

UNITED STATES

## OFFTHE WALL

## AN ARTIST DUO IS ON A NATIONWIDE MISSION TO MAKE SURE GIRLS ARE SEEN

The first subject was Veronica Calderon, a 17-year-old from Florida who thought no one cared what she had to say. Then came Traci Falbo, a 43-year-old mother of two in Indiana who had run 19 marathons, and Lauren Levin, a 13-year-old with Asperger's syndrome who was being bullied at her school in Pennsylvania. All of these women have one thing in common: They deserve to be noticed.

That's what photographer Elizabeth Sanjuan and artist Lori Pratico thought when they embarked on their project, Girl Noticed, a mural series to bring awareness to the important role women and girls play in society. The duo plans to paint a portrait of a local girl, selected from written and video submissions, in all 50 states within three years.

The first murals were done in charcoal, which fades over time, to emphasize a symbolic undertone:



Elizabeth Sanjuan (left) and Lori Pratico in front of their Girl Noticed mural in Florida, May 2015

When girls are left unnoticed, their talents will also disappear. They now use paint to make sure their message is longer-lasting, and will complete their 15th mural, in Washington, D.C., this month. "We want girls to recognize what is special in themselves," Pratico says. After all, seeing is believing. —Nila Do Simon