

After a period of intense activity that culminated in twelve weeks of nearly round-the-clock construction at the new North Street facility this summer, we are here. The excitement level is high and the newly energized school community looks forward to welcoming Benchmarks

a unique collaboration

Four Centuries of Massachusetts Furniture unites North Bennet Street School and ten additional institutions in an unprecedented partnership to celebrate furniture-making. Over the past 400 years, no state has had a greater impact on the craft of furniture making. The products of Massachusetts workmen number in the tens of millions and include some of the finest furniture made in America, from lavishly carved oak chests of the 17th century to the inventive studio designs of today. It is a legacy worthy of celebration.

Between February 2012 and March 2014, over 500 students from 15 schools in Massachusetts participated in the program.

New faculty join NBSS

Teaching at NBSS is a coveted role reserved for individuals who show mastery in their craft and the patience and dedication necessary to be a good teacher. North Bennet Street School is pleased to welcome three new faculty members to the full-time programs this year.

After completing the jewelry making and repair program at NBSS in 2002, **ann cahoon** became a principal goldsmith and designer with Flying Marquis Studio in Leominster, Massachusetts working on one-of-a-kind and limited production jewelry. She was a finalist in the gold and platinum category of the 2010 Saul Bell Awards. In addition to design and fabrication, Ann writes and lectures for the Manufacturing Jewelers and Suppliers of America (MJSA). She is the technical co-editor of the MJSA book "Secret Shop Weapons" and is featured in a forthcoming instructional DVD produced by Lapidary Journal. Ann joins Rosemary Trainor as a part-time instructor in the jewelry making and repair program.

brian vogt graduated from the North Bennet Street School preservation carpentry program in 1994. After graduation, he refined his skills at some of Boston's finest cabinetry and architectural millwork shops. In 1998, Brian founded VOGT & Company, a residential construction company specializing in custom woodworking, trim carpentry, renovations and historic preservation. Before becoming the lead instructor in the NBSS carpentry program, Brian taught wood shops in the NBSS continuing education program.

gretchen wilkinson graduated from the North Bennet Street School jewelry making and repair program in 1996. After graduating, she worked at Tiffany and Co. as an apprentice engraver before moving to Arizona and then North Carolina where she continued to develop her skills working as a bench jeweler and managing her own engraving business. She recently moved back to Boston and brings her engraving and bench jewelry skills as a part-time instructor in the jewelry making and repair program. [i](#)

“Creative Chaos” was the first title proposed for this issue of Benchmarks because it seemed like an apt description of what everyone at school was going through in August during the transition from a construction site occupied by over 100 workers each day to a school filled with 200 students, faculty and staff. The title was abandoned in favor of the more positive “We Are Here”, because we are here in the new building, and that’s what is important, but it’s worth remembering the process as well, and while “Creative Chaos” is a catchy headline, there is also truth to it.

We have accomplished an enormous amount in the past 20 months, from January, 2012, when the city advertised for developers for two surplus buildings on North Street, to August 2013, when BOND, our construction managers, began to wrap up their work, turn over the buildings and we opened the new school, successfully concluding a project that was characterized by reacting to a dizzying amount of incoming information over an extremely short period of time. The process often seemed like an act of faith on everyone’s part, but it was the result of

in praise of bill

Designing and constructing any building project is a team effort. One key member of the team during the construction phase is the Owner's Representative, also known as the 'Clerk of the Works'. The role of the Clerk is to represent the interests of the owner to ensure that the quality of both materials and workmanship reflect the design intent and the requirements of the architectural and engineering drawings. The success of our building project would

Many colleges and universities, and increasingly high schools, have a community service requirement for graduation. The experience students' gain from working in the community can be eye-opening and extremely rewarding.

North Bennet Street School does not have a community service requirement per se. What NBSS does have is the opportunity for students in several programs to work in the community during their enrollment. Piano technology students tune pianos in Boston Public Schools, bookbinding students intern at the Boston Public Library and cabinet and furniture making students make reproduction furniture for Massachusetts museums. More than other programs, students in the preservation carpentry program often work on projects with Boston-area non-profit organizations. These projects engage the entire class for months or engage one or two students for their final project. When asked about their time at NBSS, these community-focused activities are often noted as valuable and memorable opportunities. Three recent examples of NBSS student work enhancing community resources are highlighted here.

NEW DOORS FOR A LANDMARK

Over the years, when the Paul Revere Memorial Association needed a hand with a unique or challenging carpentry or locksmithing project, they have reached out to NBSS, their North End neighbor.

In the city

When North Bennet Street School was founded in 1881, service to the citizens of Boston was at the heart of its mission. Social service and training programs evolved over the school's 132 years to meet changing demographics and societal needs. In the 1980s and 90s, as the school developed the current professional training programs in traditional skills, attention to the immediate North End community and surrounding Boston neighborhoods waned.

While teaching traditional skills in eight professional disciplines and assisting graduates as they embark on new careers continue to be at the heart of NBSS, the school began, over the past several years, to turn its attention to reconnecting with the North End neighborhood and Boston communities. Now, with all of our programs under one roof at 150 North Street, the school is focusing on building and enhancing these relationships. These efforts are linked to the core mission of traditional skills, careers and craftsmanship and are currently focused in two distinct but related initiatives—workforce development and middle-school woodworking programs.

The workforce development initiative seeks to enroll more young Bostonians from underserved neighborhoods in the nine-month locksmithing and carpentry training programs and working with them as they embark on careers serving their communities. Lana Jackson, the NBSS diversity counselor, is making connections with community groups and Boston schools as part of this effort. Grants from local foundations provide administrative and scholarship support.

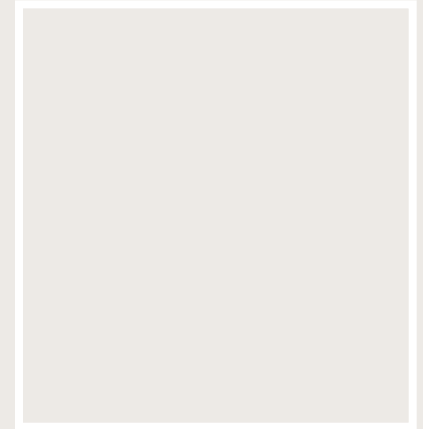
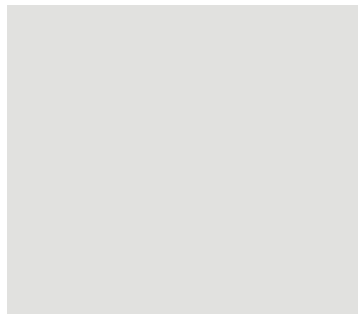
The middle-school woodworking program, now in its fourth year, provides hand-skills training for 6th-, 7th- and 8th-grade students. Begun in partnership with the John Eliot K-8 School—a North End public school—the program is expanding this year to include students from Saint John School, a Catholic elementary school in the North End and the Clarence Edwards Middle School, a public school in Charlestown. Students from all three schools come to the new NBSS facility on North Street for woodworking instruction. [i](#)

Grant support for career training

The school is grateful for a recent grant from the BNY Mellon Charitable Giving Program through the generosity of the Peter E. Strauss Trust to support scholarships for veterans and low-income students in the locksmithing and carpentry programs. The recruitment, training and

placement of individuals from under-served communities and veterans in the Boston area is part of the school's ongoing commitment to create a diverse and inclusive school and be a strong workforce development partner in the Boston area. [i](#)

Locksmithing student Eddy Dacius.



a profile of determination

Diversity counselor Lana Jackson met Keimody Crockett during her second week at NBSS at his second carpentry information session. His grandfather, a retired carpenter and surrogate father, was there to support his inquiry and eventual application. Keimody was also present when Lana gave a presentation at his school, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School—a Boston public school—in early December. He applied to NBSS the next day and was accepted in April 2012.

When Keimody received his acceptance letter and learned that he would receive the President's Scholarship Award—a full-tuition scholarship, his mother called a "family meeting." She gathered his grandfather and godfather (who has a construction business) and Keimody to talk about how everyone would work together to help Keimody through the NBSS program.

The President's Scholarship Award was established by North Bennet Street School in partnership with the City of Boston to award one full-tuition scholarship for the express purpose of assisting a local resident in attending a full-time NBSS program.



Roman Barnas

30 years of violin making

The NBSS violin making and repair program, started in 1983, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. The program was started at a time when the school was transitioning from providing neighborhood services to focusing on traditional skills training.

Then director Tim Williams and associate director Walter McDonald were researching programs and felt that violin making was a good fit. Ray Melanson, who had recently completed violin making training in Salt Lake City, wrote the three-year curriculum and taught for the first four years. In the spring of 1987, he was joined by Marilyn Wallin who taught part time. Marilyn was the lead instructor from September 1987 – May 1998. She was assisted by Arthur Toman (one day/week in 1992 – 1994), Rodger Perrin (two days/week in 1996 – 1998), Kevin Kelly (two days/week in 1994 – 1996) and Todd Goldenberg (two days/week in 1996 – 1998). In 1998 Kevin Kelly returned as the full-time instructor until 2001. Thomas Hummel was the lead instructor until Roman Barnas assumed the role in 2004.

The first four graduates were honored at graduation in June 1986 and, since then, more than 70 others have joined the distinctive community of professional luthiers and are scattered in 21 U.S. states.

The program is currently led by Roman Barnas. Roman was born in Poland and began making violins when he was fourteen. He attended the Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznan, Poland and studied music and violin making. He came to the United States in 1996 to work and to continue studying violin making and violin restoration. He became head of the NBSS violin department in 2004. In addition to teaching, Roman does acoustic research with colleagues from local universities and continues to make instruments. ¹



distinguished craftsmanship

A new award in the violin making and repair program recognizes students whose instruments exhibit superior craftsmanship.

To graduate from the three-year violin making and repair program, students present their final two instruments to be reviewed and evaluated by a panel of expert instrument makers. It is during this evaluation process that individuals are chosen to receive the award.

The award was established in 2011. During the first review after the award was established, Justin Hess, VM 1 was selected to receive the award. A review in July 2013, resulted in two additional awards to Garrett Becker, VM 13 and Cedar Stainstreet, VM 11.

Award winners receive a certificate, a \$1,000 award and their name engraved on a plaque in the violin department. Justin was recognized for his award during the 2013 graduation ceremony. Garrett and Cedar will be recognized at the next graduation ceremony in June 2014.

The new facility includes dedicated space for each of the eight full-time programs, dedicated space for workshops and short courses and a two-level gallery/lecture/meeting space.

The continuing education spaces include a new woodworking machine room and two woodworking bench rooms, dedicated benches in the jewelry and bookbinding department, a new light-illed lathe room overlooking the Boston skyline and, for the



Scholarships and craftsmanship

The 14th Annual Evening of Traditional Craft occurred at a unique moment in history as the school prepared to move to a new home on North Street and complete a \$15 million Under One Roof capital campaign. The amazing craftsmanship on display, camaraderie and celebration of the new facility made it a night to remember.

The hard work and commitment of the event committee and the generosity of sponsors and supporters made the May 14 event at Two International Place an overwhelming financial success—more than 470 guests attended and raised the highest fundraising total in the event's history. Proceeds from the event are used for scholarships.

To make sure you receive an invitation to the next event or for questions about sponsorship opportunities, contact Christine Jankowski at cjankowski@nbss.edu. [i](#)

Student & alumni exhibit

The Student & Alumni Exhibit associated with the Annual Evening of Traditional Craft and was on view for two weeks in mid-May at Two International Place. The exhibit included the exquisite craftsmanship of more than 100 students and alumni and was curated by Walter McDonald, former NBSS Associate Director. Thank you to all who participated! [i](#)



Annual fund donors go above and beyond

Through the generosity of loyal donors, the 2012–2013 Annual Fund exceeded its goal by \$45,000 for a total of just over \$416,000. This record-breaking total helps ensure the success of the school's transition to the North Street building.

And yet, there is still so much more to do! NBSS needs your continued support to sustain the school's day to day activities. Year to year, programs are taught, students learn and NBSS thrives—thanks to your annual fund donations.

Make your gift to the 2013–2014 Annual Fund at nbss.edu/giving.

bookbinding

[Alison Kuller, bb '99](#) sold her house in Camden ME and is moving to Santa Fe NM.

[Christina Thomas, bb '08](#)

was hired as the full-time assistant conservator at the Lee Library at Brigham Young University.

[Elizabeth Rideout, bb '08](#)

started a fellowship at Northeast Document Conservation Center at the end of June.

[William "Bill" Thomas,](#)

[Rebekah Lord Gardiner,](#)

[bb '93](#) exhibit "Interstices: Drawings, Painting and Sculpture" at the Weston MA Library.

Bookbinding graduate and former instructor

[Mark Andersson,](#)

[bb '92](#) was featured in Arizona

Daily Star.

An article titled "Saints Preserve Us: a conservator reflects on the influence of saints in the preservation of books," written by [Barbara Adams Hebard, bb '90](#), was published in the Italian and English versions of the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano and in the Boston College publication C21.

[Arini Esarey, bb '11](#) received a

Recognition of Excellence Award from Puget Sound Book Artists for a book in their annual exhibit.

She begins a new job as a paper conservation technician at Indiana University in October.

[Erin Fletcher, bb '12](#) was inter-

viewed on Bookbinding Now in May and bound a copy of Massachusetts Law Review for Chief Justice Ireland who wrote an article in the journal.

[Athena Moore, bb '10](#) wrote

that she has been a book conservator for the Northeast Document Conservation Center since 2011.

cabinet and furniture

Jewelry graduate [Cornelia](#)

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Sharon Scully Stetson graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2010. She majored in Fine Art with a concentration in hand-modeled porcelain. Recently, Sharon worked with the artist Sylvia Nicolas of New Hampshire on extensive stained glass projects for Providence College and Saint Anselm's College. She resides in Cape Ann and is thrilled to join the NBSS staff as Admissions Coordinator. [i](#)

