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## Artist Profile

### Rachael Booth – A Star Artist Among Us

It's a common sight in times of war – a blue star prominently displayed in the front window of a house. The blue star lets passersby know that a member of that household is serving our country and is in harm's way.

The blue star service banner is the centerpiece of a gold medal-winning quilt crafted by U.S. Marine Corps veteran Rachael M. Booth, 26, of Salt Lake City, Utah. The quilt, entitled, "*Women of Grace and Charm, the Star in the Window Quilt*," features twelve star blocks that represent the activities that women took on to further the war effort during World War II, such as building planes, supporting one another as friends, working in the U.S.O., breaking codes and others. The center of the quilt features an appliqué house block, with the star in the window and an American flag appliqué next to it.

Despite the sixty years that have passed since World War II, the quilt and, especially the blue star, have held a special significance to Booth after her husband served seven months in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. "I still can't believe that my piece was chosen to be displayed at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival," said Booth, who started quilting in 2004 as a way of developing a relationship with her mother-in-law.

It was actually Booth's mother-in-law who first introduced her to quilting. Now, she credits the craft with helping her cope with frequent migraine headaches. Although it is a craft that can be tedious and difficult for many, it is a successful "de-stressor" for Booth and allows her to enjoy an overall healthier life. "I use the arts as a way to relieve stress," she says. "Participating in the arts allows me to express myself with endless opportunities for creativity. That makes me feel good about myself and my work."

Even though she has only been quilting for three years, Booth has already completed twelve quilts and has another three tops pieced together waiting to be completed. Her other quilts include gifts for her parents, two for her daughter and two for fundraisers. Booth's two personal favorites include a quilt for her husband that was made from his military cammies and denim, and another for a cousin made from the shirts of her husband, who had passed away. As a special project, Booth and her sister get together every year and each make a quilt top using fabric from their collective stashes, so that their next quilts will feature shared pieces among them.

Rachael Booth receives her medical care at the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System. She was selected to attend the 2007 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival earlier this year and is looking forward to having her gold medal quilt on display at the event. *Women of Grace and Charm, the Star in the Window Quilt* won first place in the national art competition in the original design in needlework category.