



Benchmarks

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Each summer, this magazine gives us a moment to pause and lift our heads from our benches and desks—to gather up the efforts of the School and share them with you as evidence of what has been at hand.

Attending to what is at hand, keeping heads down and work steady has been the mood of the year. We saw fewer people, we restricted our activities, we quieted down, we put our attention into safety and care. And at the same time, we found ways to reach farther, even as we looked deeper.



You'll see in these pages a focus on the *people* of North Bennet Street School, people who are points on the continuum of our 140 year history, those who will help shape our unwritten future. You'll also see how the School is reaching new communities to become a place with more points of entry for more people.

The year has given us time to reflect on our values and influence, our constituents and community, and the pathways and partnerships that will foster new ways for more people to be part of what we offer. You'll see the fruits of this work in our growing scholarship offerings—a way to remove barriers to training—and in the many ways we engaged online, bringing NBSS together with people from other fields, and other points of view. We watched the deft hands of weavers in India, learned the stories of 18th- and 19th-century Black craftspeople in the American South, and delighted in the details of a canal-side gondola oarlock shop in Venice, Italy.

Through these visits, we saw amazing skills and beautiful objects. But our hearts were focused on the makers themselves, the individuals who these crafts revealed. With that as inspiration, we've focused this year's *Benchmarks* on the people of NBSS—highlighting not only their work, but the beautiful quirks, experiences, and openness they brought to their programs in an exceptional year.

At this time last year, we were re-committing to the School's evolution in becoming more inclusive, diverse, and equitable. Now, you'll see that commitment taken up through work with the staff, faculty, and boards. We've seen changes this year—in our focus, conversations, and culture—and in a vision statement that will guide the next waves of this work.

And lest this sounds like we have been only serious and only earnest, the portrait project featured here has allowed us to delight in the people who make up our School. Seeing their joy in pursuing their passions and developing their skills has shown the heart of NBSS. We are both a solid and a shifting place, recomposed each year by a group of individuals pulling together. This issue captures, fleetingly, our School now. Thank you for being a part of it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Turner'.

Sarah Turner, President



Deep intelligence comes in all forms, through the hands, through the objects, through the histories, through the extended community of what we do.

PULLING TOGETHER

COMMUNITY PORTRAITS FROM A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

Despite the pandemic, North Bennet Street School (NBSS) Retail & Exhibit Manager Kristen Odle couldn't stand to cancel the *Annual Celebration of Craft: Student & Alumni Exhibit*, a favorite tradition in which students and alumni display and sell their strongest work from the past year. Instead, she ambitiously reshaped the exhibition into a series of unique studio portraits of NBSS students, staff, and faculty.

Initially, the Portrait Project set out to thank the students for sustaining an incredibly challenging year with the practical gift of a professional headshot. However, the idea soon took on a life of its own and became a meaningful vehicle for recording and documenting each participant's unique educational experience. Kristen explains, "The project quickly blossomed into an online exhibit that showcases who we are and what we have been working on all year."

Tony Luong, a talented Boston photographer known for capturing the humanness of his subjects, previously shot a portrait of Lance Patterson CF '79, fabled Cabinet & Furniture Making instructor. Drawn to Tony's warm, "more-than-a-photographer" personality that makes those around him feel confident and relaxed during shoots, Kristen tapped him for the project, and he gamely agreed to photograph 91 community members over four days.

"We told everyone to bring in whatever you've been working on this year. If you struggled with dovetails, then bring in your dovetail [joinery] setup. We want to document that because you should really be proud," Kristen says.

"My favorite aspect of my NBSS experience has been the people that I work alongside and the actual work we get to take on. It is a delight to learn from not only my instructors, but also from my classmates."

While preparing for the shoot, Tony revisited *The Skilled Tradesman*, a famous series of gelatin silver print portraits by German photographer August Sander, as well as *The Small Trades*, Irving Penn's iconic 1950's portraits of *petit métiers* (small tradesmen) posing in work uniforms beside their tools. However, unlike Penn's images which sometimes come across as condescending and classist, the NBSS portraits are grounded in respect and optimism.

Altogether, the process demanded a grueling 20 hours of time broken down into 15-minute increments for each photo shoot. A small conference room was transformed into a temporary photography studio with a natural canvas backdrop, plus Kristen and Tony.

SOPHIE LINNELL
Preservation Carpentry '21
Quincy, MA



MARTYNA GRYKO

Bookbinding '22
Sterling Heights, MI



“I’ve learned that there are many ways to execute a project. Everyone has their own way of doing things but, there is a historic and practical reason and context to do something in a certain way.”

Students and faculty hauled in everything from a piano action and a meticulously built violin, to 18th century bound books, sentimental toolboxes, and hand-fabricated rings. Faculty member Michael Burrey worked on his shave horse, and several Preservation Carpentry students posed beside a Corinthian capital they are carving in relief—part of the Hancock mansion door façade recreation, an ongoing, multi-year project. Some of the portraits, like that of Daniel Osach CF '21 adjusting his stiff leather work boots, take on a confident, performative mood, while others like Susan Sit PT '21 listening to headphones with her eyes closed, feel intimate and contemplative.

From behind the lens, Tony observes that, “being able to bring in a piece that they made or tools they used gave people space to feel confidence and a sense of pride. What came out was a mood of hope for how these pictures will appear in the future, in terms of doing things with your hands and the sense of community that got us through this rough year.”

Insightful thoughts and favorite NBSS memories accompanying each portrait on the project’s website give vivid individual voices to human resilience, and a sheer love for the school and the lasting lessons it imparts.

View the full set of portraits at nbssportraits.com

VIET PHAN

Locksmithing & Security Technology '21
Malden, MA

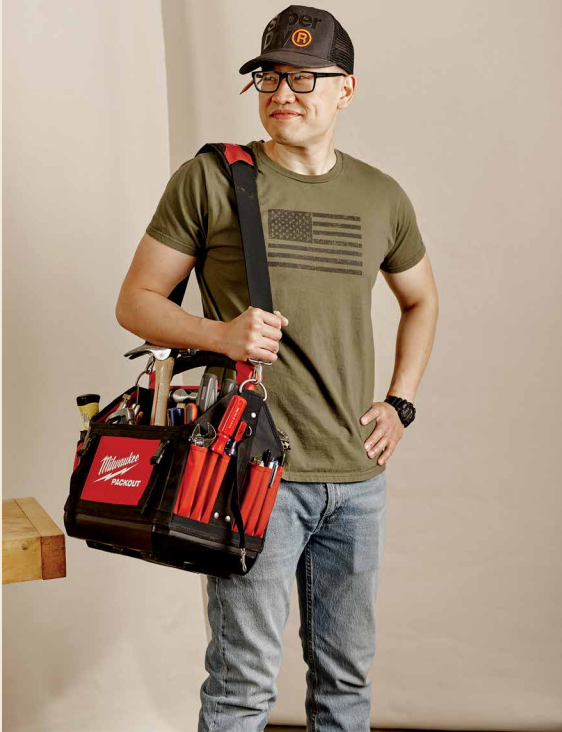
“Do not believe that you know everything, there’s always something new to learn.”

What’s been your favorite NBSS experience?

Learning new techniques and then being able to practice and perfect them.

What’s your favorite place to be?

My favorite place is wherever my friends and family are. Racetrack is a close 2nd.



CHARLIE FLOWERS

Cabinet & Furniture Making '22
Portland, ME



“If you’re excited about something, no matter how out of reach it may seem initially, you’ll find a way to do it if you keep taking comfortable steps towards it.”

What’s been your favorite NBSS experience?

The excitement you share and feel with your classmates and instructors when you’re learning to make pretty much anything. Summed up in the sentence, “Isn’t that cool?!” You can really feel the excitement behind it, like a magic trick.

What is your dream job or project?

Dream job would be traveling and teaching woodworking around the world. There’s so many different styles everywhere! And who knows what people will make once they learn how to.

XIOMARA GARCIA
Carpentry '21
Hyde Park, MA

“Before attending NBSS, I was working with a local non profit called YouthBuild Boston. My time was spent recruiting youth that were interested in learning more about the building trades and seeing if it was a good career path for them. In turn, I realized that the trades were a good fit for me.”



SUSAN SIT
Basic Piano Technology '21
Vancouver/Hong Kong



NATHAN ABBE VM '20
Teaching Assistant
Violin Making & Repair
Manchester, NH



AMANDA ACETI

Cabinet & Furniture Making '20,
Carpentry '21
Wausau, WI

What's the most important thing you've learned at NBSS?

Probably patience. From learning new things and sitting in lessons I've already had to teaching other students what I know, patience is key.

What did you do before coming to NBSS?

Before coming to NBSS, I was a Combat Engineer in the USMC. Expedient framing, roofing, laying and repairing concrete slabs, laying concrete block, cutting trees down, expedient bridging, using different explosives, sweeping for landmines, and booby traps. Fun fact, we are taught all those thing in two months total in the school house where we learn our jobs.



“My dream job is really anything having to do with woodworking. I love being able to manipulate wood into beautiful pieces.”

In The Making Continues

GLOBAL CRAFT CONVERSATIONS
REIMAGINED FOR ALL



KRISTEN'S ALL TIME FAVORITE CONVERSATIONS FROM *IN THE MAKING*

GOWNTOWN: This was our very first episode, and it was filled with Jay “Pastry Queen”, a.k.a. “PQ” Diengott’s energy. It was a rough cut and just totally fun.

BLACK CRAFTSPEOPLE DIGITAL ARCHIVE: Dr. Tiffany Momon is a force, and her presentation was tight, enlightening, and informative. Most importantly, it taught us where ownership belongs within our crafts and trades. She speaks about a writing desk made by William Howard in 1870, which consists of hand carved symbols of his formerly enslaved existence. I see this discussion as being deeply relevant to the present.

BOSTON PUBLIC QUARTET: This was a necessary and moving musical break. Betsy Hinkle and Jason Amos performed works by living Black composers on a student-made violin. The concert was played in First Parish Dorchester (a partner of NBSS), while Covid-19 vaccinations were happening in the next room.

GIRLS AT WORK: As Sarah Turner put it—“this program was sweet and human.” From a moderator’s perspective, it was certainly unnerving to try to get these teens to speak, but they were beaming with pride by the end of the hour. Editing this recording the next morning, I was smiling ear to ear and tearing up with joy for them.

PAOLO BRANDOLISIO: This was our closing episode of a trying year. It was fitting to end in a place so affected by the pandemic, shining light on a special and fragile city by speaking to an artisan who is keeping it alive. Streaming from the canals of Venice was deeply moving.

Watch all events: nbss.edu/itm

When **Kristen Odle**, the Retail & Exhibit Manager at North Bennet Street School (NBSS) logged onto Zoom to be interviewed about her latest project she confessed, “I actually feel nervous this morning.” For a second, she flashed back to preparing to take the stage to perform solo cello concerts as a teenager and feeling “all red and itchy.” The tables had turned, and the one who usually poses the questions was now being asked to answer.

Kristen has interviewed makers all over the country this year for *In the Making* (ITM), the series of virtual public programs she spearheaded to keep the NBSS community inspired and in dialogue during the pandemic. After the lockdown hit, students initially couldn’t return to NBSS in-person. They struggled to adapt to learning from improvised home workbenches but persisted. Kristen began virtual Zoom visits as a check-in to ask, “What are you doing to keep your maker-mind or your hands going?”

By the time NBSS fully and safely reopened this Fall, ITM had gathered such momentum that continuing the series was inevitable—but this time Kristen envisioned it as a global conversation about trades and craft. With

input and ideas from the NBSS community, she set out to honor the centennial of women’s suffrage, the fact that the School has a female founder, Pauline Agassiz Shaw, as well as current President Sarah Turner’s vision to usher more women into the trades. Kristen also wanted to bring in new voices. When reflecting on the wide-ranging lineup of speakers from the 15 episodes, she admits, “Some of the people that I interviewed were definitely outside of the scope of what has historically been discussed or trained within these halls.”

For each unrehearsed episode, Kristen conducts preliminary research, snaps on her headset, and starts rolling, letting the speakers take the lead. She believes, “As a small non-profit, we all wear multiple hats—and that in some ways lends itself to the as is, candid, and natural conversations that have made ITM so approachable.”

Each ITM episode is totally distinct—from the backdrop behind Kristen featuring NBSS landmarks like the locksmithing benchroom, to the format of the conversations including an alumni roundtable, a stroll through Jamila Zahra Felton’s portfolio, a preview of new work by NBSS alumna BA Harrington CF ’95,

and even a Boston Public Quartet concert. Kristen defines what connects these diverse experiences: “When you’re meeting people who live by the decision to use their hands as their life juice, you can see it in their faces, and you know that there’s a special sense of fulfillment.”

“Not only are these talks virtually accessible, but we also invite approachable panelists which in turn makes the content itself very accessible,” she explains. All conversations conclude with audience Q&A—an effort to engage with and widen the NBSS community far beyond Boston. As a result, Kristen plans to stick with some element of Zoom for future *In the Making* events, even as in-person opportunities become more feasible. In fact, Kristen is already hard at work imagining future episodes—and thinking about how to make it even more inclusive, far-reaching, and practical.

Kristen plans to stick with some element of Zoom for future events, and thinking about how to make it even more inclusive, far-reaching, and practical.

CELEBRATING A #LIFEINCRAFT

140 YEARS OF NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL

As it marks the 140th anniversary of its founding, North Bennet Street School celebrates how it was shaped as an institution, recalling a history of resilience and adaptation that will also inform its future.

As the School recognized this anniversary during the year, there were a number of virtual community events, including the second-annual Founder's Day honoring the February 6, 1841 birth of Pauline Agassiz Shaw, the visionary educator who established what was first called North Bennet Street Industrial School in 1881.

For the 2021 Founder's Day celebration, the School put out a call on social media for NBSS students, alumni, faculty, and staff to share the origin stories of their own *#lifeincraft*. From far and wide, people shared stories and images, creating a joyous online celebration that made clear that, even when physically apart, the NBSS community remained connected.

In his origin story, recent Carpentry alumnus **Jason McKenzie CA '20** reflected on his early attachment to a long family tradition. "My *#lifeincraft* began before I was even in the picture. My grandfather was a sawyer by trade. His sawmill was a homegrown operation, typical among the forests of northern New Hampshire. Fast forward nearly 40 years, and that sense of awe and wonderment around wood has never diminished. I'm well on my way to realizing my own craft—honed by the unparalleled instructors at NBSS, and ever fueled by my love for cutting up wood."

During a live *In the Making* event, "Craft Origins," held during the same week as Founder's Day, a panel of NBSS graduates and Board members detailed the moments in their lives that sparked an interest in trade and craft. Locksmithing & Security Technology Department Head and Instructor **Barb Baker LK '04** related, "My dad filled candy and cigarette vending machines.... On the luckiest day of my life, he invited me to come with him on one of his stops. I was about six years old. When he opened the vending machine, it truly was as if a choir rang out—I was stunned. I immediately knew that I wanted to work with mechanical systems."

Piano Technology alumna **Tessa Cutler Wood PT '17, PA '18**, explained her decision to learn a trade. "My two years at NBSS held some of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my entire life. Never have I felt so fulfilled or self-assured about my life's path," she wrote. "It didn't go in a straight line, but if it had, I would never have ended up owning my own business, doing rewarding and exciting work that is different every day and consistently fills me with passion and awe for my craft."

A number of NBSS staff and faculty participated as well, and all were inspired to see the words and images of the community flooding in. NBSS President Sarah Turner remarked, "I was so heartened to learn about the countless ways people discovered a life in craft and how their paths led to NBSS. We have artists, dancers, farmers, military veterans, chefs, teachers, scientists, and so many more who come to NBSS to learn a new craft or trade. The diversity of interests and backgrounds is just amazing."

If you missed this year's online events, don't worry: the annual event will gear up again next February 2022!



"Attending NBSS was an incredible experience. The School was a huge milestone in my life. Art school taught me what I aesthetically loved about jewelry—the sculptural aspect of it—while NBSS taught me about how to properly create it."

DANIELLE ROBICHAUD JM '05



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The past year has given the NBSS community time to gather (albeit virtually) and reflect on who we are as a School and who we aspire to be. We continue to be motivated by the collective enthusiasm and urgency to evolve the School at all levels, and renew our work to become more welcoming, inclusive, and diverse. We are fueled by the passion to work against biases, and to create a stronger sense of belonging for everyone.

Over the course of the past year, two working groups were formed to guide the School. One, comprised of faculty and staff, set a point on the horizon—and developed our **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Vision Statement**. We were mindful that a statement of commitment must be distinct to NBSS, and in line with our broader mission and values. To do this, faculty brought the perspective of their fields, their traditions, and their teaching. Staff helped connect us to peer efforts and to model equitable working practices. Our second group, made up of NBSS Board members, extends our reach beyond the School and into the community, and will help us signal our future.

We are grateful to have had an excellent guide, **Gwen Cochran Hadden**, in this process. Gwen joined us as a consultant in September, and her approach to DEI work is inclusive itself, valuing many voices and giving room for many perspectives. She skillfully created a space where people feel ready to share and participate, and in this, she sets a model approach for inclusive, ambitious work.

Gwen takes the long view to this work, having helped Boston neighborhoods and nonprofits evolve and diversify over many years. She helps us to see that not only are we bringing change and growth to North Bennet, but we have the ability to bring that change to our neighborhood, our city, and more broadly, to the fields that we influence with our training.

As craftspeople know, careful process and shared knowledge results in the best work. So, Gwen began with conversation—completing an initial assessment to understand the culture of the School through faculty, staff, alumni, and Board members, with more outreach to come to current students. These conversations revealed a range of perspectives and that overall, people are proud of NBSS—and also eager to increase diversity in many forms, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

Through this, we are identifying the values and norms of our community at large and within our programs, assessing what is conducive to fostering diversity and inclusion, and what should change. Coupled with the guiding principles of our DEI Vision Statement, we move to take further action. This vision statement will frame our efforts to reach new students with more scholarship and support, extend our community through online education and engagement, attract diverse new staff, faculty, and Board members, and support them in their work. Always, we continue to hold ourselves accountable, and increase

both the transparency and visibility of our efforts. Our DEI Vision statement will also be a key underpinning to our next strategic plan, which we are beginning now.

This year has been one of reflection, learning, and focused work. As a community, we have re-established a foundation to continue open, honest, and respectful dialogue that is necessary to a community where differences are celebrated. We aim to evolve not only as a School and in our industries, but also as individuals. And what comes next for NBSS will intertwine conversation, education, planning, and action. Our progress is always renewing, always dynamic. And as always, we invite you to join us as we move forward.

NBSS Faculty-Staff DEI Committee

- Jeff Altepeter, Bookbinding Instructor and Department Head
- Ann Cahoon, Jewelry Making & Repair Instructor and Department Head
- Nicki Downer, Development Coordinator
- Claire Fruitman, Provost
- Melissa Gallin, Director of Institutional Support
- Bryan McGrath, Director of Student Life & Career Services
- Rob O'Dwyer, Director of Admissions & Enrollment
- Barbara Rutkowski, Associate Director of Marketing & Communications
- Katie Theodoros, (former) Director of Continuing Education
- Sarah Turner, President

DEI VISION STATEMENT

In keeping with North Bennet Street School’s mission and history and as leaders and stewards in craft and trade education, NBSS dedicates itself to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusivity throughout our school, community, and in the fields we serve. To engage the whole person, we must support the whole person.

We are committed to continuously cultivating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive community where individual differences are expected, supported, respected, and valued. We embrace our obligation to improve our institution’s culture, strengthen our partnerships, and positively impact the future of the industries for which we train.

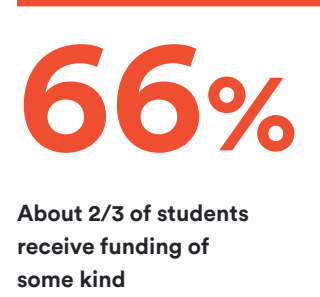
This work is necessary for the School to advance trade and craft traditions and contribute to the change we hope to see in our communities. Therefore, it is our responsibility to eliminate barriers to access and inclusion, and to expand opportunities to pursue a livelihood free from disrespectful behavior, harassment, and discrimination. We recognize that structural social barriers are a part of all organizations, and only through work by everyone, will greater change be made.

Financial Aid for All

We're dedicated to keeping excellent education affordable. Our community has raised substantial funds to make a range of new and expanded scholarships available. We've frozen tuition for the last 3 years, and in 2021 we'll provide more financial aid than ever before, making an education at America's first trade school more affordable for our students.

"I'm very satisfied with my time at NBSS, and this funding has helped me be able to focus on my career. I'm very thankful for this scholarship. NBSS really has set me up with a very promising future."

MATTHEW HAZELL LK '20



We've made applying for financial aid easier than ever! Just apply for the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) using our school code 015527, and you're automatically applied for NBSS financial aid. [Learn more at nbss.edu/funding](https://nbss.edu/funding)



Pell Yes!

ALREADY HAVE A DEGREE?

A grant which replaces the Federal Pell Grant, a valuable tool already available to non-degree-holding students at NBSS. **Provides up to the current Federal Pell Grant amount** to need-qualified students who already hold a bachelor's degree.



Yellow Ribbon

ARE YOU A VETERAN?

Over 20% of our student population is veterans, and we're proud to offer the NBSS Yellow Ribbon Program with funding that helps remove financial obstacles for those building their post-military lives. Awards may be used to cover tuition and all other qualified educational expenses, including tools, supplies, and living expenses.



International Student Aid

NEW!

LIVE OUTSIDE THE US?

Students from other countries, we are now offering financial aid for you too! We know there are many hurdles to studying abroad, and this funding aims to ease one of them. **Qualified students from all countries are eligible** for need-based funding, and awards are similar to US recipients, about one-third of tuition on average.



Workforce Development

LIVE IN GREATER BOSTON?

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:

- 1 Complete a FAFSA at studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa. Use our school code 015527. Once you fill out that form, you're automatically applied for NBSS financial aid.
- 2 Search for private scholarships at nbss.edu/funding.
- 3 Apply to NBSS, and/or finish your Admissions requirements at 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 or 617.227.0155 x115.

Preservation Carpentry students rescue former Plymouth Post Office

The scene at the former Plymouth Post Office left Preservation Carpentry (PC) student Emily Alexander confounded... bewildered even. A giant pine tree fell on the middle of a small outbuilding, cleaving it into two sections—front and back.



And at only 25 feet long and 15 feet wide, the diminutive structure didn't have much left standing on either side of the gaping hole. Yet Michael Burrey, second-year PC instructor, was telling Emily and the seven other students that they were going to make it look as if nothing ever happened. "I just didn't even know where we would start," Emily said. "My feelings were a mixture of being incredibly curious but also overwhelmed."

The shingle-sided building dates to the 1880s and sits at the foot of Catherine and Sean McKenna's driveway in the Chiltonville section of Plymouth, Massachusetts. According to local lore, it was once a post office. For almost 20 years, Sean has used it as a home office.

The damage happened in an April windstorm. In the immediate aftermath, the McKennas planned on tearing down what was left of the old post office and rebuilding. They did not consider that the building could be repaired.

Then Michael approached them. He also lives in Plymouth, although he did not know the McKennas. Michael noticed the damaged building while driving past after the storm. "It looked pretty devastating, possibly even hopeless," he said.

Michael suggested that second-year students in the PC program would take the restoration on as a learning opportunity.

He would even donate much of the lumber from logs that he sawed into boards himself. The family just needed to pay an affordable per-diem fee for student labor. The McKennas enthusiastically agreed.

The project started in September. In keeping with best practices for the pandemic, students wore masks, brought their own tools, and kept their distance from each other. They first stabilized the building with screwjacks, come-along winches, and timbers. Then, they brought the framework into square, starting from the bottom and working their way up. Along the way, they cut away broken materials and replaced them. "Michael really broke it down into helpful steps," Emily said.

After seven days of work spread out over five weeks, the students closed the hole, sided the building, roofed it with tarpaper and made it weathertight, fulfilling their responsibilities. The owners planned on finishing the rest on their own.

Catherine described the students as "efficient, quiet, and methodical," which captures the program's focus on craft perfectly. "We are so thankful," Catherine went on to say. "This wouldn't have been possible without North Bennet Street."

On the last day, the students reflected on their work. Emily said the general consensus was amazement that they had

accomplished so much. Her instructor Michael agreed, sharing that the students not only honed existing skills, but also learned several valuable lessons. First, buildings are flexible. You can push and pull them into place with the right tools. The second lesson—and perhaps the most important one—was to not get discouraged, even in the face of tremendous structural damage.

Emily, a Sacramento, California native, graduated from the PC program shortly after wrapping up the Plymouth project in October. She now works as a preservation craftsman at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. Before becoming a carpenter, Emily spent 10 years in the photography and graphic design business, having graduated with a BFA in photography. The career change, she said, was prompted by a desire to step away from her computer and work with her hands. Preservation carpentry allowed her to merge that goal with her lifelong passion for history.

Projects like the Plymouth Post Office, she said, are proof that she discovered the right path. "We were all so proud," she said. "By working on something like this, we're adding to the building's history, but also keeping it alive for future generations. Which is why it meant so much to me."

ANN CAHOON JM '02
 Department Head and Instructor,
 Jewelry Making & Repair
 Worcester, MA

What has been your favorite NBSS experience?

Graduation. To see so much accomplishment—by students and instructors alike—all in one place and on one day is staggering and humbling. It's easy to forget how profound and intense the NBSS journey is when you're working hard with your head down in the middle of it, but impossible to ignore on graduation day.

What have been your favorite distractions in the past year?

Knitting, knitting, knitting!



“Growth, improvement, and excellence are always possible. So is failure. Embrace the opportunities they offer.”

JOHN BOISSY
 Cabinet & Furniture Making '22
 Melrose, MA

What's the most interesting job you've ever had?

I was a children's ski instructor for about eight years at a small resort in Indiana.

What's something that surprises people?

When they find out I'm a religious brother who likes woodworking.



ALI MUHAMMAD
 Carpentry '21
 Springville, IA

DANIEL OSACH
 Cabinet & Furniture Making '21
 Worcester, MA





WILL ROPER PT '19
Teaching Assistant
Basic Piano Technology
New Providence, NJ

“Much of my life has been centered around learning and performing musical theatre.”



GALEN BERMUDES
Carpentry '21
Arlington, MA

“The most important thing I’ve learned at NBSS is how to work with a team. Being able to bounce ideas off of each other or lending someone a hand is essential in carpentry, and this school is amazing at teaching us how crucial that is.”

MELANIE BLOCH
Cabinet & Furniture Making '22
Ennis, MA

What’s your favorite NBSS experience?
Walking in every morning with a big grin on my face excited to start the day.

What did you do before coming to NBSS?
Chinese Linguist/soldier, math degree, ski lift electrician, service industry.

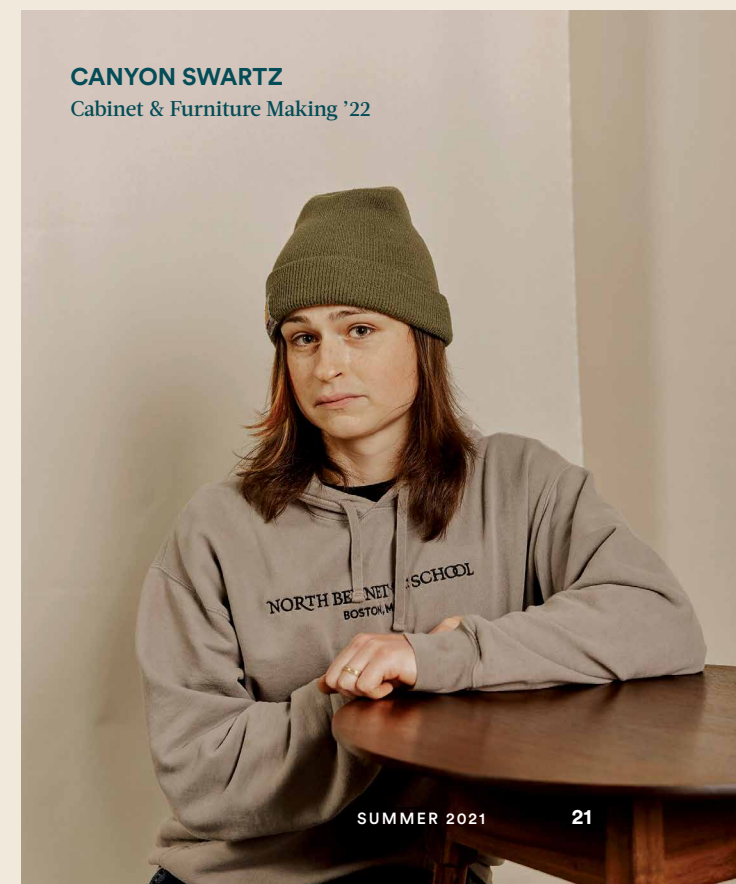
What’s your dream job or project?
Starting an artist retreat/co-op/commune on a good chunk of land with a bunch of tiny houses and some nice communal shop space.



BARB BAKER LK '04
Department Head and Instructor,
Locksmithing & Security Technology
Melrose, MA



CANYON SWARTZ
Cabinet & Furniture Making '22



EMILIE PELLETIER
Violin Making & Repair '23
Boston, MA



LANCE PATTERSON CF '79
Instructor, Cabinet & Furniture Making
Boston, MA

“It is so amazing to realize the beautiful, complex, practical work that can be done with simple hand tools...I feel so grateful to have had George Fullerton and Phil Lowe as my teachers. Their specific lessons are deeply branded in my memory.”



MADELIN WOODRUM
Basic Piano Technology '21



ARIANA RUTLEDGE
Bookbinding '22
Eureka, CA

“My dream job is to work in the Vatican Library.”

What did you do before coming to NBSS?

Before coming to NBSS,
I worked as a cake decorator.

What is your favorite NBSS experience?

Making my own tools, like
paring knives, lifting knives,
and bone folders.

View the full set of portraits
at nbssportraits.com.



“An important lesson that I’ve learned is that if you take the time to do the initial steps of a project well, it makes the rest go much smoother.”

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

PHILIP C. LOWE CF '74



“Phil truly is the definition of a mentor... He taught us through his actions, to take pride in craftsmanship, to share our knowledge with everyone who will listen, and to inspire the next generation of cabinetmakers to carry on the traditions of the craft with honor.”

Dan Faia CF '94, Cabinet & Furniture Making Department Head

We are pleased to announce that **Philip Lowe**, a 1974 graduate of the Cabinet & Furniture Making program, is the recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Though Phil passed away earlier this year, our community wanted to honor his many years of teaching and mentorship with this year’s award. Phil was a master furniture maker, entrepreneur, teacher, mentor, and dear friend to all. Phil was a Cabinet & Furniture Making instructor at NBSS from 1975-1985, with the latter five of those years as Department Head. During this time, Phil helped build the program’s core curriculum and supported its transition to be fully accredited.

Soon after leaving his role at NBSS, in 1989 he launched and led the Furniture Institute of Massachusetts, which trained hundreds of students from across the country in the art of classical woodworking techniques.

In addition to numerous accolades and achievements from shows, institutions, and private individuals, Phil won the Cartouche Award in 2005 from the Society of American Period Furniture Makers, and was chosen in 2010 for the “Artisanship Award” bestowed by the Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America. These awards reflect his generous contributions to the field and its community, while also cementing his legacy as a master furniture maker and artisan.

Phil’s legacy is second to none, and his impact includes not only the fine work he produced over 50+ years, but also the generations of woodworkers who he guided in the craft.

The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes a graduate from one of our nine full-time programs based on their professional accomplishments, their contributions to their craft and field, and their work with schools and organizations to promote excellence in craft.



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VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

DECEMBER 13–17, 2021

This once-a-year event is the best opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at America's first trade school. Learn more about our programs in traditional trades, engage with a like-minded community of artisans, enjoy live demonstrations and tours of our building, and more.

Free, open to the public, and 100% virtual.
Stay tuned for more info, including dates, times, and activities.

nbss.edu/openhouse

