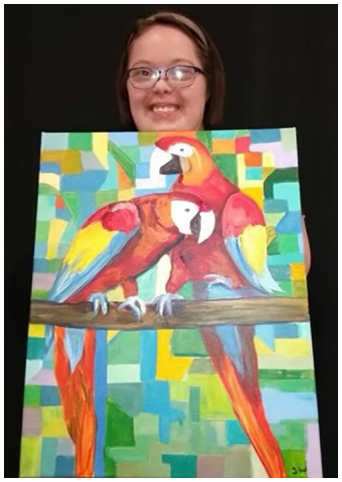
Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
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Gallup local Sarah Wilson, also known as “Gallup’s Bird Lady,” will participate in the Global Down Syndrome Foundation’s 13th annual “Be Beautiful Be Yourself” fashion show.

“I’m excited for the competition,” Wilson, who is 38 years old, said in an interview with the *Sun.* “I’m excited to wear my dress. It’s burgundy.”

The fashion show is the largest Down Syndrome fundraiser in the world. According to a press release, the show has raised over $24 million for life-saving and life-changing research and medical care to date. This is the first time in three years that the event has been held in-person.

According to a press release published by the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, the money raised during the fashion show will provide world-class medical care to over 2,200 patients with Down Syndrome from 33 states and ten countries; fund over 200 scientists researching on Down Syndrome research with a focus on Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, autoimmune diseases, eye health, audiology, and regression; and build upon their advocacy efforts which have resulted in $200 million in additional Down syndrome research and medical care funding from the National Institutes of Health over the last five years.

Wilson said the medical research is something that is very important to her, as she underwent open heart surgery when she was born.

Besides being a fashion model, Wilson is also a passionate artist. She paints birds, and has sold over 20 paintings so far.

“I love painting. My parents got me into it,” Wilson said. She said her parents signed her up for art classes as a way to entertain her and help her engage with other people.

Wilson’s paintings are available for purchase at www.artbysarahwilson.com .

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