



## Visionary moves in fabric design

**G**eorge Mendoza was a promising high-school athlete when macular degeneration, a retinal disorder that leaves blind spots and distortions in the central vision, made him legally blind. Mendoza used his disability to fuel a passion for athletics, writing and painting, becoming the subject of two PBS documentaries and an exhibitor at galleries around the country. Now, his spirited and colorful art will become a 100-percent cotton fabric collection, which will debut at the International Quilt Market Show in October 2009.

**Westminster Fibers Inc.**, Charlotte, N.C., worked with Mendoza's agents at Art of Possibility (AOP) Studios, whose unique mission is to represent physically disabled artists in a for-profit model. "It's incredibly rewarding to license George's fine art into practical applications," says Ketra Oberlander, AOP Studios founder and blind artist. "Westminster Fibers validates my belief that good deeds are good business."

The company's creative yarn and fabric, under the Rowan and FreeSpirit brands, give needlework artists, knitters, quilters and crafters a way to integrate beautiful art into individual designs. Westminster Fibers converts cotton, flannel, fleece, poplin and canvas, as well as home-decorating and quilting fabrics. For more information about the Mendoza designs, visit [www.freespiritfabric.com](http://www.freespiritfabric.com).



Latino artist George Mendoza brings organic shapes and vibrant colors to his paintings and, in October 2009, to a new fabric collection from Westminster Fibers. Photos: Art of Possibility Studios.

