



Benchmarks

At North Bennet Street School, we firmly believe that a strong community is essential for the strongest education. Our students, alumni, faculty, staff, and supporters form a diverse and powerful network, supporting and inspiring one another as they pursue their passions and embrace the power of craft to make positive change. In an ever-evolving, polarized world, reliance and shared effort is needed more than ever.



In this edition, you'll find inspiring narratives of students who have discovered their true calling within our walls, transforming their lives and the lives of those around them. From our 2023 Graduation and Distinguished Alumni Award to our Community Education feature and *Carving Out Space*, these stories will take you on a journey that showcases the profound impact that our School has on individuals and communities alike.

In *Learning-by-Doing*, we also delve into the numerous partnerships and collaborations that exemplify our commitment to community engagement. From working with local nonprofits to preserve and restore historical landmarks, to forging relationships with schools and businesses that extend our values, we explore the power of collaboration in fostering positive change.

Moreover, this issue will introduce to our robust scholarship offerings in *Building Futures*, *Shaping Lives*, as well as share with you other great stories and events from our community. Whether it's woodworking, bookbinding, jewelry making, piano technology, or something else, our programs attract individuals from all walks of life, united by their passion for craft and skill.

Throughout the magazine, you'll encounter the spirit of our NBSS community—one that extends far beyond our campus and reaches into the fabric of Boston and beyond. We celebrate the connections formed, the knowledge shared, and the lasting impact made by those connected to our School.

Thank you for joining us on this journey through the expanding and evolving world of NBSS. We hope that this issue will inspire you, deepen your appreciation for crafts and trades, and ignite your own sense of community. Together, let us continue to build, create, and support one another as we shape our shared future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'ST' or 'Sarah Turner'.

SARAH TURNER, PRESIDENT

Students install their timber frame on The Greenway in downtown Boston, just steps away from our School. The experience was part of five day Community Education class taught by NBSS grads Sophie Linnell PC '21 and Kevin Cronmiller PC '21.



View more great partnerships on page 14.

Graduation

On a sunny June morning, we celebrated a new group of students entering their professional crafts and trades careers. The excitement and energy in the air was palpable, as was the pride on the faces of every graduate, their friends & family, and of course our own faculty and staff too.

A parade through the North End—led by a rousing fife and drum—carried the festive crowd from NBSS to the historic Old North Church. There, School leaders and honored guests applauded the hard work and dedication of our graduates in a series of heartfelt speeches. Among the speakers, **Chris Cook** of the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway Conservancy delivered an rousing address on community and connectivity, while our Distinguished Alumni Award winner **Ilah Cibis JM '05** shared an inspired message of appreciation and inclusivity. These speeches gave way to thunderous applause and cheers from the crowd as graduates accepted their diplomas and certificates from faculty members, one by one.

Commencement day is a joyous celebration of achievement and new beginnings. Surrounded by a crowd of supporters, the smiles of our 2023 graduates lit up the room as they embraced their achievements, ready to embark on their chosen career paths with newfound confidence and skills. We look forward to hearing all that they'll accomplish in the years to come.

View a full recording of the full ceremony and all our speakers' remarks at nbss.edu/news



“You create, literally, the physicality of our humanity. You use tools and create what is needed, what is wanted, and what is given. As your craft passes to these objects, you connect to the recipient. You will have an opportunity to teach your skills. Sometimes formally, sometimes informally. Always take this opportunity. In doing so, you will help protect our shared humanity.”

CHRIS COOK, ROSE F. KENNEDY GREENWAY CONSERVANCY

Distinguished Alumni Award

Ilah Cibis JM '05

This award is presented each year based on one's professional accomplishments, one's contributions to industries, and one's work with schools and organizations to promote excellence in craft.



Ilah, the owner of Ilah Cibis Jewelry in Worcester, Massachusetts, works with recycled gold, silver, and platinum as well as responsibly sourced stones. She has specialized in lab-grown diamonds since 2014 and is the only jeweler in New England to offer Aether Diamonds, the world's first carbon negative diamonds made from carbon dioxide extracted from the atmosphere.

We hear companies and individuals say they hope to leave the world a better place: and for Ilah, this is a core value. She strives to make her business a space in which all are welcome. Her priority is to create an inviting, inclusive experience, and thoughtfully and intentionally push back against toxic norms in the jewelry industry.

"I make jewelry for everybody and every body. However you present, whatever your gender identity, sexual orientation, size, age, race, or ability—I want to give you the shopping experience you deserve and make pieces that speak to your uniqueness."

According to **Ann Cahoon JM '02**, Jewelry Making & Repair Department Head, "Ilah is a successful business owner, with exceptional skills as a traditional bench jeweler which she uses to drive her business and brand. She has long focused on sustainability and was an early adopter and thoughtful user of ethically manufactured, lab-grown diamonds."

Ilah uses her platform to open the door for others who might otherwise have been shut out. She finds innovative, safer solutions to create beautiful pieces of work. Ilah is an involved member of our community: a guest speaker, instructor, Program Advisor Committee member, and a helpful resource to many current and former students. She was also a driving force behind bringing computer-aided design into the Jewelry Making & Repair curriculum.



Building Futures, Shaping Lives

Get to know just a few of our remarkable graduates who have trained for new careers through NBSS scholarships, and who embody our philosophy of *a good life, built by hand*.

\$1.1M

in NBSS scholarships
will be provided to qualified
students this year

Wali Qaderi

CARPENTRY '23

When/how did you discover your discipline/field?

Carpentry is completely new to me. Actually, the United States and Massachusetts are also new to me. I moved to the U.S. from Afghanistan in January 2020, right before Covid. I was on a World Bank fellowship in Washington, D.C., but in the middle of the fellowship, Covid started and the program was canceled.

For various reasons I was unable to return to Afghanistan at that time, and so I moved to Massachusetts with my wife and two daughters. After some time, I decided I wanted to work with my hands and build things. From there, I started looking for construction jobs and trade schools.

How did you discover NBSS? Why did you choose to attend the School?

I was supporting my family, so I thought the best option would be to start working in construction. But because of my lack of experience and having never worked on a construction site, it was difficult to find someone to hire me.

I started researching trade schools and found North Bennet; I learned that it is the first trade school in the United States. I thought, "Wow! I am lucky I ended up in Massachusetts."

Can you describe the NBSS community in just a few words?

The overall experience was wonderful. The teachers were amazing. The School is very diverse; there are talented students and people of all different ages and lifestyles.

When I see cars with a Massachusetts license plate, which says, "The Spirit of America," I actually think of NBSS. The North Bennet instructors, students, alumni, everyone—I think they are the spirit of Massachusetts and the United States.

What are some ways you have felt supported at NBSS?

The financial assistance I received from the School helped me so much. I was studying four days a week, and then three days a week, I was working at Home Depot to pay the grocery and other bills. I was borrowing money from my sister to pay the rent, but the other bills were my responsibility.

Without financial assistance, it would not have been possible for me to attend North Bennet.

What motivates you?

What motivates me is hope for the future, for my wife and my daughters. Every day of work here is about a better future for my daughters and my family. That makes me motivated.

What's next for you?

I was hired by Columbia Contracting Corp., which is based in Natick, Massachusetts. North Bennet helped me find this position, and Peter Smith PC '04, Carpentry Department Head, recommended me to the company. I will do my best in this job to represent North Bennet and what Peter and my other instructor, Brock Leindecker PC '16, taught me.

North Bennet was the first chapter of my life in the United States, so it has been emotional leaving my instructors and classmates. We have been together for the last nine months. Sometimes I'm unlucky in life, but sometimes I'm very lucky. I have found my way.



Our **NBSS Impact Scholarships** provide up to \$10,000 to help promote representation in our industries.

Brittany York

BASIC PIANO TECHNOLOGY '22 | ADVANCED PIANO TECHNOLOGY '23

When/how did you discover your discipline/field?

I received my undergraduate degree in music at Salem State University. When I was a sophomore, I started getting into composition. The lens that I was composing through was a lot of digital audio workstations and playing with things like GarageBand and Pro Tools. I remember coming to this plugin that I fell in love with that was all pianos.

I started showing up at piano dealerships that sold these instruments new. I tried to get to know as many different brands and models as I could by playing them and bothering the salespeople. They were so gracious at all the locations I visited.

This became a big passion of mine, visiting piano dealerships. They're just the most magical places in the world to me. I decided quickly that if I could work anywhere in the world, I would want to work at one of them.

Can you describe the NBSS community in just a few words?

Creative, quirky, masterful, and connected.

What are some ways you have felt supported at NBSS?

Out of the gate, North Bennet is a place I felt more supported than I've ever felt anywhere in my life. North Bennet has taught me what support means. And it's come through a lot of different avenues: It's come through connections. It's come from making really good friends and adding to my family. And it's come from feeling wanted and valued.

When I was a first-year student, I was only planning to do the Basic Piano Technology program. I didn't have the resources to do the second-year Advanced Piano Technology program. I had worked in sales

before first year, and I had a savings that I was living off of, to support myself outside of school. I was at the end of it, and I wasn't sure what I was going to do. We had so many great guest instructors, and the resounding thing we kept hearing from all of our alumni instructors was, "Do the second-year program; you won't regret it. People who didn't do it, wish they did. If you have the opportunity, it's so worth it."

I was lucky enough to receive the Surdam-Murphy Scholarship, and it was the difference between being able to do it and not being able to do it. Doing Advanced Piano Technology was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

What motivates you?

One of the things I love the most is sitting back and listening to someone play a piano I've worked on—it's so special.

Besides working in your field, what else keeps you busy?

I'm into weightlifting, boxing, and kickboxing. Any excuse to be outside, I'll take. I love being active.

I also have a fantasy world-building project that I've been working on for 10 years, so I do a lot of writing and language writing as well as some art for it. That takes up a lot of my mental space that's not devoted to the work that I do.

What's next for you?

I'm moving to take a full-time technician position with Faust Harrison Pianos in White Plains, New York. They are a piano dealership and a rebuilding factory, which is very rare in our industry. It's this perfect, best-of-both-worlds dream job where I get to be in a dealership full-time and play.

40%

of average tuition
costs are funded by
scholarships



Our **NBSS Workforce Development Initiative** provides up to \$30,150 to students in greater Boston.

75%

of our student body
receives some form
of financial aid

How to Apply for Aid

Our financial aid team is here to answer your questions, help you navigate the process, and determine your eligibility for all types of funding. Just email us at financialaid@nbss.edu.

Check out sample award packages via our new Financial Aid & Scholarship Guide. nbss.edu/financial-aid

Abra Mueller

BOOKBINDING '23

When/how did you discover your discipline/field?

Over a decade ago, I graduated from the University of Southern Maine with a bachelor's in music, focusing on early music, which includes Renaissance and medieval music. I worked with Renaissance and medieval manuscripts and facsimile editions of those manuscripts for a long time for research purposes and for transcribing music for performance.

Seeing those early manuscripts ignited a passion for the history of the book as an object and as a vessel for the passing on of the history of the world.

From there, I looked into archives as a field. I decided to get a master's degree in library science from Simmons University, and I was exploring the world of archives and preserving rare books, manuscripts, and collections. What I discovered was that I was far more interested in the hands-on work of conservation, rather than preservation.

I started researching how I could get my foot in the door of the conservation field.

What are some ways you have felt supported at NBSS?

When I first enrolled in the Bookbinding program at North Bennet, I received scholarship funds. I had never received a scholarship for anything in my entire life. I took out student loans to pay for my prior degrees, but I had never received financial aid that I didn't have to pay back. This was the first time I felt like, "Wow, I must be doing something right. This is incredible that someone wants me here enough to offer me aid to come here." That was a boost from the beginning.

Then, last summer, my financial situation changed dramatically, to the point where I thought I was

going to have to quit school. I was ready to pack it in. Claire Fruitman CF '96, Provost, advised me to talk to the Financial Aid Office, so I wrote a letter explaining my situation. They were able to make changes to my support so I could finish the program. It was a miracle because I don't know what I would have done otherwise.

I am truly amazed and so grateful for the hoops they had to jump through to make sure I could stay here.

Can you describe your work in just two or three words?

Meticulous and thoughtful.

What motivates you?

What motivates me the most is the protection of cultural heritage. The most important thing to me is maintaining the historical record. Being part of that gets me a little emotional. It's an incredible privilege to be able to do that.

What's next for you?

I currently have two temporary jobs for the summer. I am working at the Harvard Library Collections Care lab, where I'm building enclosures for their library materials, some of which are circulating and some of which are not. I am also heading back to the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) in Andover, Massachusetts, where I interned last summer, to do conservation work. My hope is to find a full-time position in a conservation lab, in whatever form that takes.



Our **NBSS Pell Yes!** funding provides up to \$6,895 to qualified students who already hold a bachelor's.

Community Education

Whether you're just curious about trying a new hobby, or you're a professional wanting to expand your knowledge, our **community education classes** offer something for everyone. With talented instructors, small class sizes, 120+ offerings each year, and amazing facilities, you'll build hands-on skills (and some great projects!) in no time.

HERE'S WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING:

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK CONSERVATION

"This workshop was everything I could have hoped for and more. Jim is a fantastic teacher, my classmates were wonderful, and I left with several new skills I'll be able to put into immediate use in my library."

Instructor: James Reid Cunningham BB '90



FUNDAMENTALS OF FINE WOODWORKING

"The last two weeks were sincerely some of the best of my life. Bob and Rachel and everyone I met did an incredible job of creating a welcoming atmosphere for learning and I learned so very much. The class was structured amazingly well to give the true fundamentals of handtool woodworking. Thank you for running such a great class!"

Instructor: Bob Miller CF '11



SIDE-STITCHED BOOKS OF CHINA, JAPAN, AND KOREA

"Evelyn's ability to clearly convey complex new techniques and methodologies was just terrific, just what I needed as a beginner developing a complex book project. Fabulous teacher, patient, attentive, focused and a master of her craft."

Instructor: Evelyn Wong

INTRO TO BROOM MAKING: HANDBROOMS & SWEEPERS

"What a wonderful two days! Aspen is an outstanding teacher and an inspiring artist. Feeling so lucky that I was able to attend. Thank you!"

Instructor: Aspen Golann CF '19



JEWELRY MAKING 101

"Willow is a great instructor! We learned a lot in one day, and we had a great group of fellow students. I appreciated Willow covering the ways to sit and hold tools so that you take care of your body as well. Thanks for a great class!"

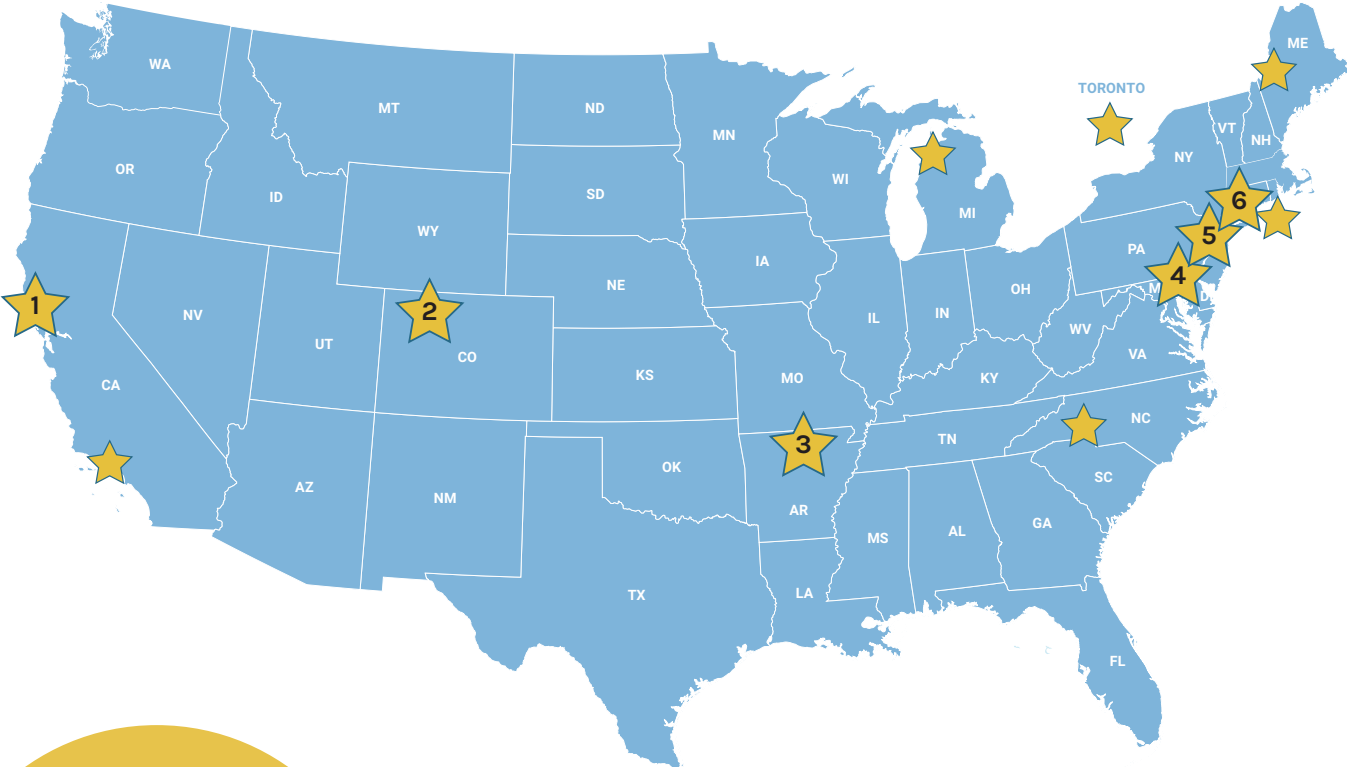
Instructor: Willow Coronella JM '20



Check out our full roster of Community Education classes at nbss.edu/ce

LEARNING-BY-DOING

A decade of inspired work
with community groups, nonprofits,
colleges, individuals, and others.



UNITED STATES & CANADA

- 1 Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation**
Institutional support
San Francisco, CA
2022-2023

2 Aspen Music Festival & School
Summer Internship
Aspen, CO
Ongoing

3 Windgate Foundation
Institutional support
Little Rock, AR
Ongoing
- 4 Handhouse Studio, Charpentiers Sans Frontières, National Park Service, National Building Museum**
Notre Dame de Paris Truss #6
Reconstruction Project
Washington, D.C. | **2023**

5 Decorative Arts Trust
Curatorial Internship
Media, PA | **2023**

6 Steinway & Sons
Summer internship: Spirio
New York City, NY
2016-present



MASSACHUSETTS

- 7 Boston University**
Tanglewood Institute
Summer Internship
Lenox, MA | **2010-present**

8 Trustees of Reservations, Fruitlands Museum
Conversations in Craft
Exhibition
Harvard, MA | **2018-2019**

9 Private Client, C2MG Builders
Dover Horse Farm
Dover, MA | **2019-20**

10 Nantucket Preservation Trust
Various restoration projects
Nantucket, MA | **2020-2021**

GREATER BOSTON

- Home Base, a partnership of Mass General Brigham Hospital and the Red Sox Foundation**
National Center of Excellence: Front Desk, Enrollment Support
Charlestown | **2019**

First Parish Church Congregation, Historic Boston, Inc.
First Parish Church of Dorchester: Steeple and Window Restoration
Dorchester | **2012-2019**

Boston Harbor Now, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (Mass DCR)
Custom-Built, Barn Style Maintenance Facility
Georges Island, Boston Harbor | **2019**

Association of General Contractors, St. Mary's Center for Women & Children
Library & Lockers Project
Dorchester | **2016**

MissionSAFE (formerly Dorchester Youth Collaborative)
First Generation Tradespeople Program
Dorchester | **2016-2018**

Historic Boston, Inc., Urban Farming Institute, Trust for Public Land
Fowler Clark Epstein Farm
Mattapan | **2016-2018**
- Madison Park Technical Regional High School, Boston Public Schools**
Summer Career Discovery Program
Boston | **2018-present**

Revolutionary Spaces (formerly The Bostonian Society)
Hancock Mansion Door Project
Boston | **2017-present**

Boston Public Schools, EdVestors
Districtwide Piano Tuning
Boston | **2012-present**

Guild of Bookworkers
Fine Binding Exhibition
Boston | **2022**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Violin Power Efficiency Research
Cambridge | **2014-2015**

Massachusetts College of Art & Design (MassArt)
Furniture Design Certificate Program
Boston | **2010-present**

Boston Vet Center
Educational Programming, Enrollment Support
Boston | **2023**

The Rose F. Kennedy Greenway Conservancy
Timberframe Raising
Boston | **2019-present**
- Museum of Fine Arts, MassArt, Society of Arts & Crafts, Fuller Craft Museum**
Commonwealth of Craft
Boston, Brockton | **2012-2018**

KR+H Cabinetmakers
B/A/D Talks
Boston | **2019-present**

Ethical Metalsmiths; MassArt; SMFA Tufts
Radical Jewelry Makeover
Boston, Somerville | **2021-22**

Project REACH, University of Massachusetts
Enrollment support
Boston | **Ongoing**

Boston University College Advising Corps
Enrollment support
Boston | **Ongoing**

...AND OVER 30 MORE!

View an expanded version of this map at nbss.edu/partnerships



Carving Out Space

Founded by **Aspen Golann CF '19**, the Chairmaker's Toolbox is determined to give everyone the skills and inclusive environment needed to craft their own seat at the table.

There is an old photograph of **Aspen Golann CF '19** standing in the back of a woodshop in 2019, her hands clasped over her mouth as she peers into a cardboard box and screams with joy. Inside, is a toolbox.

The image foreshadows Aspen's launch of **The Chairmaker's Toolbox** (CMT), a project that works toward more equitable access to chairmaking skills and tools across the United States and Australia.

When Aspen graduated from NBSS, she dreamed of purchasing every tool she would need to own in order to work from her own woodshop. "I came up with a spreadsheet and a practical, five-year plan to buy all the tools needed to become an independent chairmaker," she said.

But the dream became a reality far sooner than she expected thanks to a few plot twists. Her mentor, NBSS guest instructor **Peter Galbert**, received a phone call from a former student now retiring who hoped to donate their tools to a

young furniture maker. Two days later a box arrived in the mail. The candid photograph, snapped by Peter, conveys the pure joy that Aspen felt when she was surprised by the extraordinary gift.

"It contained the very best version of each of the tools I would need to make chairs," she said from the Rhode Island School of Design, where she was finishing up a semester teaching furniture design.

The realization that the tools were passed down from one furniture maker to another gave Aspen a real sense of belonging. She said, "As a queer woman, and often the only woman in a shop space, I felt like an outsider. It was lonely and hard to be authentic."

However, she did feel at home in the craft, and found mentors at NBSS who made her feel "loved and supported." She also connected with an informal network of female-identifying, queer, and gender non-conforming students. Aspen knew she needed to continue to grow that community in an even bigger way.

"As a queer woman, and often the only woman in a shop space, I felt like an outsider. It was lonely and hard to be authentic."

Left: Aspen in her workshop, crafting a windsor rocking chair of her own design. Photo: Loam Marketing.



Instructors and students posed with an in-progress chair they designed collaboratively in a class hosted by New Hampshire-based chairmaker Peter Galbert. Photo: Audi Siosi.

Teaching Against the Grain

A year after graduating from NBSS, Aspen won the **2020 John D. Mineck Fellowship for Furniture Arts**, an award offered by the Society of Arts and Crafts to one early career furniture artist each year. Her application had featured work that “examined gender and power through classic American decorative arts,” and proposed the launch of CMT.

With the prize earnings in hand, Aspen founded CMT soon after. The project seeks to break down the barriers that push women, nonbinary people, and BIPOC out of green woodworking and chairmaking—or keep them from entering the trade in the first place.

It achieves this by collaborating with other makers, schools, and organizations to offer chairmaking classes and workshops completely free of charge. It also provides opportunities for toolmakers from

underrepresented communities to develop and sell their own limited-edition tools with the support of established chairmakers as mentors. And finally, through a program called **The Living Tools**, donors can gift their personal collections of tools to emerging woodworkers in need.

CMT’s focus on chairmaking and green wood-working is no accident. Aspen has long been frustrated by the prevailing perception that these sub-disciplines in woodworking require a rarefied skill set or the academic knowledge of a period enthusiast. “In reality, chairs are vernacular furniture once made by American farmers. You only need a few hand tools, and the materials are cheap,” she explained. “A chair can be crafted in a small space or backyard, and doesn’t require access to expensive machines or a high-end woodshop.”

“Chairs are vernacular furniture once made by American farmers. A chair can be crafted in a small space or backyard, and doesn’t require access to expensive machines or a high-end woodshop.”

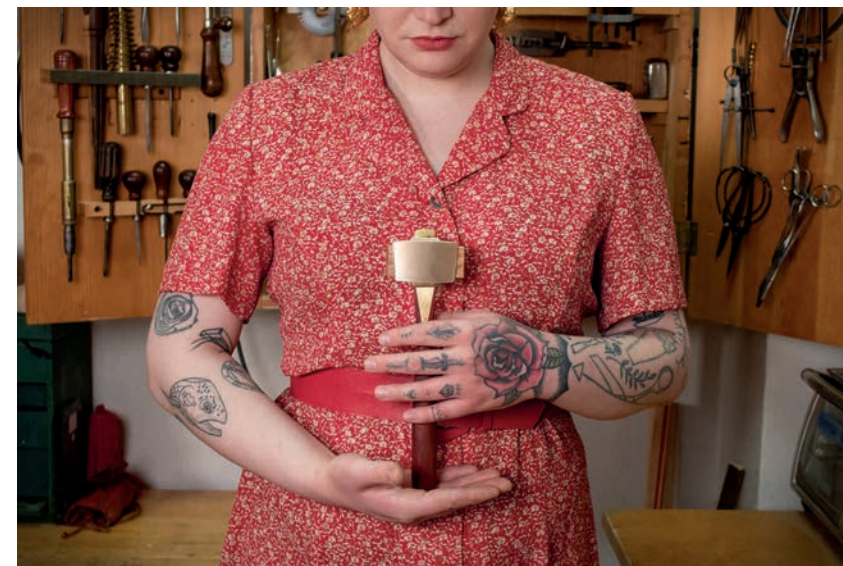
So far, more than 200 scholarship students have taken a class or received support through CMT, with many of them developing their own individual variations for the design of their chairs.

Lee Scheffey is one of them. The self-described queer, trans spooncarver and green woodworker enrolled in a CMT stick chair class at Lost Art Press in Covington, Kentucky last summer. Exceeding their expectations, Lee said, “The greatest part of my experience was sharing a space with people who love chairs as viscerally as I do. I left the class with lifelong friends, increased social confidence, and a stronger belief in my own woodworking and building abilities.” Finishing their chair after returning home took real commitment but paid off.

“That chair is evidence of what my hands are capable of and seeing it in my living space pushes me to make more. The relationships I made in the class continue to inspire and support me in that work.” **LEE SCHEFFEY**



Lee Scheffey assembling the back of their windsor chair at Lost Art Press in Kentucky. Photo: Aspen Golann.



Eleanor Ingrid Rose holding her brass and rosewood infill mallet, available at thechairmakerstoolbox.com. Photo: Stacey Motte.

Craft-based sculpture artist and toolmaker **Eleanor Ingrid Rose** was drawn to CMT because she wanted to nurture and strengthen that community. Last year, she co-taught a CMT class with Aspen at A Workshop of Our Own in Baltimore, Maryland. As a trans woman she hasn’t always felt physically safe or welcome in woodworking spaces, and found purpose in being able to help create “a hyper-supportive,” inclusive learning environment.

CMT also commissioned Rose to cast a limited edition infill mallet based on an iconic H.O. Studley mallet. The tool is part of The Toolbox, the CMT line of classic tools produced by underrepresented toolmakers and available for purchase.

Passing Toolboxes Forward

Maia Rosenberg, a chairmaker in Weaverville, North Carolina wanted nothing more than to be able to make furniture with tools like these.

They said, “I knew that woodworking was my calling for years, but I hadn’t been able to start making because the tools are so expensive.” A posting in their local guild newsletter from CMT inviting those from underrepresented communities to apply to receive donated tools changed everything. They applied immediately. Soon after, they received a collection of tools that gave them the chance to start carving in their own studio years sooner than their budget allowed. But it’s the tools themselves that make Maia feel included in an intergenerational community of makers.

They shared, “The donor was also a woman of color and she wanted to make sure her tools ended up with someone whose path in the craft was like her own. I can’t tell you what it means to me not to just have these tools but to know that someone wanted me to have them. I think it makes every cut sweeter.”

Some of the tools originally donated to Aspen, which helped spark the idea of the Chairmaker’s Toolbox. Photo: Lucy Plato Clark.




Katrina Tompkins using a handplane in a CMT class. Photo: Aspen Golann.

Aspen’s own dream of paying forward the toolbox she received is now coming full circle. She was the recipient of the **2023 Award in Craft** from **The Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation**. If anything, the prestigious award, which came out of the blue with a phone call that changed her life, has validated the project’s importance.

She said excitedly, “This award has helped me truly believe that this work is valuable. I have a lot of plans for CMT: more classes, educational partners, tools, scholarships, and more access. I want to really amplify what we already do and offer even greater support to emerging and established woodworkers in our field.”

Aspen and her partners are just getting started imagining how to scale CMT to give even more people the time, materials, and skills and they need to make their own chairs and pull them up to an ever-widening table.



 NBSS will host The Chairmaker’s Toolbox with chairmaking and other classes in the year ahead. Sign up for our newsletter to receive updates at nbss.edu/info.

“There was a silversmithing elective at my middle school, **Shady Hill School**, that I fell in love with early on. Then I was lucky enough to get to take a workshop at NBSS a few years later. Now I have over 20 years of experience with the craft, which is so special as a first generation jeweler.”

Zoe Beatty JM '14

“**Shanna Leino @shannaleinohandbuilt** and **Jim Croft** fundamentally changed my life by teaching me how to recognize, respect, and have fun with quality materials.”

Brien Beidler

“**Gervais Larochelle** (aka Dad) put a reciprocating saw in my hands at ten years old... a love of tools was born, and that started it all. I follow my passion to honor him.” **Anthony Larochelle**

“**@russelllovesart** and **@denese.sanders.art** were my first book arts teachers, in high school and community college! They're both incredible art teachers who put me on the path where I found how much I loved bookbinding. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing today without them.”

Emily Patchin BB '16

“My dad, **J.P. Bennett**. He supported me from the moment I said I wanted to study music and went with me to every piano dealership we could find so I could go meet all different brands and models.”

Brittany York PT '22, PA '23

FROM OUR COMMUNITY:

Who inspired your start in craft or trade?

“After taking the Three-Month Furniture Making Intensive with **Jamey Pope CF '06** I did a short apprenticeship with NBSS grad **Shaun Bullens CF '05** in the summer of 2015. Shaun is a master woodworker and I learned a great deal during that time. Both Shaun and Jamey convinced me to apply to the Cabinet & Furniture Making Program and have supported my career ever since. I am grateful to both of them for helping me get to where I am now.”

Sandy Weymouth CF '18

“**@raines_marla** bought me my first tools back when I was in college. **@jimmydiresta** inspired me to just start making things and treating it all as an experiment and play.”

Matt Romick CF '24

“Alumnus **Larry Fine's 'The Piano Book'** got me hooked on piano technology!”

Luca Cipolla PT '23

“**My Dzia**. He was an amazing wood carver and painted with incredible detail. He and my Nana always encouraged my love of making.” **Erin Fletcher BB '12**

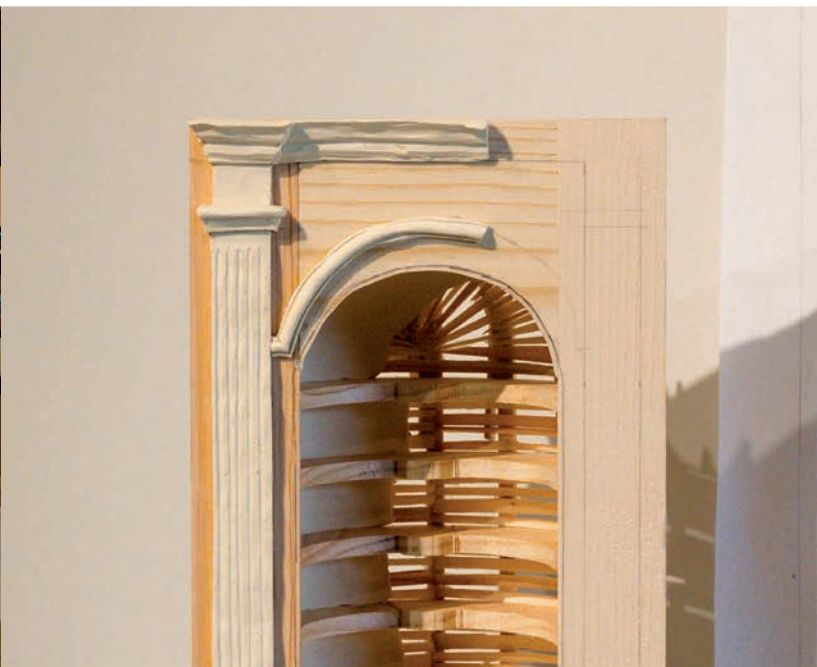
2023 EXHIBITION:

Continual Craft

By crafting objects with care, using materials considerably, and repairing the world around us, our NBSS students and graduates are contributing to a more lasting future.

Our **2023 Exhibition: Continual Craft** explores the opportunities and challenges in this work through a number of examples: the durability of dovetailed furniture and fine bindings, the transformation of outdated materials, the reinvention of an old space, and more.

On display through August 12, 2023.
Learn more and view the exhibition
at nbss.edu/2023exhibition



This Exhibition is made possible with generous support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and our Partners in Craft.
nbss.edu/pic

Farm Floor to Table



**One lucky person will win the
Breakfast Table by Sandy Weymouth!**

Enter our free raffle for your chance
to win at nbss.edu/table-affle

When he was 22 years old, over the course of two years, Sandy Weymouth CF '18 worked alongside his dad to build a log cabin in the deep woods of Maine. That experience was notable not only because it tapped into his interest in the natural world (he was a geologist-turned-environmental engineer at the time), but also because it foretold a future he didn't see coming.

Several years later, an everyday experience summoned fond memories of that time laboring in the forest, and helped ignite what he refers to as a "craving to make things" with his own two hands.

Sandy reflects, "When I started buying nicer furniture in my early 30s I was shocked at how much 'good design' actually cost. As my wife can attest to, my first response when seeing the price tag of a walnut armchair was to say 'I could make that for much cheaper!'" he says with a laugh. "Of course, I had zero knowledge of furniture making at the time, so I didn't really know what I was talking about. But it set the wheels in motion."

By his late 30s, Sandy had dabbled in woodworking, including taking a short class at the Eliot School in Jamaica Plain. At the recommendation of his instructor, Sandy looked into NBSS and was immediately drawn to the School's Three-Month Furniture Making Intensive. After completing the course, he secured a short internship with an NBSS graduate, who encouraged him to enroll in the School's Cabinet & Furniture Making program. Within three years of his first woodworking class, with an NBSS diploma in hand, Sandy officially started his newfound career.

Today, his Hingham-based company Sawtimber crafts furniture for private clients, and importantly, helps them "connect the oak tree in the woods and the table in their dining rooms, to better understand the importance of sustainability."

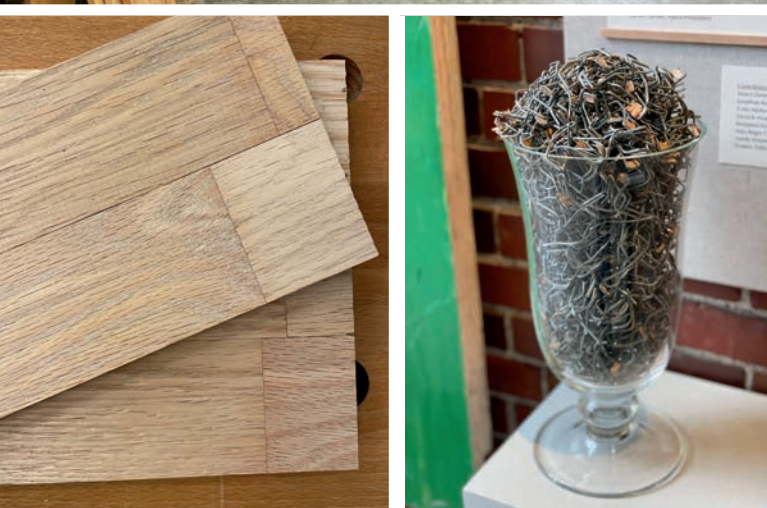
An opportunity presented itself in late August 2022 that would draw upon Sandy's training at NBSS, and reconnect him with the School.

Kristen Odle, NBSS Retail & Exhibition Manager, received an email from **Select Demolition**, who was hired as part of the demolition of the Boston Celtics Training Facility in Waltham, MA. They felt that the basketball court's oak flooring had too much historical significance to end up in a landfill. So after carefully dismantling and salvaging the material, they wanted to share it with a number of local vocational schools, including NBSS, to highlight both sustainable practices and the ingenuity of tradespeople.

Kristen knew just the furniture maker to contact for this one-of-a-kind opportunity.



The former Boston Celtics practice facility in Waltham, Massachusetts. Photo: Select Demolition



“When I first saw the flooring in a storage facility, I knew that if anyone could take on this kind of work, they'd be an NBSS grad. Sandy—with his refined and modern design eye—immediately came to mind as the person to update and elevate that material into something completely transformed.”

At first, Sandy was hesitant to accept the commission. “I didn’t have any experience working with reclaimed wood and this particular lot looked challenging. It was splintered, full of thick staples, and coated in a heavy varnish, not to mention the deep green Celtics paint,” he remembers. Together, Kristen and Sandy developed a plan to “remediate” the material and prepare it for a second life.

With contributions by seven students and staff over the course of several months, the flooring was detached from a subfloor, hundreds of staples removed by hand, and the wood was milled, jointed, glued, milled, and jointed again.

Sandy was floored (*pardon the pun*) when he saw the finished product. “The milled wood looked like any normal batch of white and red oak that I would get from the lumber yard. It was simply my inexperience with reclaimed wood that led to my initial inability to see its potential,” he shares. An unrealized design from Sandy’s portfolio was selected for the project: a Scandinavian-style, three-legged kitchen table with intricate joinery and a modern aesthetic. After working out the details in Rhino, and prototyping a scale model in his workshop, he felt ready to begin.

Sandy notes, “There was no room for error here. We had just enough wood to make the table, and so I wanted to get it exactly right.”

From top: Salvaged flooring in storage; NBSS students begin their work on the raw material; the transformed flooring, nearly ready for Sandy; staples removed from the flooring; Sandy cuts the outline of the table top.

“There was no room for error here. We had just enough wood to make the table, and so I wanted to get it exactly right.”

SANDY WEYMOUTH

And right he did. The resulting piece is unrecognizable from its previous purpose, with its modern lines and pickled white finish. Notably, Sandy made sure to put the wood grain on display, not only as a reversal of that Celtics green, but also to connect the table to its natural origins. He relates, “My ultimate goal with Sawtimber is to move towards creating my own line of furniture that would include this Breakfast Table along with several other pieces I have already made.”

Kristen shares, “We set out to completely transform the donated flooring. What we found was a creative challenge—and proof that by applying the right skills, energy, and time, landfill-bound material can be converted into high-end, livable furniture. I’m so excited to be able to share Sandy’s work as part of our 2023 Exhibition: *Continual Craft*.”

Reflecting on both this project and his experience at NBSS, Sandy shares, “I am thrilled that Kristen invited me to work on this unique project. I enjoyed the challenge of not only designing a new piece of furniture, but also figuring out how to make it,” he says.

“Of course, I could not have taken this on without my training at North Bennet. While I have much more to learn on my woodworking journey, I know the School’s network of instructors and alumni will always be at hand, and I’ll always be a part of the NBSS community.”

ON DISPLAY
May 5 through
August 12, 2023



View the Breakfast Table along with 50+ other sustainably-minded works as part of North Bennet Street School’s 2023 Exhibition: *Continual Craft*.

The exhibition explores how NBSS students and graduates are contributing to a more lasting future by crafting objects with care, using materials considerately, and repairing the world around us.

The Breakfast Table was made possible through the donation of materials from Select Demolition, LLC, and the transformative work of NBSS community members:

- Alexander Begin CF ’23
- Derrick Howard CA ’22
- Jonathan Kenkel PC ’22
- Benjamin Kotis CF ’23
- Colin McKenna CF ’20, PC ’22
- Kristen Odle, NBSS Staff
- Sandy Weymouth CF ’18

Events + Exhibitions

2023

Sep 6	Career Training Programs: Fall class start
Sep 7	In the Making: The Exhibition (through 12/2)
Sep 9	Community Education: Fall term begins
Sep 14	In the Making: Locksmithing & Facilities
Oct 12	In the Making: Peoples’ Inclusive Welding
Oct 24	B/A/D Talks: Builders, Architects, Designers
Nov 16	In the Making: Thinking with Things
Dec 1 & 2	2023 Open House & Winter Market
Dec 7	In the Making: Boston’s North End
Dec 18	Winter break (through 1/1)

2024

Jan 22	Career Training Programs: Spring class start
Jan 25	In the Making: The Sloyd Experience
Jan 29	Community Education: Winter/Spring term begins
Feb 22	Founder’s Day
May 9	Boston Design Week Tour
May 10	2024 Exhibition (through 8/9)
May 31	2024 Commencement for Career Training Programs
Jun 3	Community Education: Summer term begins



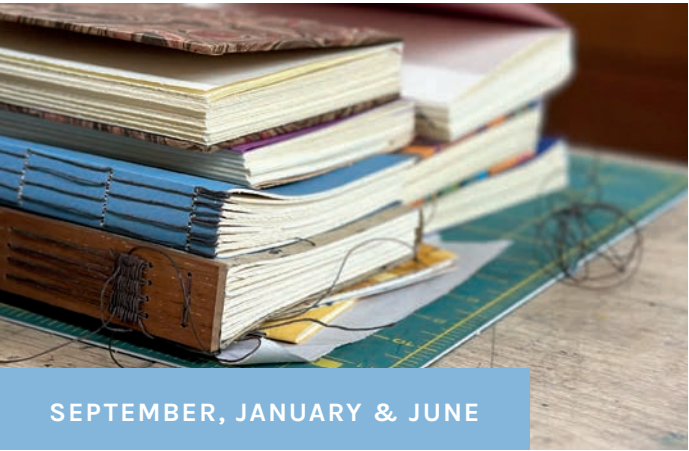
SEPTEMBER & JANUARY

Career Training Programs: Class start dates

All nine of our full-time, professional programs start in September, with four having an additional class start in late January.

Want an early decision? We have a priority application deadline of 2/1 for the fall start, with decisions by 3/1. Applications outside of this time frame are accepted on a rolling basis.

View nbss.edu/admissions for details.



SEPTEMBER, JANUARY & JUNE

Community Education: Terms begin, classes ongoing

Our short classes for beginners through professionals run all year long, with new terms beginning in September, January, and June. Learn more about our current offerings at nbss.edu/ce.



SEPTEMBER 7 — DECEMBER 2

In the Making: The Exhibition

An insider’s view of the lives and work of those who practice and appreciate craft in all its forms, *In the Making* has hosted interviews with over 50 individuals and groups from around the world in the last three years. The inspiring series kicks off a new season with an exhibition that reflects on the diverse voices, fields, and perspectives featured by the program to date. Curatorial support by The Decorative Arts Trust. nbss.edu/itm

Open House & Winter Market

Our annual Open House offers a behind-the-scenes look at America’s first trade school. Explore nine career training programs, discover dozens of community classes, tour our expansive facility, connect with students and faculty, and more! nbss.edu/openhouse

As part of Open House, join us for the second edition of our artisan holiday market, featuring work by NBSS community members, refreshments, and a festive spirit too. nbss.edu/wintermarket



DECEMBER 1 & 2

More to come! View a full, up-to-date listing of School activities at nbss.edu/calendar

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2023 FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Open House

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 craftspeople, enjoy live demonstrations, explore our building, shop our artisan market, and more!

nbss.edu/openhouse

FRIDAY +
SATURDAY
December
1-2

