ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

INTRODUCTION

We're excited to share the League of NH Craftsmen's Annual Report—a vibrant snapshot of a dynamic year filled with creativity, growth, and progress. This comprehensive report highlights our accomplishments, financial performance, and the impactful work we've done to support and celebrate fine craft across New Hampshire. Told through the voices of our dedicated leaders and partners, this summary reflects a year of meaningful collaboration and bold steps forward. As we look back with pride and ahead with purpose, we remain inspired by our mission and energized for what's to come.

THE ORGANIZATION

MISSION

The mission of the League of NH Craftsmen Is to advance, cultivate and champion excellence in fine craft. We pursue that mission through educational programming, leadership initiatives, marketplace strategies and support services.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ZACHARY JONAS, CHAIR
BEVERLY WOLF, VICE CHAIR
GRAYSON MEAD SHEPHARD, TREASURER
ANDY HAMPTON, EVENTS CHAIR
CHRIS ARCHER, STANDARDS CHAIR
HETHRE LARIVEE, MEMBER AT LARGE

ADMINISTRATION

KATE SAUNDERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SARAH NYHAN, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MOLLY HARPER, ADMINISTRATIVE COOR. STANDARDS & OPERATIONS
SARA PETIPAS, MEMBERSHIP & RETAIL DATA MANAGEMENT
ALICIA BERGERON, COMMUNICATIONS & GRAPHIC DESIGN ASSOCIATE
LISA ALMEIDA, EDUCATION COORDINATOR
KARINA JONAS, EVENT MANAGER

A Message from the Board Chair

It is no stretch to say that 2024 was an eventful year for the League! Together we celebrated a successful 91st Annual Craftsmen's Fair. We saw changes in leadership both in the boardroom and at HQ as I stepped into the role of Chair and Kate Saunders became our new Executive Director. We saw the League's assumption of the Concord gallery, the award-winning launch of 'A Handmade Life,' and broad, constructive updates to the League's internal policies, Bylaws, and Strategic Plan.

As I look forward to the year ahead, I see hope and opportunity. With Kate in the Executive Director's office the team at HQ is stronger than ever, and we are all working to foster a culture of support and collaboration with our diverse and dedicated membership.

It is also true that 2025 will have its challenges; in New Hampshire and around the nation, nonprofit organizations are working to navigate shifting state and federal support. In light of these changes the League will rely on its community more than ever. Financial contributions are always welcome, but the importance of participation, volunteerism, and community activism should never be underestimated. The League doesn't function without *you*.

It is best to embrace change, and the League is fortunate to begin this year from a position of strength and stability. We look forward to an outstanding year ahead, and beyond, as we begin to lay plans for our centennial celebration in the not-too-distant future!

Thank you all for making this amazing group what it is, and for helping to shape our community and the culture of craft we all value so dearly.

Sincerely,

Zack Jonas
Chair, Board of Directors

A YEAR OF FIRSTS!

1ST AWARD WINNING FILM MADE IN NH!

A HANDMADE LIFE

This film won the Filmmaker of the Year award in the NH Film festival and was featured on NH PBS.

1ST MAJOR RENOVATION OF CONCORD GALLERY IN 52 YEARS!

CONCORD GALLERY

This site in our Capital features a special tribute to the legacy of the League's history.

1ST CRAFT APPRENTICE PROGRAM EXHIBITION AT HQ!

THE LEGACY OF THE LEAGUE

The craft apprentice program is in partnership with the Maine Crafts Assoc.

1ST POP UP SALES EVENT!

NEW IDEAS FOR LEAGUE SALES

As we think about creative sales opportunities the team created a special 'Pop Up' sales event in Concord at HQ.

A Message from the Executive Director

To the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen Board of Directors and Miriam Carter — I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your exceptional leadership during this time of transition. I am incredibly humbled and honored to serve alongside such a remarkable group of individuals. Each of you brings unique skills, passion, and a deep commitment to the League and the craftsmen we serve. Without your wisdom, vision, and steady guidance, we would not be so well positioned for the exciting opportunities ahead.

I am equally proud of the outstanding team at headquarters — a dedicated group of professionals who work tirelessly with the well-being of our craftsmen, our community, and the future of craft in both their minds and hearts.

This year, we achieved meaningful milestones together. We updated our strategic plan, infusing new momentum, vision, and energy into the organization, while also refining our governance by establishing bylaws, committee charters, and supporting documents that bring clarity to roles, responsibilities, and future direction.

This fall was especially meaningful as we gathered to celebrate 'A Handmade Life', a moving film capturing our League's legacy through the voices of our members, and unveiled the beautifully renovated Concord retail gallery — a space that bridges our rich history with the future of craft. Additionally, our advocacy work at the state level continues to grow, supporting vital partners like the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, and strengthening our leadership role in championing arts and crafts throughout New Hampshire. The renewed energy and engagement from our community is both inspiring and promising for what's to come.

Sincerely,

Kate Saunders
Executive Director

ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

60 YEARS AT MT SUNAPEE

OVER $85,000 IN GRANTS

OVER 20,000 HOURS FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS!

RECORD BREAKING ANNUAL FUND OVER 40K!

1.5 MILLION IMPRESSIONS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

NEARLY 2M IN SALES AT THE GALLERIES

89K VISITORS VIA FACEBOOK

100 CRAFTSMEN DONATED TO THE FAIR RAFFLE

A Message About Miriam Carter's Leadership

Miriam Carter's tenure as Executive Director of the League of NH Craftsmen was marked by strategic leadership and transformative impact. She restructured operations, clarified staff roles, and strengthened relationships between Headquarters and League gallery managers. Her steady guidance through the COVID-19 pandemic ensured organizational stability during a difficult time for so many nonprofits.

Miriam built meaningful partnerships with local and state officials and collaborated with the Maine Crafts Association on the Craft Apprentice Program. She co-wrote grants to support the League, which funded projects like the educational video series Craft Stories, which led to the creation of 'A Handmade Life'. She also oversaw the renovation of the Exhibition and Museum space, improving lighting and presentation.

Miriam enhanced the League's Annual Fair through thoughtful improvements—relocating The Shop at the Fair, upgrading the Fair Guide, and introducing the Invited Guest program. Miriam also set a high standard for our jury process. She fostered the enhancement of professionalization of the standards process and juror training.

Over eight years, Miriam delivered consistent budget surpluses and significantly strengthened the League's financial position, furthering the League's capacity to honor its mission and a vision of a strong future for its membership.

Throughout the years, strong leadership and our shared commitment to one another have driven the success of our organization—each of us playing a vital role in supporting and uplifting the team—and we are deeply grateful to all who serve the League with dedication and heart.

Financial Statement

Treasurer Report
Grayson Shephard

Finance Committee Board Summary League of New Hampshire Craftsmen

The Finance Committee is pleased to report that, following last year's highly successful audit — which concluded with zero exemptions or errors — the League's financial systems remain in excellent care. We continue to value our strong partnership with Supporting Strategies and the dedicated administrative team overseeing the League's financial operations. Even in a year of transition and change, our systems have remained stable and well-managed.

Throughout the year, the Finance Committee met monthly to monitor financial activity, providing quarterly updates to the full Board. As anticipated, we expect to confirm a deficit for the fiscal year, primarily due to the acquisition of the Concord gallery and leadership changes, both of which were extraordinary events. Our analysis indicates that without these two significant events, the League would have ended the year with a surplus.

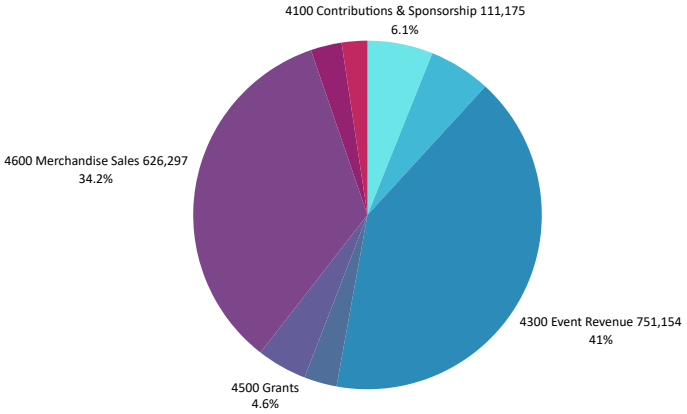
Looking forward, we maintain a strong commitment to refining our financial systems to improve efficiency and ensure the prompt and accurate distribution of resources — particularly in remitting payments back to our artists on a monthly basis, including during the Annual Fair. The Committee reviewed three budget scenarios and endorsed a conservative plan that accounts for anticipated shifts in state grant funding, projecting a controlled $50,000 deficit for next year.

A detailed summary of our financial position, including key data points on revenues, expenditures, and year-end results, is provided for your review.

League of NH Craftsmen
Statement of Activities
Unaudited
April 2024 - March 2025

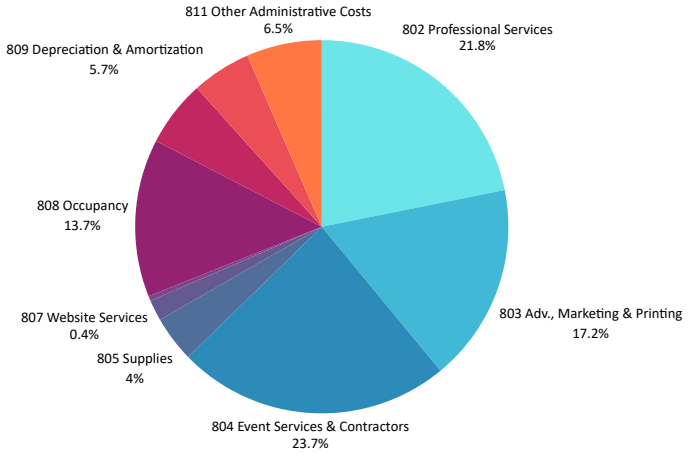
Income

4100 Contributions & Sponsorship	111,175
4200 Dues & Membership	105,055
4300 Event Revenue	751,154
4400 Gallery Partnership Revenue	55,601
4500 Grants	85,077
4600 Merchandise Sales	626,297
4800 Other Income	52,758
4802 Endowment Draw	43,552
Total Income	$ 1,830,669
Cost of Goods Sold	$481,667
Gross Profit	$ 1,349,002



Expenses

801 Payroll and Benefits	529,422
802 Professional Services	192,519
803 Adv., Marketing & Printing	151,376
804 Event Services & Contractors	208,690
805 Supplies	35,168
806 Travel & Meals	15,870
807 Website Services	3,812
808 Occupancy	120,458
809 Depreciation & Amortization	50,436
810 Award, Grant & Education	45,332
811 Other Administrative Costs	57,502
Total Expenses	$1,410,584
Net Operating Income	$(61,582)



The extraordinary circumstances of the acquisition of the Concord Gallery, transitional costs due to the change in Leadership and the Hooksett fire resulted in a budget deficit this year. Upon analysis, if these three events did not occur this year, the League would be reporting an anticipated surplus of our budget of approx. 65-67k.

Endowment Update

The purpose of an endowment for the League of NH Craftsmen is to strategically ensure long-term financial sustainability, support innovation, and protect the organization's ability to fulfill its mission regardless of economic fluctuations.

The League's current market value of the endowment is

$927,784.81 as of April 30, 2024.

Strategic Purposes of the Endowment:
Preserve the League's Legacy: Provide permanent support for preserving and advancing traditional and contemporary craft.

Fund Strategic Initiatives:
Support future-focused programs, outreach, or innovation that may not be possible through annual operating funds.

Stabilize Operations:
Provide a financial cushion during lean years or economic downturns, reducing dependence on volatile income streams.

Encourage Donor Confidence:
Signal fiscal responsibility and long-term planning, making it easier to attract major gifts and planned giving.

Empower Leadership:
Give future leaders flexibility and resources to act on opportunities aligned with the League's mission.

Annual Fund

We are thrilled to share that this year's Annual Fund campaign achieved a **record-breaking 12% increase** over last year's numbers— the largest jump in our history! This incredible growth has a direct and lasting impact on our membership, as well as the events and engagement activities we are able to offer our community.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who contributed, and a special thanks to our Donor Gift Challenge participants. Your generosity and enthusiasm played a pivotal role in making this milestone possible.

Together, we're building something truly extraordinary, and we couldn't have done it without you.

2025 total: $40,490.63
2024 total: $36,129.39

Grant $ received and distributed

We received **over $85,000** in grants to support our impact on travel and tourism, our legacy of demonstration and traditional craft, and support for enhancing programs to promote the future of craft in New Hampshire. This support was vital to the marketing efforts for the Annual Fair marketing and promotion, the funding for the Fair demonstrations and the support needed to promote and run educational opportunities available through the League's leadership.

We are honored to have received grants from:

NH Joint Promotional Program (JPP)

NH State Council for the Arts: Public Value Partnerships Grant

NH State Council for the Arts: Dept of Natural and Cultural Resources

Norman and Gale Hochgraf Charitable Foundation

NH Charitable Foundation

Over the year ahead we look forward to supporting our partners and enhancing educational programming throughout NH. This year's educational grant recipients are ...

NH Potters Guild
The New Hampshire Potters Guild (NHPG) and the League will be funding a visiting artist at their newly constructed wood kiln during the New England Wood Firing Conference. This initiative will provide an invaluable educational opportunity for local ceramic artists, students, and the broader community to engage with a recognized ceramic artist.

League Gallery - North Conway
Our support will help Karissa Masse manage and maintain the North Conway gallery's pottery studio and improve their flexibility to organize and schedule classes.

League Gallery - Meredith
With support from the League, Nancy Rowley will upgrade her gallery's equipment for classes on jewelry, metalwork, and stained glass.

Sanborn Mills Farm
A historic working farm and craft education center, Sanborn Mills Farm has embarked on a project to restore and transform the second floor of its 1850s horse barn into a fully functional tin smithing studio.

Demonstrations at the Annual Fair
Demonstrations by our craftsmen are an outstanding way to engage with our community in support of the League's educational mission.

New Juried Members & Standards Committee Update

Standards Report
Chris Archer & Molly Harper

The Standards Committee is pleased to announce that 26 new craftsmen were accepted into the League following two seasons of jury sessions in October 2024 and March 2025. Additionally, 15 craftsmen were conditionally accepted (pending product reviews), 18 were deferred, and 4 juried members added new media to their juried repertoire. Jury sessions were conducted for over 60 applicants plus 8 critiques.

Fully accepted members represent work in clay (4), fiber (8 - includes felting, knitting, punch needle, rug-braiding, stitchery & surface design, weaving), knifemaking (1), metal (1), metal jewelry (4), non-metal jewelry (2), photography (4), printmaking (1), and wood (2). View the newly accepted members from 2024 & 2025 on our website.

In May, the Standards Committee hosted juror training which onboarded 8 new jurors in 8 different medias. We look forward to expanding our juror pool in the future, and extend our thanks to all jurors who participated in the Standards Program this year. If you would like to learn about how to become a juror, please reach out to Molly Harper, our Administrative Coordinator for Standards and Operations.

The Standards Committee meets monthly to review Media Guidelines for clarity and consistency and to ensure that Standards Policies and Procedures are current and comprehensive. We are excited to explore new approaches to communicating the Spirit of the Maker and League Standards with membership and sharing the Jury/Critique processes with prospective new applicants.

L to R, work of newly juried members Kristen Dettoni, Carol Lake and Michelle Hallee Wong

Annual Fair Update

The 91st Annual Craftsmen's Fair was our 60th consecutive event held at the Mount Sunapee Resort in Newbury, NH. This strong partnership has been nurtured through the years by the League, the New Hampshire State Parks department and the leaseholders at the mountain. What an accomplishment!

Financially, the 2024 Fair was a very successful event, despite ever-increasing production costs. The League's net income was $487,605 and our booth holders reported sales over $2.7M!

We used a multi-platform marketing campaign to draw in nearly 20,000 visitors, including printed pieces, traditional print ads, public relations work, radio, billboard ads and digital/social media ads. Our digital marketing tracked over 1.5 million impressions and led 89,000 visitors to our Facebook event and website.

Over $10K in excellence awards were provided to exhibition participants, and sales in our Art, Craft & Design and Sculpture Garden areas topped $100K – our highest ever. A team of League members as well as twelve guilds and associations provided engaging demonstrations to Fair visitors. These important partners support the League in sharing their love of craft with thousands of enthusiastic fairgoers.

Hundreds of youths participated in our scavenger hunt and other educational offerings. Our Kids Create and Pottery tents provided hundreds of children (and some adults!) with the opportunity to learn and express themselves creatively for no additional charge.

Nearly 100 artists donated work to our raffle, which allowed us to raise more than $12,000 to assist with Fair production and keep costs down for Fair participants. We were fortunate to have a cadre of volunteers assist at the Fair - a total of 112 people donated more than 800 hours during the event! We welcome (and rely on) this support from our community.

Event Committee Update
Looking Ahead

Andy Hampton &
Karina Jonas

The Event Committee is pleased to announce that the 2025 Fair is full! We have had an amazing response to our calls for participation in TSATF, AC&D and the SG. Our numbers are higher than they were last year. We will have some of our favorite food vendors returning and a couple of new ones joining us.

In addition to our wonderful juried members, we will be hosting our Guest Artist Program again this year. There were many applications but the available spaces were limited, so after the jury process we sent out invitations to those few who were accepted.

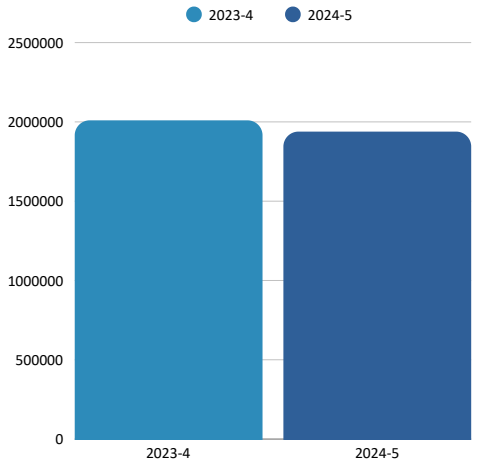
We have also been working on a new and improved Committee Nomination Process that has been approved by the Board. If you are interested in participating in the committee please reach out to Andy Hampton or Karina Jonas by emailing *eventmanager@nhcrafts.org*. Other items on our monthly agendas have been the Annual T-shirt and the Jury Process Survey.

We will have a confirmed t-shirt design this month and all the results of the survey will be reviewed at our next meeting. We meet monthly to make sure that there is valuable communication between the EC and HQ staff going forward into this year's Fair. It is a team effort!

Retail Gallery Performance

The League of NH Craftsmen galleries experienced a modest 3.5% decrease in gross sales overall. It's important to note that this figure reflects a unique year marked by significant operational disruptions: our Nashua location has been closed since January, and our Concord gallery was offline for eight weeks due to a planned renovation.

Gallery Performance Sales
FY 2023-4 $1,938,685
FY 2024-5 $ 2,009,761
(71,076) -3.5%



Web sales via the online Gallery topped $79,420 which represents a 4.44% increase.

Despite some challenges, there were several strong periods of performance. October led the year with a 9.9% increase in sales over 2023, followed by December, which saw a 5% increase, reflecting strong holiday engagement. March was also a notably productive month, with a 6.2% sales increase, signaling renewed momentum as locations resumed full operation.

We remain optimistic moving into 2025 with refreshed spaces and renewed energy in our galleries, and we look forward to building on these bright spots in the coming months.

Juried and Supporting Membership

We are pleased to share that our community continues to grow. We now have 655 state-juried members on our rolls—a net increase—and nearly 350 supporting members who continue to stand by us year after year. These numbers highlight steady and encouraging momentum as we look ahead to all that's to come.

3% Increase in total Juried Members

Exhibitions, Education & Outreach

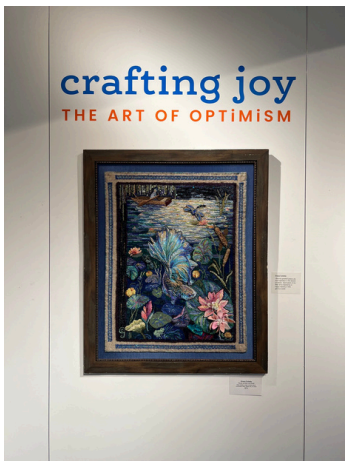
Upon completion of a thorough review of the entire Permanent Collection, the League's dedicated Museum & Exhibition Gallery committee staged an exhibition of work from the collection which was available through the summer of 2024, featuring numerous pieces, some of which had not previously been exhibited.

In the fall a special workshop series entitled, "As Seen at the Fair" took place over four Wednesday evenings. We welcomed students who were excited to learn more about wood inlay, rug hooking, pyrography and needle felting.

We were fortunate to be able to host the Craft Apprentice Program exhibition at League HQ in November as well, celebrating the mentor/apprentice pairs from both Maine and New Hampshire, and we look forward to making this an annual event. In addition, the League sponsored two apprenticeship pairs and will continue next year.

A juried member exhibition titled "Crafting Joy: The Art of Optimism" ran for eight weeks and included special open hours during Concord events such as an Art Walk in early November, and the popular Midnight Merriment event on the first Friday in December. Gross sales from this exhibition exceeded $2,000.

We were also able to offer our exhibition space for a pop-up event for the Concord Gallery during its renovation period in February, yielding approximately $4,000 in sales it otherwise would have needed to forego as work proceeded on its permanent location.



Craft Stories and ‘A Handmade Life’

Connecting with the community and offering inspiration to future makers, the Craft Stories video series shares the behind-the-scenes of the creative process, celebrates both contemporary and traditional methods of craft production, and demonstrates why making objects by hand truly matters. This series and its accompanying curriculum guide offer a way for educators to bridge the distance between their classrooms and the working artists’ studios.

Premiering at the 2024 New Hampshire Film Festival, and winning the Director, Ian Scura, the prestigious “NH Filmmaker of the Year” Award – ‘A Handmade Life’ was a labor of love from Concord New Hampshire’s Windwood Productions. The team at Windwood worked for three years to turn the individual Craft Stories series into a feature length documentary.

‘A Handmade Life’ shares the stories of ten artists from the greater New Hampshire area each working in different mediums. The film dives into each artist’s creative processes and lives, showcasing the value of craft, design, and local community. Their stories demonstrate the importance and viability of making a life as an artist and impart inspiration to continue these crafts and traditions for generations to come.

Caleb White, Lawrence & Victoria Elbroch and Caitlin Burch-
some of the featured artists in Craft Stories

‘A Handmade Life’ aired on NHPBS during April of 2025 and is still available to stream on the NHPBS app or online. The movie will be screened in additional locations across the state in the coming months, continuing to educate and inspire new audiences about the value of handcrafted work and its makers.

Annual Ornament Program

Our 2024 Ornament *Unfolding* by first-time ornament maker and metal jewelry artist Katherine Rudolph has been incredibly popular with our League community. Despite some unexpected production delays, the support of collectors and patrons with a pre-order process was incredibly successful, and we anticipate ending with another sold-out ornament.

Our newly released 2025 Ornament, *Theodore* was created by Meggin Dossett, a metal artist from Lebanon, NH. Meggin is now a three time annual ornament maker, having previously provided our 2019 ornament, *Tidings of Joy* and then, working alongside fellow metal artist Paulette Werger, offered *Season's Splendor* in 2022. *Theodore*, made of cast pewter, is a moose that appears ready to stride off through the woods and wetlands of New Hampshire. The ornament is available in a limited edition through the League's affiliated galleries and webstore.

Strategic Plan Update

Goals and Priorities

I. Advance: Strengthen Core Operations

- Governance: Improve Board effectiveness through recruitment, evaluation, and training.
- Business Model: Diversify revenue via events, online sales, and partnerships.
- Professional Development: Address member needs through education, partnerships, and peer learning.

II. Cultivate: Nurture Craft & Community

- Education: Expand outreach and engagement through strategic programming and inclusivity.
- Juried Membership: Refine structure to support artistic growth and broaden participation.
- Standards: Update jurying practices to reflect modern media and technology.

III. Champion: Promote and Advocate

- Advocacy & Branding: Launch communications to engage younger audiences and elevate the craft's relevance.
- Marketplaces: Expand and modernize venues for member sales (fairs, galleries, online).
- Field Leadership: Boost visibility through events, publications, and thought leadership.
- Centennial Planning: Prepare for LNHC's 100th anniversary (2032) with strategic national collaborations and celebrations.

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