



**D**an Namingha likes to joke that the first collaborative effort he and son Arlo undertook occurred accidentally when Arlo was 18 months old and had crawled under the safety gate and into Dan’s studio, there to add a few strokes to a painting. But that was an accident.

Their first intentional collaborative effort resulted in a statue, “Looking to the Future,” which was commissioned by the New Mexico Community Foundation and which was unveiled at the Niman Fine art gallery in Santa Fe on Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2003. The foundation has created an annual award to honor a family of legacy and asked Dan and Arlo Namingha to sculpt the award.

The family of Lt. Gov. Diane Daniels Denish will be the first honored at a fund-raising banquet in Albuquerque on Oct. 25. Included in the award is the lieutenant governor’s late father, Jack Daniels, who died in September, and his late brother Bill, founders of the Daniels Fund, a charitable foundation that supports early childhood and education programs. The lieutenant governor attended the unveiling and talked about her family.



And family is also what the Naminghas talked about during the unveiling and at a press conference. The Naminghas are an artistic family themselves. Dan’s wife, Frances, manages the Niman Fine Art gallery and Arlo’s wife, Nicole, assists. Dan and Frances’ other son, Michael, attends the Parsons School of Design in New York. The Namingha family donated the statue.

Dan, 53, of the Tewa-Hopi tribe, said that the New Mexico Community Foundation specifically wanted a sculpture that had a family theme. Arlo, 30, pointed out that the 14-inch sculpture depicting a mother, father, child and infant reflects

the idea of family unity, noting that one figure forms into another. He also said that he and his father wanted to create something universal that would represent all cultures. He said the abstractness of the piece makes it more universal.

Adding to the family theme was the collaborative nature of the sculpture. "It is a true honor for a father and son to collaborate," Dan said. "For me, personally, this is a reflection of one family. The idea of looking to the future gives the idea of the extended family."

It was an easy collaboration, father and son said. They began working on ideas and with sketches beginning in June, but because they were staging their own exhibits they had to work off and on this sculpture. "The idea was there from the beginning," Arlo said. "We just had to put together his thoughts and my thoughts."

Actually, what was unveiled is a clay model. The final sculpture will be cast in bronze.

As for the original collaboration of nearly 28 years ago, Dan says that he left in some of Arlo's strokes and the painting is now in a collection somewhere. Other works by both artists can be viewed at <http://www.namingha.com/index.html>.