétah project photographs University of New Mexico Gallup branch student Andrea Todachine Sept. 6.**

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**University of New Mexico Gallup branch student Andrea Todachine smiles for the camera Sept. 6 in Gallup.**