

# BENCHMARKS

THE MAGAZINE OF NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL | 2019







# SIGHTS ON THE HORIZON

BY SARAH TURNER  
President of NBSS

EACH SPRING, NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL LAUNCHES a new class of graduates to pursue their fields of craft and trade. Every group is different, made from the many experiences our students bring with them. They come to NBSS from accomplished careers, from work and service both near and far, from previous studies and previous fields. Together, they form a completely unique cohort—who, for this moment, represent what this School can be.

As I learn about the crafts and trades that our students are both preserving and advancing—I am struck by the character of the commitment. The fields at NBSS are not ones that take center stage—rather, they play a supporting role to culture and our lives. Piano Technicians and Violin Makers will prepare the instruments for musicians to play, making someone else's sound and performance possible. Bookbinders will present and preserve the words of authors and poets, giving a vehicle to other people's ideas. Across our fields, our graduates will build, fix, and restore, offering their work to people and communities.

I'm drawn to this approach: working on behalf of others as a way to contribute our specialized knowledge to something larger than only our own work. It's a position that requires some modesty, some stepping back. The School was founded on efforts like these: oriented toward community, working to help others. And while our methods are different, much of this spirit still exists.

Some of our graduates will embrace the traditions their studies were built upon, enjoying the lineage of which they are a part. Others will chafe at history, wanting to find a new way forward and to help old methods adapt.

We are in an amalgam of the old, the new, and the not yet. History, approaches, ways to work and live are being re-framed and re-fitted all the time. Our fields, while tried and true, are adapting to today's needs, ideas, and values. Our graduates will advance these fields, responsive to their own strengths and interests, and to the world and its changes.

Like our graduates, NBSS is at the beginning of a new chapter—and as we know, building things takes time. Being trained in the crafts gave me a deeper understanding of this. So much of making is slow, and yet suddenly:

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there is the thing before you. Pass after pass with a scraper, stitch by stitch, cut after cut, preparing materials to fit and come together: making by hand asks us to trust in slowness. We must not rush the finishing, be patient with each pass of the plane, and notice that our marks still show. It's in this slow time, this over-and-over time, that new ideas can take hold. Our minds are both occupied and free.

NBSS is known for preparing students for work and for working-lives. It is a school known for teaching practical application and usefulness, coupled with integrity and beauty. But NBSS is a bigger effort than what happens in our shops, over a program of study. It is a network, extending out and back through each of us. Like our new graduates, we will keep our sights on the horizon, remembering that our efforts will aggregate. This is how you build a life, a livelihood, a School: effort by effort, over time.





## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF CRAFT

**EACH YEAR, NBSS HOSTS** a series of events that supports the School's mission to train students for careers in traditional trades. The centerpiece of these events, the Student & Alumni Exhibit, featured over 100 pieces of work from our talented community. Guests of our Opening Party enjoyed a lively evening with student demonstrations, live music, and great conversation.

All proceeds from the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of Craft help ensure that a quality education is accessible to all who want to learn.

For more great photos, visit [facebook.com/NBSSboston](https://facebook.com/NBSSboston).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

All events take place at NBSS in Boston unless otherwise noted. For more details on these and other great events, visit [nbss.edu/calendar](https://nbss.edu/calendar).

### Formation: Guild of Book Workers Bookbinding Exhibit

Wednesday, June 5 – Saturday, July 27

### Rally at the Alley: Student & Alumni Bowling Party

Wednesday, September 25  
Sacco's Bowl-Haven | Somerville, MA

### Open House 2019

Friday & Saturday, November 1 & 2

Free and open to the public. Learn more about our unique history, Full-Time programs, Continuing Education classes, and our community of NBSS students, alumni, faculty, and friends.

### 24th Annual New England Fine Furnishings Show

Friday, November 8 –  
Sunday, November 10

Waterfire Arts Center | Providence, RI

### Toys for Tots

Thursday, December 5  
Thos. Moser Showroom | Boston, MA

### North End Holiday Stroll

Friday, December 6

### CraftBoston Holiday

Friday, December 13 –  
Sunday, December 15

Hynes Convention Center | Boston, MA

### 2019 Holiday Party

Thursday, December 19





# BUILDING ON A FOUNDATION

BY R. SCOTT REEDY

**FOR BETH ANN (BA) HARRINGTON CF '95,** carpentry was the family business. But while being the daughter, granddaughter, and sister of carpenters would seem to have been good preparation for the Cabinet & Furniture Making program at North Bennet Street School, it wasn't that simple.

"It's funny because, as a woman, I wasn't involved in the business. My grandfather, my dad, and three brothers were all taught to be carpenters," recalls BA. "I would help my father out from time to time once my brothers were gone, but it was never about him teaching me a skill."

Instead, BA learned by observing her father, homebuilder Edwin Harrington. "My dad built eight different houses I lived in growing up, all in the same neighborhood in Holland, Michigan. He was a master at his craft and as a good man, too," she says.

To follow in his footsteps, however, she had to acquire her own skill set. "My dad didn't teach me woodworking skills. I went to NBSS for those," says BA, who studied archeology, art history, and education at Wheaton College.

While teaching art in a Boston elementary school, she had an epiphany moment. "I always wanted to work with my hands, so I decided to go to NBSS. My decision to work in wood was an homage to my father and my family. My dad was happy, and a little surprised, when I decided to study at NBSS. He was also fully supportive," she recalls.

*"Foundationally, everything I do in my practice and my teaching comes from NBSS. That's why I believe it is so important to give back. It's not so much about how much alumni give, but that they give. Alumni giving is a very important measure of a place."*

BA enrolled in one of the School's first summer workshops, a two-week program on the Queen Anne footstool taught by now-former instructor Will Neptune CF '81. "There were 11 guys, all with some experience, and me. And I'd never even been taught how to use a table saw correctly," says BA.



Fortunately for BA, her instructor saw her potential. "I think Will realized it was a gift, because it made me more teachable. Even though I was terrified, because it was the most intense thing I'd ever done, I was already starting to understand that this is who I am. When Will started to teach the geometry of a cabriole leg, I devoured it. My mind just lit up," she says.

It took her a couple of months to finish the footstool, but from there she was able to enroll in the Cabinet & Furniture Making program, continuing to learn from not only Will but also Lance Patterson CF '79, Alex Krutsky CF '81, and Brian Kelly CF '84.

After graduation, BA spent a decade as an independent custom-furniture maker before going to the University of Wisconsin–Madison,

where she earned her MFA in 2007 and a master's degree in art history with a certificate in material culture in 2010. Now an associate professor in the College of Fine Arts at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, BA teaches advanced and beginning woodworking.

While her life and career have taken her in many directions, for BA—a longtime [Annual Fund](#) donor and 2018 supporter of the [Lives & Livelihoods Campaign](#)—NBSS remains a constant.

"I've been to many schools, but North Bennet Street School will always have that sense of alma mater and hallowed halls for me. Foundationally, everything I do in my practice and my teaching comes from NBSS. That's why I believe it is so important to give back. It's not so much about how much alumni give, but that they give. Alumni giving is a very important measure of a place," she says.

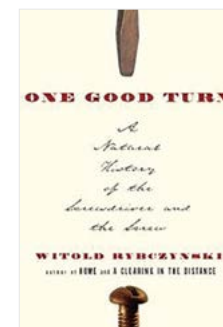
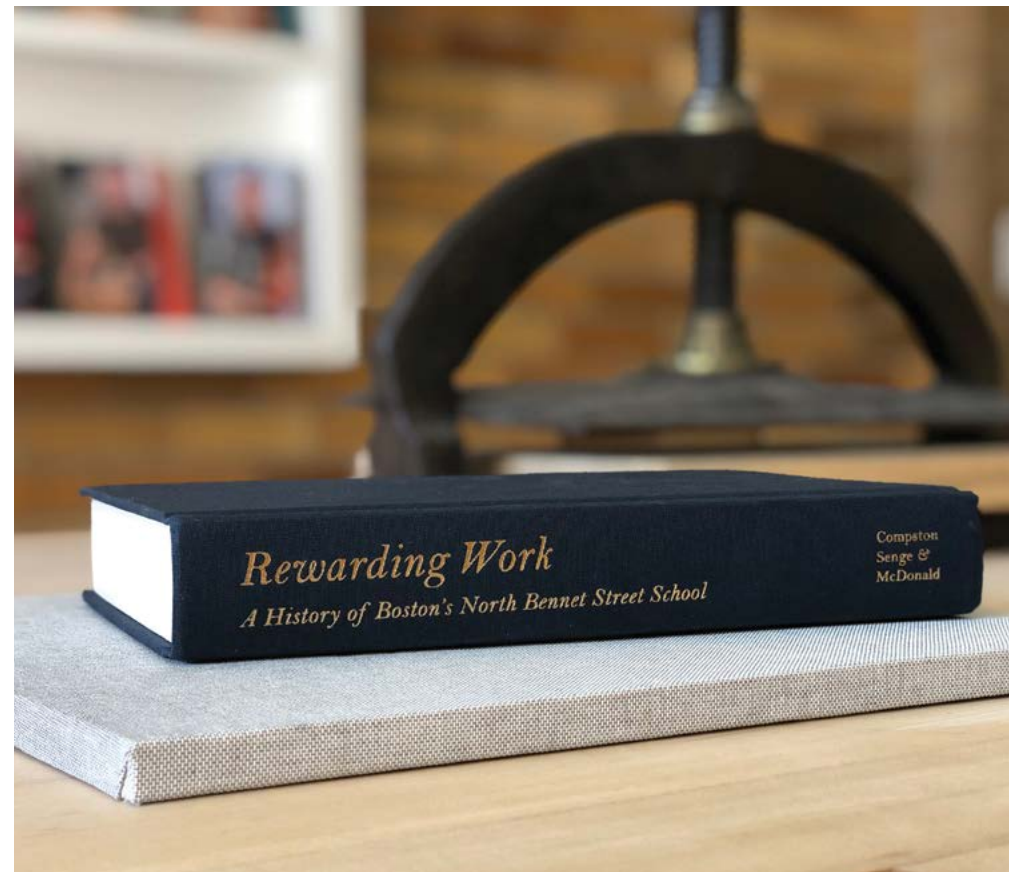
North Bennet Street School has personal as well as professional resonance for BA. "The first time I hand-planed something as a student there, I saved the shavings and mailed them to my dad. So it was cathartic to return after his passing and be absorbed in what he represented. We did end up swinging hammers together, too, on a house remodel in Ithaca, New York, and that's when I realized my being a woodworker was tied to my dad," says the proud daughter. "The sound of my father swinging a hammer is one of the most familiar, soothing sounds I have ever heard."

## WHAT WE'RE READING

### Rewarding Work: A History of Boston's North Bennet Street School

By Christine Compston,  
Walter McDonald, and Stephen Senge

*Rewarding Work* is a story of innovative leaders with the courage to experiment in education and meet the needs of a dynamic workforce. The book provides an engaging account of how the School provided new immigrants with the skills they need to flourish in America, and how after 138 years, the impact of NBSS can be felt around the globe.



### One Good Turn: A Natural History of the Screwdriver and the Screw

By Witold Rybczynski

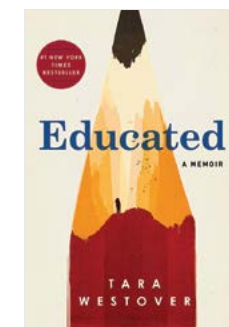
*One Good Turn* is a tale of mechanical discovery and genius that takes readers from ancient Greece to car design in the age of American industry.



### Fewer, Better Things: The Hidden Wisdom of Objects

By Glenn Adamson

*Fewer, Better Things* explores the history of craft in its many forms, explaining how raw materials, tools, design, and technique come together to produce beauty and utility in handmade or manufactured items.



### Educated: A Memoir

By Tara Westover

*Educated* is an unforgettable coming-of-age story that gets to the heart of what an education is and what it offers: the perspective to see one's life through new eyes, and the will to change it.



# WOMEN IN THE BUILDING TRADES

BY AMANDA GRAY CA '19

**IN RECENT YEARS**, there has been an uptick in programs encouraging women to change their perception of the trades. From various educational initiatives to summer camps teaching young girls everything from woodworking to welding, these new and expanded strategies are an effort to help women see what was once a male-dominated industry as a viable career option.

While these advancements are welcome, many tradeswomen still find it challenging to access the resources needed to thrive in the trades due to continual underrepresentation in their fields. In addition, women's role in the skilled workforce is inextricably connected to both a demand for occupational freedom and a desire for opportunities so often denied them throughout history.

Recognizing women who have entered and thrived in the trades is essential to the continued development of a diverse, inclusive workforce. A robust industry needs workers with a diverse range of skills and talents. North Bennet Street School is continually pushing the boundaries of what it means to be a master of one's craft, and in this series we explore the changing landscape of the trades—while also celebrating some of the talented women who began their careers at NBSS and are making an impact in the building trades.

Meet two NBSS graduates here who have launched their careers in the building trades—preservation carpenter Tracy Chim PC '09 and carpenter Michelle Her CA '18.



## Tracy Chim PC '09

After graduating from NBSS, Tracy Chim PC '09 went on to open her own business, TLC Woodworking, located in New Durham, New Hampshire. For the past ten years, her business has specialized in making and restoring custom storm windows and doors.

In high school, Tracy was on the path to a career in architecture. It made sense as she had both a deep interest in the history of how things were built, and a background in working with her hands. She recalls that every time her parents got a piece of furniture that required assembly, it was handed off to her. Yet when she began researching programs, she realized that there were a lot more requirements than expected for a budding architect, which led her to the NBSS Preservation Carpentry program.

"I was looking for schools and found out that to enroll in architecture programs, you needed a portfolio, which I didn't have at the time. Luckily, my guidance counselor told me that I could start by picking a major, and building up a portfolio while doing my undergrad." Tracy came across the Historic Preservation program offered at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island, and it was there where she embarked on the first leg of her journey toward becoming a carpenter. "I ended up loving historic preservation, and learning about my favorite styles, specifically Queen Anne and Victorian architecture. It was really valuable to me," says Tracy—who was simultaneously falling in love with preservation and realizing that becoming an architect wasn't for her.

In a serendipitous moment during her senior year at Roger Williams, a student from the NBSS Preservation Carpentry program came to visit her class. The timing couldn't have been better, Tracy remembers. "I was graduating in 2007 and the recession was beginning, so nobody was hiring," she recalls. "I wasn't really ready to enter the workforce and even though I loved the topic, and I felt that the emphasis on office work in historic preservation wasn't really for me. So in a lot of ways it was just fate that an NBSS student visited my program." She applied to the NBSS Preservation Carpentry program shortly after.

Thinking back on the first time Tracy visited NBSS, she recalls that she knew it was the place for her: "The minute I walked into my interview I felt at home." That feeling didn't stop once she entered the classroom. "I was like a sponge. Once I had all the right tools and got over my fear of working with the machines, it all felt very natural." From the step-by-step process of learning how to handle tools, to carving a dovetail joint, to eventually doing timber framing and working off-site, each aspect of the two-year program helped Tracy find the perfect balance between her love for preservation and her ability to practice craft in a contemporary setting. But she also notes that it took time to find her place in a male-dominated field.

While preservation carpentry tends to have a greater equality of women and men in the field compared to general construction, Tracy describes an internship that she took at a construction company while still a student at NBSS and initially feeling intimidated. "As a woman, you can face challenges



when it comes to feeling comfortable in your work environment, especially in larger companies where there are likely fewer women employed," says Tracy. "I realized that I had to show that I knew what I was doing, and I think what really impressed my coworkers was that I was able to read plans. That showed I had both the skills and knowledge to give something important to the team."

Tracy reiterates that it's important not to get discouraged, especially in the beginning, and that there is a positive aspect to being one of the first women on a team. "Being the first allows you to make an impression and change people's minds in regards to what women can and cannot do," explains Tracy. "My husband loves telling people what I do, because people are still surprised. I love seeing their faces—it can be gratifying."

Tracy's time at NBSS nurtured her numerous skills while simultaneously teaching her how to put them to use. She also gained confidence, which allowed her to build up and maintain a lucrative business. "I couldn't imagine doing something else with my life right now. I am happy to go to work, and I look forward to spending time with my coworkers and being in my shop where I feel at ease. I remember when I was afraid to pick up the tools, and now it's just second nature."

## Michelle Her CA '18

Michelle Her CA '18 worked as a United States Navy Seabee (Naval Construction Force) for three years, building gun ranges, warehouses, schools, and pavilions before enrolling in the NBSS Carpentry Program. Today, Michelle works as a carpenter for Columbia Contracting, performing the majority of her work in greater Boston.

Professionally, Michelle has done everything from managing an office to serving three years in the U.S. military. By the time she enrolled in the Carpentry program at North Bennet Street School, she had already cultivated a diverse set of skills, and the curriculum at NBSS encouraged her to focus on the finer details. "The program was totally different," says Michelle, "because in the military I mainly worked with masonry, doing a lot of block building. So understanding carpentry—everything from the math involved to the properties of the wood—was a totally new experience."

*"What I learned in the military set me up for general construction and taught me how to work efficiently and in large groups. North Bennet taught me information and skills that were specialized and much more specific."*

Michelle Her CA '18

While Michelle has experience in diverse professional landscapes, she recognizes that she has had to be persistent when applying for jobs in the trades. Michelle remembers having to sometimes convince employers that she has both the necessary skills and the ability to thrive in a male-dominated workplace. "When employers see that a woman is applying, sometimes you will feel like they are trying to discourage you during the interview process. For example, I've been asked if I'm sure I'll be okay working in this environment."

Michelle stands by the fact that women in the trades need to "explore what works for them, and to continue to put themselves out there." After graduating from NBSS, she combined her newfound skills as a carpenter with what she learned in the military, which built a foundation for success. "What I learned in the military set me up for general construction and taught me how to work efficiently and in large groups," she explains. "North Bennet taught me information and skills that were specialized and much more specific."

Like many graduates of NBSS who have made the transition from starkly different professional backgrounds such as academia or office work, Michelle emphasizes that working with her hands not only cultivates a more fulfilling profession, but also a more fulfilling lifestyle. "With carpentry, I can get lost in the work. I find myself looking at the clock and seeing how quickly the day has gone by without my realizing, which tells me that I am doing something that is fulfilling and truly worthwhile."

Today, Michelle is still honing her craft with Columbia Contracting, which has given her the opportunity to keep learning and strengthening the skills she learned at NBSS.



**ABOVE**  
*Michelle Her CA '18 (center) with her team, who won the Bennet Town building contest during her NBSS Carpentry class year.*

**LEFT**  
*Michelle working on Bennet Town.*





## THE CLASS OF 2019

We celebrated the hard work of 90 accomplished students with their families and friends at this year's inspired commencement ceremony. Join us in congratulating our grads and welcoming them to the broader alumni community.

View a highlights video and even more happy photos of graduation at [nbss.edu/blog](https://nbss.edu/blog).







Board of Directors Chair Marc Margulies presents the Distinguished Alumni Award to Chela Metzger BB '93

# 2019 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

**THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD** is given annually to an alumnus who is nominated by their alumni peers and voted upon by the Alumni Association. The decision is based on a nominee’s professional accomplishments, their contributions to their craft, and their work with schools and organizations to promote excellence in craft. This year the Award goes to Consuela “Chela” Metzger BB ’93.

According to her nominators, “Chela is responsible for the education of many book conservators through her various roles in conservation education. She has been an outstanding representative of NBSS as a practitioner and teacher.”

Throughout her influential 20+ year career, Chela has held multiple teaching and book conservation positions: conservator at Huntington Library in San Marino, CA and The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor;

lecturer of preservation and conservation studies at University of Texas at Austin; conservator of library collections and affiliated assistant professor in art conservation at Winterthur/University of Delaware. Chela currently serves as head of the conservation center at the UCLA Library.

Chela recently won the 2018 American Institute of Conservation’s Sheldon and Caroline Keck Award for a sustained record of excellence in the education and training of conservation professionals. She was also the recipient of a rare book conservation internship at the Library of Congress in 1994 and was awarded a three-month teaching Fulbright to teach book conservation in Argentina in 2000.

In addition to these accomplishments, Chela continues teaching and consulting in Latin America, occasionally exhibits as a book artist, and is a proud supporter of local libraries.

# FIND YOUR FINANCIAL AID

We’re dedicated to keeping excellence affordable. Our community has raised substantial funds to make a range of scholarships available. We froze tuition at the current level, and in 2019 we’ll provide more financial aid than ever before, making an education at America’s first trade school more affordable for our students.



Already have a degree?

**Pell Yes!** is a new grant from NBSS, which provides up to \$6,195 to need-qualified students who already hold a bachelor’s degree. This gift replaces the Federal Pell Grant, a valuable tool already available to non-degree-holding students at NBSS.



Are you a veteran?

The **NBSS Yellow Ribbon Program** helps to bridge the financial gap beyond VA benefits, and may be used towards tuition, tools, and/or materials. Over 20% of our student population is veterans, and this funding helps remove financial obstacles for those building their post-military lives.



Live in greater Boston?

The **NBSS Workforce Development Initiative** provides “full-ride” scholarship awards to high-need individuals living in greater Boston who experience significant barriers to employment. Three dozen students have received this aid to date, offering them a clear path to the workforce.

**Want to learn about the full range of aid for which you’re qualified? Just complete the following steps:**

- ✓ Complete a FAFSA at [studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa](https://studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa). Use our school code 015527.
- ✓ Fill out the NBSS Financial Aid Application at [nbss.edu/aid](https://nbss.edu/aid).
- ✓ Search for private scholarships at [nbss.edu/funding](https://nbss.edu/funding).
- ✓ Apply to NBSS, and/or finish your Admissions requirements at [nbss.edu/admissions](https://nbss.edu/admissions). Once you’re accepted, we’ll provide your full aid package.

## Questions?

Contact Jamie Dergay, Director of Financial Aid at [jdergay@nbss.edu](mailto:jdergay@nbss.edu) or 617.227.0155 x115.

# YOU’RE HIRED!

A Non-Exhaustive List of 2019 Graduating Student Employers\*

- Ace Locksmith & Security Systems
- Animal Adventures
- Artisan Piano Services
- Bayview Builders
- Boston Athenaeum
- Boston University/Tanglewood
- Brookline Lock
- C2MG Builders
- Columbia Construction
- David’s Woodworking
- Doshie Powers Pianos
- Dr. Green Thumb
- Eastern National
- E.J. Jaxtimer Builder, Inc.
- G C Construction Company
- K.H. Chapin Fine Violins
- Long’s Jewelers
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology Libraries
- Mass Ave Lock
- Mount Auburn Cemetery
- Murphy Remodeling & Renovation
- National Parks Service
- Newport Mansions/Preservation Society of Newport County
- Northeast Document Conservation Center
- North River Builders
- North Shore Lock & Key
- Pleasant Avenue Restorations
- Preservation Timber Framing
- Payne | Bouchier Fine Builders
- O’Rourke Restorations
- Perron Builders
- PrintCraft/Strong Arm Bindery
- Sea-Dar Construction
- Sing For Hope
- Steinway of Greenville, SC
- Structures Home\*Work\*Living
- The Abbey Studio
- The Violin Shop
- Thistle Lock & Safe
- Vintage Builders
- W. Van Alan Clark, Jr. Library at School for Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University

\* Some employers have employed multiple grads





## THREE-MONTH FURNITURE MAKING INTENSIVE

**OPEN TO BEGINNER AND EXPERIENCED WOODWORKERS ALIKE**, NBSS offers an in-depth comprehensive furniture making course to build a solid foundation in the most essential woodworking skills. It is designed for both novices just starting their woodworking journey and lifelong enthusiastic hobbyists looking to build expertise—and everyone in-between.

Dave McCormick, who attended the winter 2019 session, has been a woodworker for over 30 years and was curious to see what he could

discover by going back to the classroom. “At least twice a week, our instructor would demonstrate something that involved a new technique I had not used before, and many were simpler than the ones I had been using,” he says. “In the 138 years the school has been teaching, they have narrowed in on the best ways of working.”

Over the course of the three months, instructors (who are all NBSS alumni) guide students from basic hand and machine skills to advanced techniques. With both group and individual



Eve Radovsky CF '20 works on her dovetails. She is now a full-time student in the Cabinet & Furniture Making program.

*“I felt intuitively like woodworking was something that made sense for me to pursue based on my general interest in handcraft and design...”*

Eve Radovsky CF '20

instruction, students gradually build up their skills and know-how to construct a Shaker nightstand and a cabinet on a stand by the end of the course.

For students thinking about applying to one of our Full-Time programs who don't have much prior woodworking experience, this course offers a great skill-building opportunity and sets them up to hit the ground running.

Eve Radovsky CF '20, a current Cabinet & Furniture Making student, took a summer Three-Month Intensive before enrolling in her Full-Time program the following fall. “I felt intuitively like woodworking was something that made sense for me to pursue based on my general interest in handcraft and design, and was at a crossroads in my life where I wanted to pursue a more creative career, but I had no actual woodworking experience,” Eve says.

“It provided a good foundation for the two-year program, as a lot of what was learned in the Three-Month was repeated in the first semester of the Full-Time program—I found that since I was so new to the trade, it was helpful to learn some of the basics twice.”

Learn more about the course and view upcoming sessions at [nbss.edu/ce](https://nbss.edu/ce).

## RECENT CONTINUING EDUCATION OFFERINGS

Book Arts, Woodworking, Carpentry, Jewelry Making, Musical Instruments, and more!

View all our upcoming classes and sign up at [nbss.edu/ce](https://nbss.edu/ce).

Book Structures for Prints and Photographs

Build a Banjo or Banjo Ukulele

Continuous Arm Windsor Chair

Enclosures for Preservation and Beyond

Exploring Paper

Harpsichord Voicing and Regulation

Historic Timber Framing

Introduction to Leather Bookbinding

Introduction to Piano Technology

Introduction to SketchUp

Introduction to Veneer

Round Faceted Stone Setting

Surface Gilding

Traditional Hand Engraving

Window Sash Restoration



## SHOP TOUR

## Third Year Studio

*Fort Point, Boston*

Colin Hill Urbina BB '11 signed a lease on his 1,200 square foot studio space nearly ten years ago, before tower construction and cranes became a way of life in Boston's Fort Point neighborhood. The building retains the gritty character of the former manufacturing district, and is a bastion for other artists and makers, as well as for a brewery. Though the cheap rent has brought some minor issues over time, it's also allowed Colin to build out the bindery with various equipment and custom-made benches—built to match those at NBSS. He's also added studio mates and fellow NBSS grads Erin Fletcher BB '12, Kate Levy BB '17, and Lauren Moon-Schott BB '13. Together, their individual binderies make up Third Year Studio, one of the neighborhood's last active workshops, and a reference to their shared background at the School's prestigious two-year Bookbinding program.

Read more about the binderies that make up Third Year Studio, and view other great shop tours at [nbss.edu/blog](http://nbss.edu/blog).



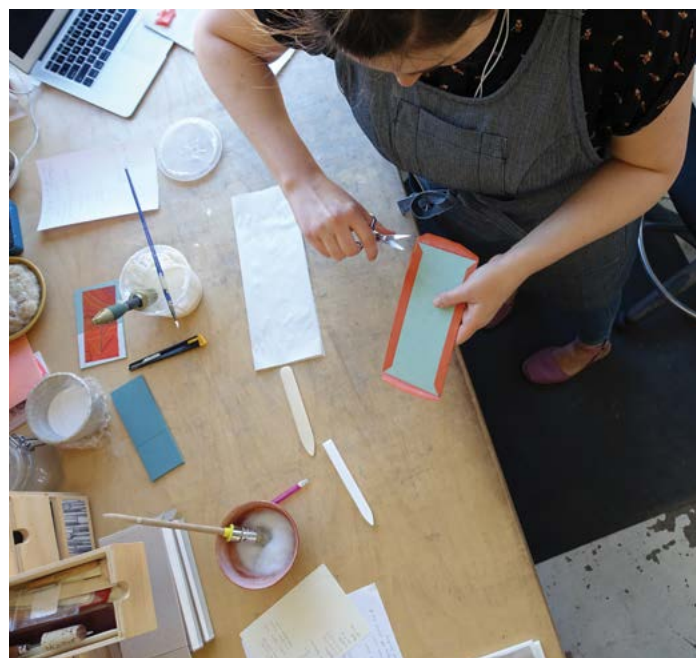
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4.



2.



3.

1. Colin Urbina  
BB '11 at work

2. Miniature bound  
books on display

3. Erin Fletcher  
BB '12 at work

4. The Congress  
Street Bindery

5. Colin's wall space,  
with various dye tests  
on leather

6. Colin shows off a  
prize find: a Vintage  
Vandercook printing  
press



5.



6.





## STONE COTTAGE RESTORATION

BY R. SCOTT REEDY

**WHEN IT CAME TIME TO RESTORE A STONE COTTAGE**—originally built by a World War I general—on his property in Westwood, homeowner Yanni Tsipis turned to Steven O'Shaughnessy PC '99, Preservation Carpentry (PC) Department Head at North Bennet Street School.

"Steven was more than just the right person for the job, he was a god-send. He knew instantaneously about the wood, the roofing, and every other component in the building. In this day, with so much focus on replacement, we really appreciated Steven's focus on restoration and preservation of the millwork structure, the windows, and the beautiful door," says Yanni.

As detailed in Michael E. Shay's 2011 book *Revered Commander, Maligned General: The Life of Clarence Ransom Edwards, 1859–1931*, the stone structure is a 1920 reproduction of the field

station in France from which the major general commanded the 26th Division. Steven was tasked with replacing the roof, restoring the original wood casement windows and door, and doing other exterior and interior repairs.

"The original roof may have been wood-shingled, but the building is nestled under a canopy of trees, so we thought a new wood roof would eventually rot. We pulled off an asphalt roof from the 1970s and put on a new roof using architectural asphalt shingles that look much better with the building's stonework," says Steven.

While work on the new roof and other structural repairs went smoothly, Steven quickly realized that the project's biggest challenge was the building's over-sized door. "You had to take a run at it and risk injuring your arm and shoulder just to get it open. The house had been mothballed for quite a while, mainly because of the door. General Edwards must

have wanted something it would take a battering ram to get through, because the only door is made of two heavy slabs of oak joined together by wrought iron brackets," explains Steven.

Before long, Steven, with assistance from Dan Brownwood PC '18, Christopher Dowd PC '09, and Christopher Laudolff PC '19, got the door off its massive iron strap hinges and presented Yanni with options to address its warping and sagging—one of which was to replicate the door with a new version.

"Yanni vetoed that idea, so I changed the door jam and stops to account for the current shape of the door," recalls Steven. "I agreed with his decision because, as someone who teaches preservation, I understood that saving 80 to 90 percent of the original door was the right thing to do."

Once the door's restoration was complete, which further involved replacing rotted sections with

matching white oak patches, attention shifted to its antique box lockset—and its missing key. Steven turned to a member of his Preservation Carpentry Program Advisory Committee and an NBSS faculty colleague for advice.

"Robert Adam founded the PC program at NBSS in 1982. He is an authority on historic hardware and fasteners, so I sent him photos of the lock and he said it was from the 1850s. Then I took the lock box off the door and brought it in to Barbara Baker LK '04, Department Head of Locksmithing & Security Technology," says Steven.

Along with her expertise, Barb brought her appreciation for old locks to the ad hoc project team. "I could see it was very old and would be a challenge, especially to find the right blank. What I did first was create an approximation of a key blank using a pipe, onto which I soldered some brass."

"The pipe was the post, and the square of the brass represented the bit—or what looked like a little flag," she continued. "We had a good laugh at the crudeness of the approximation," says Barb. So she then turned to Ed Maestranzi at Benton Locksmiths, which has been in business for over 200 years.

"Ed loaned me a couple of key blanks and when they didn't work, he had one of his technicians use a lathe to hand-make a single custom key blank, welding on a bit and adding a bow, which is the part of the barrel or skeleton key that you grasp."

"Ed donated the key blank. He's a supporter of NBSS and believes in what we do," says Barb, who was joined in the work by Anthony Giso LK '19.

"Anthony is one of the best students I've ever had. He was a close partner the whole way and did a fantastic job," says the proud instructor. "We had to take our time, too, because we had only one key blank, and only one chance to shape it properly."

Working in her spare time, Barb also had help from faculty colleagues. "Bookbinding Department Head Jeff Altepeter BB '99 provided binder's board for drawing and cutting key facsimiles, and Ann Cahoon JM '02, Jewelry Making & Repair Department Head, loaned us a jeweler's saw to complete the project."

Steven recalls the moment when he told Yanni he could now lock the restored door. "I said to him, 'Do not lose this key, Yanni. It is truly one of a kind.'"

Yanni, an executive with Seaport WS Development, who served as project manager for the renovation of 150 North Street (North Bennet Street School's new building) while previously with Colliers International, says his respect for NBSS has only deepened. "North Bennet Street School is an extraordinary resource for any good steward of historic architecture," says Yanni. "The Stone Cottage project is a beautiful illustration of that."



The key blank used by Barb Baker LK '04, Department Head of Locksmithing & Security Technology, and her team to craft the replica key.



*Welcome to NBSS!*

**Colleen Walsh Powell**  
Director of Development

Colleen has been working in the area of development and fundraising for more than 12 years: at Boston University, the Winsor School, and most recently at Emerson College, where she was the Director of Major Gifts. Colleen has implemented development strategies for high-profile campaigns, coordinated events and annual giving programs, and worked on the behind-the-scenes operations of her offices to build strong foundations for her work. She brings both strong professional experience to the role as well as creative big-picture thinking.

Colleen has also been an educator, singer, and performer, and is motivated by institutions that have distinct missions which contribute meaningfully to society. She received her B.A. in English and Philosophy from Santa Clara University and an M.S. in Arts Administration from Boston University.

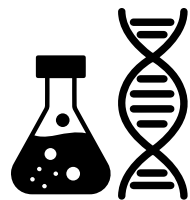



Connect with Colleen and the Development department at [development@nbss.edu](mailto:development@nbss.edu).

Meet more new NBSS staff members at [nbss.edu/blog](https://nbss.edu/blog).



# WHAT WAS YOUR PREVIOUS CAREER?

Our students come to NBSS from all walks of life, and many embark on a career in the trades after pursuing other occupations. We find the skills and experience they bring help them become even better craftspeople. Here are just a few of the career transitions our students and alumni have made.

 <p><b>Biochemist to Jeweler</b> Marei Dose JM '18</p>	 <p><b>Professional Musician to Carpenter</b> Amanda Wang CA '19</p>	 <p><b>Theater Set Shop Tech to Furniture Maker</b> Jason Krivelow CF '16</p>
 <p><b>Pastry Chef to Bookbinder</b> Cynthia Fields-Belanger BB '97</p>	 <p><b>Personal Care Attendant to Locksmith</b> Richard Hendricks LK '18</p>	 <p><b>Astrophysicist to Piano Technician</b> Liao Liu PT '11, PA '12</p>
 <p><b>Copywriter to Preservation Carpenter</b> Rob Hoffman PC '17</p>	 <p><b>Art Fabricator to Violin Maker</b> Nathan Abbe VM '20</p>	



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88

total graduating  
students in 2019

42

graduating  
students  
already hired

22

new grads running  
their own small  
business

13

graduates  
furthering their  
education

*INSIDE: Find out who's employing our 2019 grads!*

*\* As of May 2019, with interviews ongoing*

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