

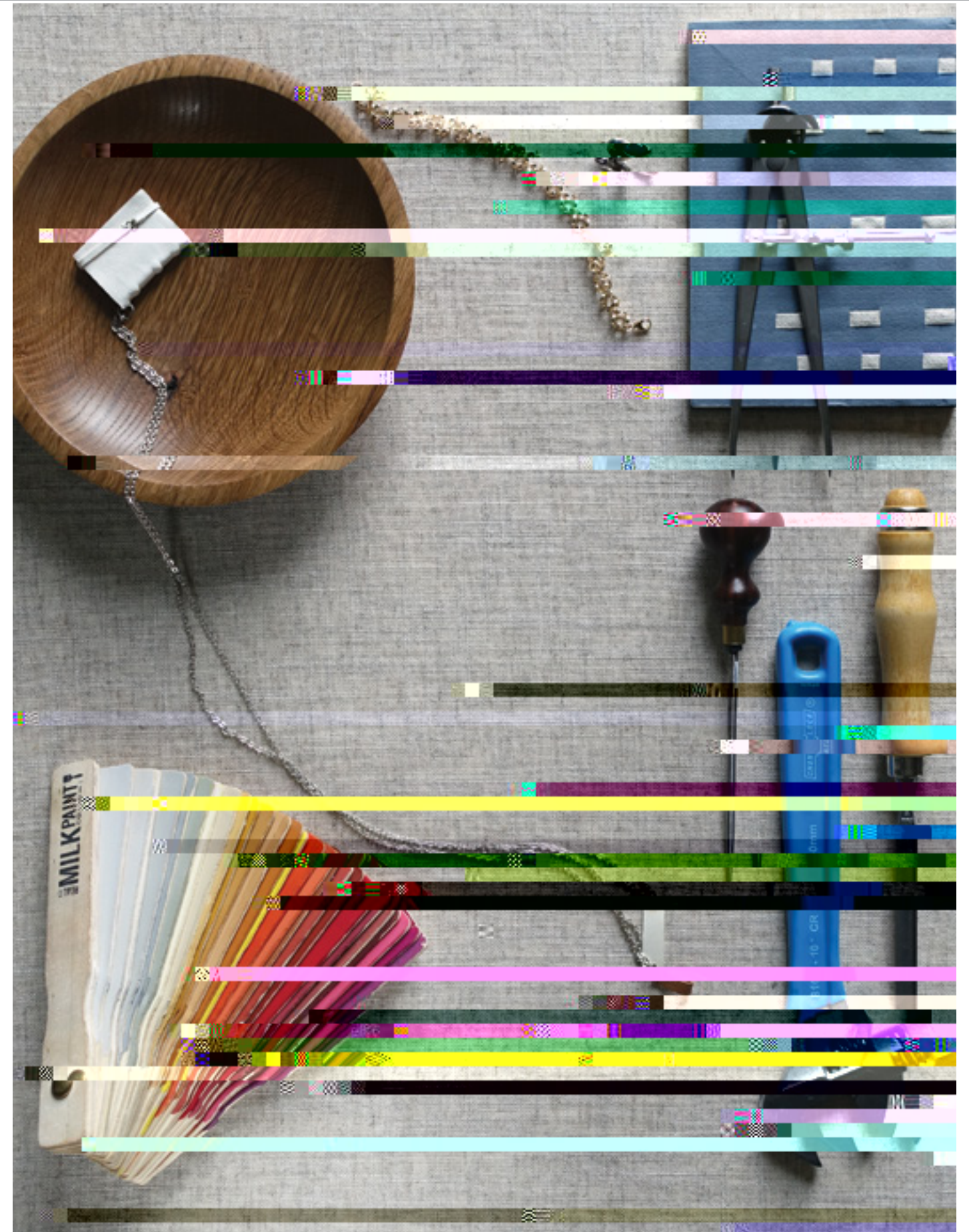
BENCHMARKS

THE MAGAZINE OF NORTH BENNET STREET SCHOOL WINTER 2017

WE'RE ONLY AS GOOD AS THE EQUIPMENT WE USE.
WE RECENTLY ASKED THE NBSS COMMUNITY:

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TOOL?

Two vertical lines defining a space for responses.



WITH MOST THINGS IN LIFE, you either pay with your time or your money. Say you want to build a box using 3/4 black walnut. You have three options: Buy boards milled to nominal thickness from a lumberyard (least time, most money); purchase rough-sawn 4/4 boards to mill yourself (more time, less money); or fell a walnut tree, have a sawyer cut it intoitches, wait years for the wood to dry and mill it to your nominal dimensions (least money, most time).

This time:money ratio came to mind recently when I was asked about my decision to attend North Bennet Street School (NBSS) as a [Cabinet & Furniture Making](#) student. I'd been aware of the School, established in the North End of Boston in 1881, since I began making furniture and seeking out woodworking wisdom—and as a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, I paid for the opportunity to attend with my time. After years spent serving in the military, I am fortunate to have earned education benefits that allow me to explore my woodworking passion. Living and training in Boston can be a financial challenge, but VA benefits allow students like myself to focus solely on studying.

Upon arrival, I was surprised to learn the School's current veteran attendance is [at its highest since the post-Vietnam era](#). As of this writing, one in five of the students is a veteran, and that number is expected to rise in coming years.

But why are so many veterans attracted to the craft? I can only surmise that, as craftsmen and craftswomen, we train in pursuit of that high we get from making something with our hands, stepping back and admiring it.

FRAME TO FINISH

BY R. SCOTT REEDY

IF THE SHERBORN-BASED SEQUOIA CUSTOM BUILDERS, INC.

is any indication, the NBSS tradition of alumni hiring students as interns and employees is alive and well.

The current team at Sequoia is comprised of five Carpentry alumni employed full-time as carpenters and assistant carpenters. Owner and operator Patrick O'Shaugnessy CA '06 believes hiring NBSS graduates just makes good sense.

"I don't feel that hiring alums is a way of giving back. I feel lucky as a business owner to be hiring formally trained tradesmen. The fundamentals that I learned in the classroom make them more adaptable and better able to continue learning in the field. What I look for in an employee is that they have the North Bennet mentality to love what you do."

Pat says that he developed that understanding himself during his time as a teacher.

"I taught at NBSS for five years (2009–2014). It is a special community. The skills I learned gave me the ability not only to make a living but to fulfill a passion. And when I was a new graduate, first working on my own, I missed

that shared passion, so going back to teach really re-inspired me in my craft as well as my commitment to pass along those incredibly valuable skills.

Since we're all NBSS graduates, we focus on staying true to the traditions of the School in bringing the craftsmanship to every project we take on." Now an assistant carpenter at Sequoia, Jayquan Richardson CA '16 began developing his own carpentry skills when he was just a young teenager.

"A business friend who owned a house and, when I was about 14, I helped him build a cabinet and do some small carpentry projects," recalls Jayquan. "He liked my work and recommended North Bennet Street School to me. When I arrived, I had no idea exactly what I was getting into, but I knew right away that it was what I wanted. I knew I could never work in an office. It would just be too boring. I like doing something different every day. That's what I like about hands-on carpentry," explains the 2015 graduate of Lowell High School.

"All the skills I have, I learned at NBSS, including patience. I also learned about resilience and a lot about teamwork, too." After completing the program, Jayquan set out to find employment. One of his first stops was an NBSS alumni event, where he met Pat.

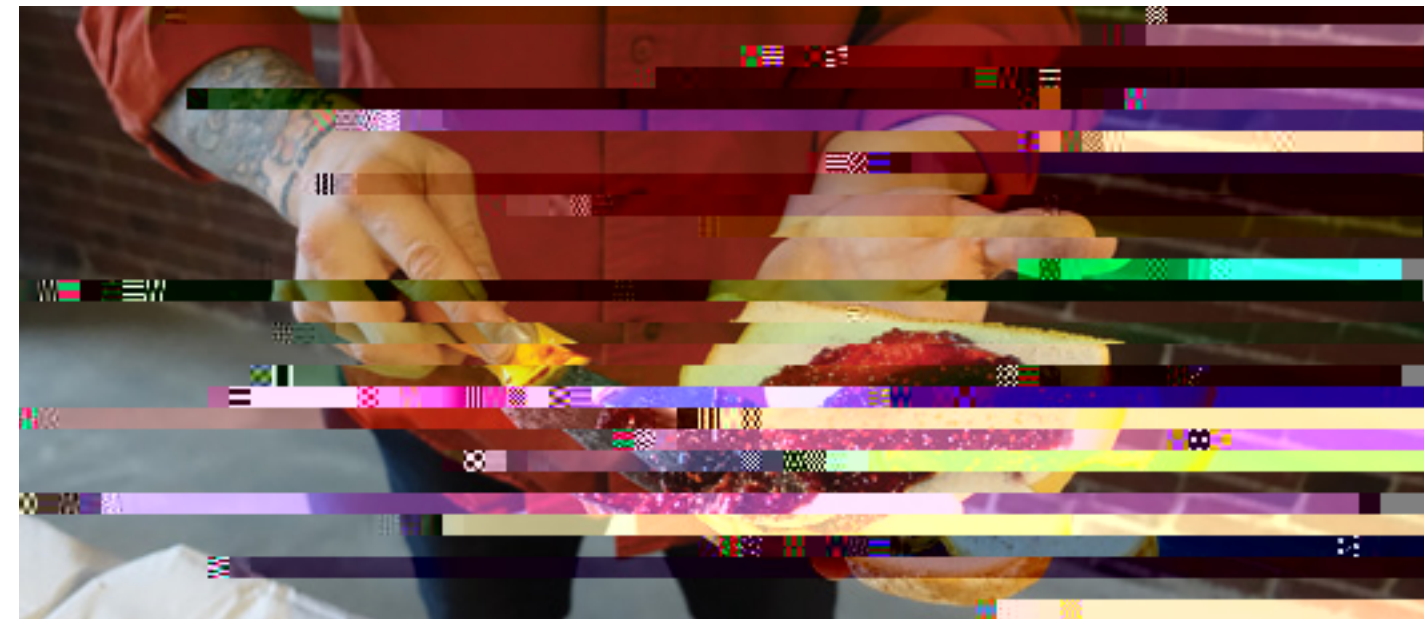
"Jayquan made a great impression. He was assertive in meeting me at an alumni function, and he was diligent in his follow-up," remembers Pat. "He was honest in his conversations and really knew what he was seeking for employment. He wanted to do an array of carpentry tasks from frame to finish. He wanted mentors, too, and fortunately we were able to offer him the right environment to cultivate his craft. It has been great to see him excel on our team."

Grateful for the opportunity to do things the NBSS way and happy to have earned Pat's respect, Jayquan is also pleased with the support the boss shows the entire team.

"Pat wants us to be set up for success, too, so if a tool is broken he wants to be told so he can repair or replace it. He always makes sure we have a uniform. I have maybe 30 different Sequoia shirts – long sleeve, short sleeve, some with and some without collars. If you get something on a shirt and it doesn't come out, Pat gets you a new one."

Pat's attention to detail and professionalism are traits shared by Jayquan, who plans one day to open his own carpentry business.

"I approach all my work with determination," he says. "I want to get it done efficiently and correctly."



PEANUT BUTTER JELLY TIME

BY KEVIN DERRICK

IT'S THURSDAY AT LUNCHTIME, and North Bennet Street School students crowd both sides of three long folding tables in the expansive Windgate Gallery. They've been summoned to the space over the School's loudspeaker just moments ago, and before them are a mouth-watering array of fixings:

Bananas, oranges, and apples. White and whole breads. Peanut butters of the creamy, crunchy, and "natural" varieties. Jams, jellies, and preserves. Nutella and Flu, for those with a sweet(er) tooth. The students may have entirely different backgrounds, hand skills, and career goals. But when it comes to lunch, everyone agrees PB&J Thursdays are hard to beat.

"Chunky peanut butter with raspberry preserves is the best combo," Kate Levy BB '17 is quick to point out, as she draws the sweet spread across a slice of bread. A friend chimes in, "Six parts peanut butter to one part jam. Eat, and follow up with second sandwich." A winning formula.

"My go-to is an open face PB & Flu," said Tess Wood PT '17, in between bites. "I always kick the North End" cites Brooke Esplin VM '19. "It's so much better than an expensive lunch in myself afterwards because I'm gluten free... but it's worth it."

National PB&J Day is fast approaching on Sunday, April 2, and ideas on how best to celebrate it are already circulating. Suggestions range from adding crackers to the fixings, to a grill in for Elvis-styled sandwiches (peanut butter and banana, toasted). "It's really just a way to help students from having to go outside in the weather," Provost Claire Friesman CF '96 shares. "It turned out to be wildly popular, so much so that we decided to make it a permanent event."

Though the festivities around that day may be anyone's guess, what's not in question is the future of PB&J Thursdays at NBSS. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the PB&J Thursdays were extended through Mayenormously popular weekly favorite will be fully funded, from fresh fruit and breads to a broader selection of a favorite, Teddie All Natural Peanut Butter. Wholesome foods means happier, harder-working students, after all.

As for one of the less healthy options, Brendan Sullivan CF '18 exclaims, "Midwesterners already took a vote... no Flu! What is that stu anyway?" A winning formula.

Board Updates

MELBA ABREU leads fiscal and administrative operations at Jobs for the Future. She previously served as both a Senior Financial Officer at Harvard University and Director of Finance and Technology at Harvard's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies. Melba received her degree in accounting and finance at the Instituto de Economia in Matanzas, Cuba, and has completed extensive coursework in computer science, information technology, and financial management at Harvard University.

BRAD CALLOWAY is an Executive Vice President and Tax Credits Manager at First NBC Bank. Through this position, he leads the tax credit programs, which includes origination and structuring investments in new markets, and historic and low-income housing tax credits. Brad completed a Bachelor of Professional Accountancy degree from Mississippi State University and completed the CPA certification process in Mississippi.

CHARLES KLINE CFP® is a Partner and Managing Director of Century Capital Partners and member of the Board of Management at Century Capital Management a public and private equity funds management business. In addition to his role on the NBSS Board, Charlie serves on the boards of directors of Digital Risk, LLC; Integro, Ltd., Thomco Enterprises, Torrent Technologies and Advisors Excel. A proud

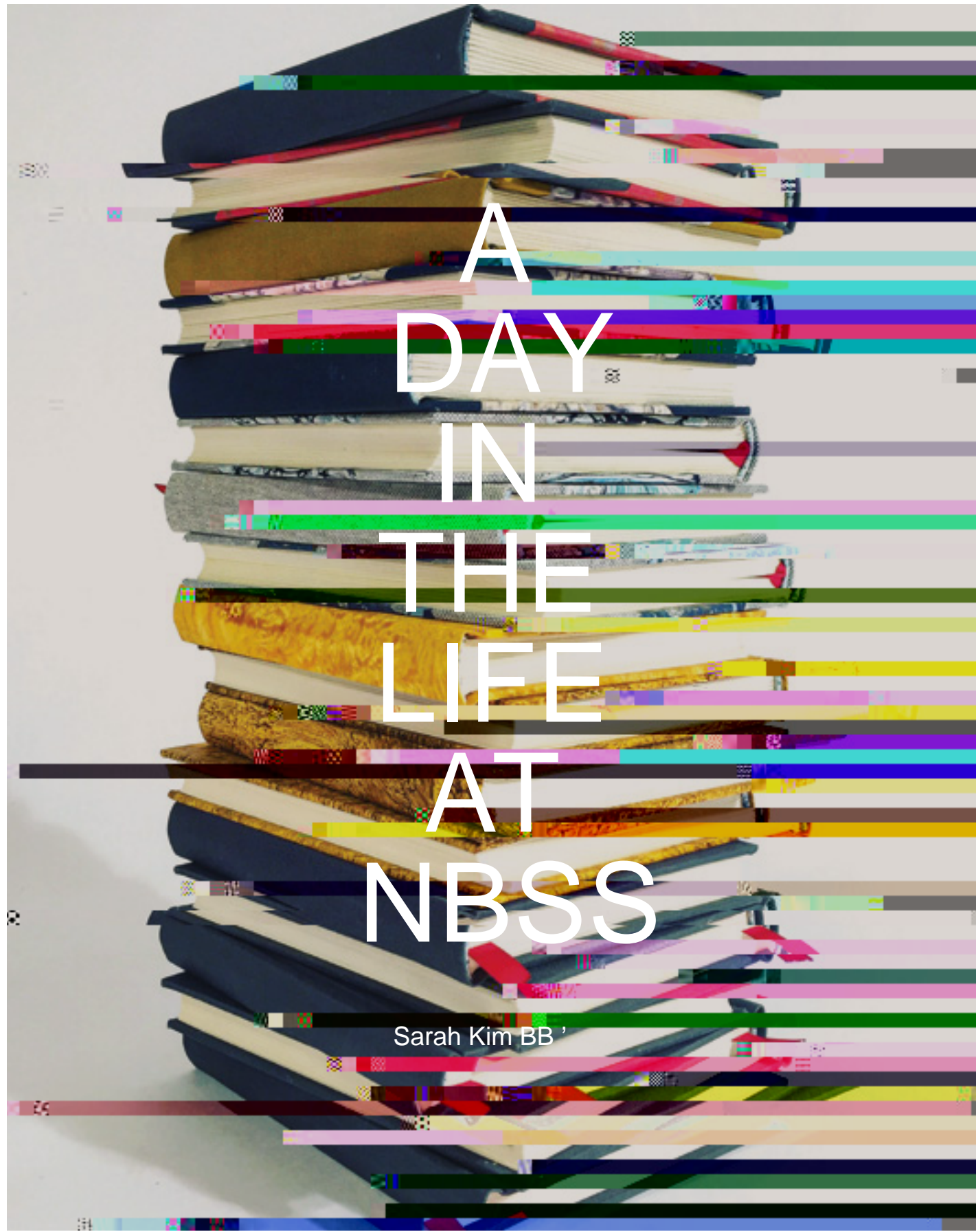


Photo of all the books I've made so far. What do you think?



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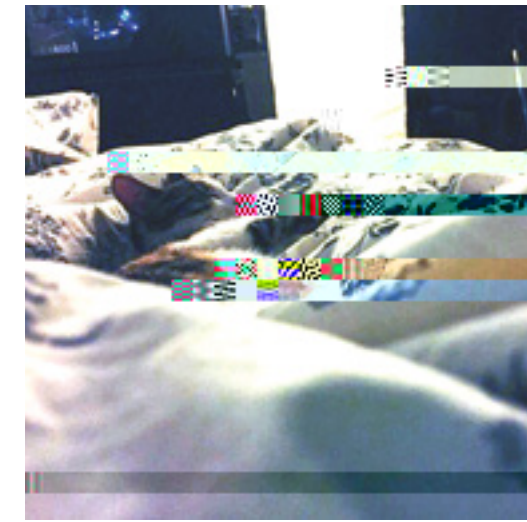
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Bookbinding student Sarah Kim BB '18 recently started classes at NBSS this past fall. Moving here from Syracuse, NY took some adjusting, but she's loving her new home and all that Boston has to offer. Here Sarah shares a typical day in her life, from morning commute and bench work to a few of her favorite things.

Follow Sarah on Instagram @s.kimplicity

- a Good morning, Boston! I can't believe this my view every day when I get on the train.
- b Getting to work. I'm the happiest when I'm here.
- c Time to round and back this book.
- d Bricco's, a sandwich goldmine tucked away in a hidden Boston alley.
- e Closing shift at Tatte. I LOVE that my job allows me the opportunity to learn more about different crafts. First, #coffee and now #bread.
- f Nothing like coming home to bed at the end of a busy day.

For more great photos of Boston and the North End, visit us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

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