

CUSTOM WORKROOM CONFERENCE & marketplace

September 28-30, 2026
Bayfront Convention Center
Erie, PA



Custom Workroom Conference is the only annual educational event and trade show specifically for custom drapery, upholstery, and soft furnishing workroom businesses.



www.CustomWorkroomConference.com

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Join the [CWC Attendees private Facebook group](#) to meet other attendees, ask questions, learn about show specials, and to plan your trip.

Subscribe to the [CWC monthly e-newsletter](#)

Hello!

In 2016, we produced the very first Custom Workroom Conference in Concord, North Carolina. There were a lot of unknowns and risks, but we believed that the workroom industry would show up - and show up they did! We would not have had the confidence to embark on this journey without the encouragement of Hanes Fabrics who supported our vision, sponsored the very first CWC and has been with us every year since. As a thank you to Hanes Fabrics, we have designated them as our *Legacy Sponsor* in honor of their commitment to the workroom industry and CWC.



For the 10 year anniversary we have chosen a spectacular venue and look forward to welcoming you the Bayfront Convention Center on the waterfront in Erie, Pennsylvania. There are two hotels connected to the convention center, the neighborhood is walkable and the sunsets are spectacular.

CWC is the place where the custom sewing and upholstery trades and workroom owners are understood, supported and celebrated. All levels of experience and business models are welcomed and valued. You will enjoy meeting suppliers in person, learning from our talented team of instructors and having fun with people who “get you.” Many people have told us that attending is life changing and we are grateful for the friends and mentors who make CWC such a valuable experience. We look forward to celebrating the CWC 10 year anniversary with you!

With Warmest Regards,

Susan Woodcock and Rodger Walker, Owners and Producers CWC

Within walking distance of the convention venue!



REGISTER NOW

Lunch included in the ticket price!



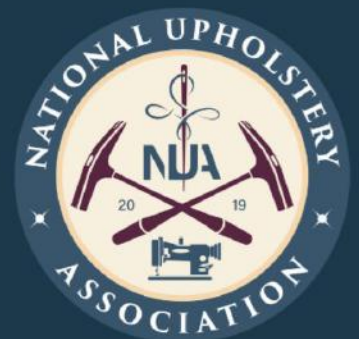
Join the NUA at the CWC Pre-Event
2 Hour Afternoon Lunch Cruise
Open to All CWC Attendees!

VICTORIAN PRINCESS RIVERBOAT CRUISE



SUNDAY, SEPT 27 | 1-3PM
BOARDING TIME 12:30
ERIE, PA

\$30 MEMBERS
\$44 NON-MEMBERS



CWC 2026 Schedule All classes and events are held at the Bayfront Convention Center

Sunday, September 27, 2026

12:30 - 3:00 pm Riverboat cruise and lunch hosted by National Upholstery Association (This special event is not included with CWC attendance - register and pay through the NUA. See page 3)

5:00 - 7:00 pm, CWC Registration & Welcome Reception on the Sunset Terrace sponsored by Trivantage

Monday, September 28, 2026

7:00 - 8:30 am, CWC Attendee Breakfast, West Ballroom

8:30 am – 10:00 am, Education Program: Session 1

Coffee break sponsored by B&B Hardware, North Point Lobby

10:45 am – 12:15 pm, Education Program: Session 2

12:15 - 1:45 pm, Lunch and keynote address sponsored by Hanes Fabrics, West Ballroom

1:45 - 3:15 pm, Education Program: Session 3

Coffee break sponsored by WCAA, North Point Lobby

4:00 – 5:30 pm, Education Program: Session 4

8:00 - 10:00 pm, Social Event & Party sponsored by Helser Brothers, Sunset Terrace (RSVP on page 7)

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

7:00 - 8:30 am, CWC Attendee Breakfast, West Ballroom

9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Exhibitor Marketplace, North Great Hall

9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Education Station sponsored by Curtains & Soft Furnishings Resource Library

5:30 - 6:30 pm, After Marketplace Mixer, Sunset Terrace

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

7:00 - 8:30 am, CWC Attendee Breakfast, West Ballroom (8:30 - 9:30 am, Hotel check-out)

9:30 am – 12:00 pm, Education Program: Session 5

10:30 - 11:00 am, Coffee break, North Point Lobby

12:15 - 12:45 pm, Closing comments and goodbye message, North Point Lobby

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CWC Registration & Welcome Reception

Sunday, September 27, 2026

5:00 - 7:00 pm at the Bayfront Convention Center ~ Sunset Terrace

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HOW TO REGISTER

The Custom Workroom Conference attendance fee is \$600.00 and includes the welcome reception on Sunday, September 27, breakfast buffet Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, your choice of classes on Monday, September 28 and Wednesday, September 30, lunch and keynote address and the social event & party on Monday, September 28, and entrance to the Exhibitor Marketplace, Education Station and the After Marketplace Mixer on Tuesday, September 29.

REGISTRATION OPENS ON MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2026 at 9:00 am ET

1. Review the event brochure to learn about the schedule, venue, instructors, classes, and events. Choose your classes (see Class Schedule on page 17).
2. Click the "*Register to Attend*" button below. Complete the registration form with your information and class choices.*
3. Lunch (1) on Monday, September 28, 2026 **is included with your attendee registration fee**. If you would like to bring a guest, additional lunches can be purchased at a cost of \$30.00 per person. **This purchase is non-refundable.**
4. Read and sign the refund and cancellation policy.
5. Complete the form with your payment information and click "submit" at the bottom of the page.
6. You will receive a confirmation email to the email address used for registration.
7. If you plan to attend the "Helser Prom" on Monday evening, September 28, be sure to RSVP using the QR code in the brochure on page 7.
8. When filling out the form you will be asked to provide your name, company name, city and state. This is for your name badge. **Carefully type the information exactly as you would like it to be printed.**

REGISTRATION OPENS ON MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2026 at 9:00 am ET

REGISTER TO ATTEND

Custom Workroom Conference 2026

SOCIAL EVENT & PARTY

HELSE



PROM

September 28 | 2026

From 8:00 - 10:00 PM

Sunset Terrace

Bayfront Convention Center | Erie, PA

Ticket RSVP



MEET THE CWC INSTRUCTORS



Jonathan Bennett owns Unsprung Upholstery, a Richmond, Va., upholstery shop that offers custom builds, slipcovers, pillows, and cushions. Having sewn in various capacities for 30-plus years, he's known for his precise pattern matching and detail work. He has a BFA in fashion design, and taught pattern making, garment construction, and digital marketing for 13 years at Virginia Commonwealth University. Jonathan launched Unsprung University in 2025, offering hands-on instruction for slipcovers, pillows, and upholstery and he is the new owner of Workroom Tech, the only dedicated trade school in the U.S. for custom upholstery, drapery and soft furnishings. See www.unsprungupholstery.com, www.unsprunguniversity.com, www.WorkroomTech.com, Facebook, and Instagram.



Deborah Cronin has been in the interior design industry for more than 40 years, first in home decorating retail sales and management and then, since 1999, as owner of Leatherwood Design Co, a high-end to-the-trade fabrication studio in Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y. Her specialties are making shades and any other project that requires inventive techniques. Deborah loves sharing her expertise with her designers, as well as with workroom colleagues at CWC, Workroom Tech, various WCAA chapters, and State University of New York at Purchase. She is a member of the WCAA Virtual Chapter. See more on Facebook and Instagram.



Kari Culberson owns House Marais, a to-the-trade workroom in Decatur, Ga., offering full-service soft goods fabrication for the home, including window treatments and lampshades. She has a master's degree in interior design from Florida State University, and has worked in the interior design industry for more than 15 years. In 2011, Kari started a textile line producing hand block-printed linen. Her fabrics have been carried in design showrooms across the country, and her work has been featured in *Atlanta Homes & Lifestyles*, *Lonny*, and *Martha Stewart Living*, among others. Find out more at www.housemarais.com, and on Facebook and Instagram.



A lifelong textile enthusiast, entrepreneur, and educator, **Jeanelle Dech** is president of Adaptive Textiles, an innovative textile printing company in West Chester, Pa. She's the creative energy behind The Workroom Channel's Method Share, Fly on the Wall, and Real Workroom series (www.theworkroomchannel.com), and is the founder of The Workroom Marketplace (www.workroommarketplace.com), which offers a curated collection of drapery patterns and workroom efficiency tools to professional sewists worldwide. She celebrated nearly four decades in the home-décor industry with the launch of Klimaka Studios (www.klimakastudios.com), which provides a beautiful collection of fabrics and engineered designs specifically for workrooms.

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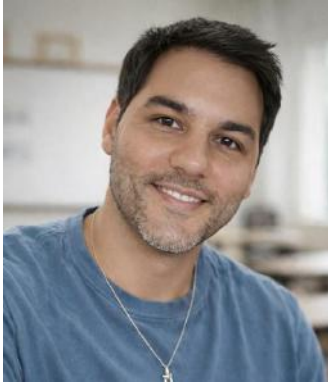
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visit our booth 61-62, Sep. 29, 2026
Bayfront Convention Center Erie, PA

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For more than 10 years, **Manuel Fernandez** has owned The Workroom of SW Florida in Naples, Fla., providing custom window treatments, soft furnishings, and upholstery to designers and homeowners. In addition to mastering the technical aspects of the industry, Manuel has also honed his business skills - pricing confidently, setting clear boundaries, and communicating clearly with his clients. Known for his straightforward approach and commitment to valuing the true cost of custom work, he frequently works with other workrooms to help them operate more confidently instead of making fear-based decisions. Find out more at www.flworkroom.com, and on Facebook and Instagram.



Kathy Geffen is the owner of Kathy Geffen Design, a custom drapery workroom in Richmond, Va. Kathy is known for creating beautiful, highly functional window treatments, bedding, and soft furnishings. Before building her workroom, she spent 25 years in the corporate world helping organizations improve how they operate, streamline processes, and successfully manage change. She now brings that same structured, results-oriented thinking to the drapery industry through the Workroom Accountability and Mentoring group. She belongs to the WCAA Richmond Chapter, as well as her local chapter of International Furnishings and Design Association. See www.kathygeffendesign.com, www.finetunecoaching.com,



Over his 40+-year career, **Sohn Lewis** has reupholstered thousands of pieces of furniture and other items, including antiques, walls, and automobile and boat interiors. One of his more notable projects includes upholstering hundreds of replicated seats for the 2000s renovation of Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. His work also appears in the Smithsonian Institution, a few embassies, and the Maryland governor's office, Senate chambers, and statehouse. He's done work for Joseph Furniture Restoration (Columbia), Johnson Berman (Baltimore), Ibello Upholstery (Baltimore), and latesta Studio (Kent Island). He is the lead upholsterer and instructor at The Cavanagh House in Baltimore.



While in college for fashion design, **Will Linn** spent his summers working at his aunt's drapery workroom. In 2010 he began working at Marquis Design Group in West Palm Beach, Fla., as a fabricator, and is now the head workroom manager. In addition to handling day-to-day workroom operations, he builds and upholsters the custom beds, ottomans, cornices, and specialty projects. Will's work appeared at the Kips Bay Palm Beach Show Houses in 2020 (Keith Baltimore), 2022 (Barbara Lewis), 2024 (Betsy Wentz), and in 2026 (Barbara Lewis), as well as at the new Holiday House Wellington Designer Show House (HW Interiors).



Robin Matthews has owned and operated Seams Sew Right, a retail and to-the-trade workroom in Kinnelon, N.J., since 2000. She specializes in superbly constructed window treatments, bedding, slipcovers, cushions, and pillows. She's known for her innovative fabrication and installation techniques. Her work has been featured in *DIY*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Design NJ*, and *Window Fashion VISION* and *Draperies & Design Professional* magazines. Robin has taught at CWC, Workroom Tech, the Slipcover Summit, and for several WCAA Chapters. She's a member of the WCAA Southeastern Pennsylvania–New Jersey and Virtual Chapters, as well as NUA. Check out www.seamssewright.com,



A lifelong fan of quality craftsmanship and making things, **Michelle Minner** started a DIY-focused blog when she left banking. By 2011, that blog grew into the custom upholstery studio that is Blue Roof Cabin. Based in Shelton, Wash., she transforms cherished furniture into one-of-a-kind pieces that reflect both their history and their owner's vision. In addition to teaching for CWC, she has a course on The Workroom Channel, and was a virtual instructor for FLC Training Systems. She served on NUA's inaugural board and led its early public relations efforts. See more at www.bluroofcabin.com, and on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

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Terry Sandlin, of Monroe, Ga., is a 30+-year veteran of the home-furnishings industry, having established Terry's Designing Windows in 2008 in Cropwell, Ala. Terry is known for her attention to detail, quality workmanship, and "Yes we can" attitude. Fabricating pillows, cushions, and window treatments are her favorite. She has written for *Drapery & Design Digital Digest*, and her work has appeared in *Birmingham Home & Garden*, *The Cottage Journal*, and *Southern Living*. Terry teaches Custom Draperies: Level 1 for Workroom Tech and regularly at CWC. She mentors several new workroom pros and is a member of WCAA. Check out Instagram.



Aaron Studham started at Marcoux Upholstery part time in 2008 making deliveries and sweeping floors while working various odd jobs. As he developed his upholstery skills, he took on more responsibilities within the business, including estimating and working with designers. In 2023, Aaron purchased the Leominster, Mass., business, which offers commercial and residential upholstery with a focus on custom-built projects, including sofas, banquettes, and beds. Marcoux Upholstery projects have been featured in magazines like *Architectural Digest*, *Decor Maine*, and *Boston Home*, and appeared on the TV shows *Castle Rock* and *Dexter*. Learn more at www.marcouxupholstery.com and Facebook, and Instagram @rocknthhawk.



Heather Taylor operates Custom Textiles, a drapery and upholstery workroom in Burlington, Conn., serving designers, as well as commercial and retail clients. Heather studied industrial design at the Rhode Island School of Design before becoming a product designer for DuPont Pharmaceutical. She was an environmental graphic designer for commercial interiors until establishing Custom Textiles in 2003, a career change devoted to her sewing passion. Heather has taught at CWC, and served as treasurer of IDS-Connecticut and president of the WCAA Connecticut Chapter. She is currently a member of WCAA, NUA, and the National Button Society. See www.customertextiles.net,



In a previous life, **Julie Thome** had a 20-year banking career as a foreign currency trader, which brought her to the U.S. in 1995. A lifelong passion for fabrics and sewing, however, inspired her to start her drapery workroom when her children were small. Since 2000, she has owned and operated Julie Thome Draperies Inc., a to-the-trade workroom in Bethel, Conn., specializing in high-end details and turnkey distance project management. Julie's work has been published in *Architectural Digest*, *U.K. House & Garden*, *House Beautiful*, *Elle Decor*, and *U.K. Homes & Gardens*. See www.juliethomeinc.com, Facebook, and Instagram.



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Grant Trick owns Grant Trick Furnishings in High Point, N.C., where he collaborates with designers to create custom pieces, and produces his own designs from The Grant Trick Collection. He has a degree in apparel design from the University of Alabama, and has worked as a sportswear designer, and as a contract showroom designer and prop maker in New York City. He learned the craft of custom upholstery and soft furnishings in San Francisco before returning to Alabama to build his own business. In 2022 he moved to North Carolina to learn large-scale furniture production. See www.granttrick.com and Instagram.



Lauren Volper was a digital marketing consultant by day and upholstery hobbyist by night when she was hired to implement growth strategies for a local furniture refinisher. Inspired by the need for upholsterers and the idea of working with her hands, she opened Hudson Valley Upholstery in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., in September 2024. Within three months she had a six-month queue of projects. When she's not helping clients refresh their furniture, she helps businesses optimize their digital presence. Her work has been featured in Hudson Valley Magazine, and she's a member of NUA.



Before opening Find the Thread Upholstery in 2023, Brooklyn-based **Ruti Wajnberg** spent four years as head of production at a to-the-trade upholstery shop in New York City. Before that, she used her MBA in entrepreneurship to work in software development, but always carried a torch for upholstery. Known for bold pattern pairing and joyful textiles, Ruti helps her clients revive beloved heirloom pieces — guiding them through a fabric and design process that's fun, easy, and low-stress. She teaches upholstery in her studio and at the Peters Valley School of Craft. She's a member of NUA. Check out www.findthethread.com and Instagram.





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Since 1995, **Jennifer White** has operated Hudson Valley Drapery Studio, a to-the-trade workroom in Lagrange, N.Y. She is best known for her meticulous attention to detail, as well as her high-end, hand-sewn draperies and shades - which also happen to be her favorite projects to fabricate. In 2022 she opened Workroom Supply LLC, through which she sells systems, components, and supplies for window coverings. Jennifer frequently shares her knowledge as a teacher with in-person classes at Workroom Tech in North Carolina and the Workroom Cadre regional programs. See more on Instagram.



In 2001, **Heidi Yoder** established Smithland Custom Interiors, a full-service design-to-installation drapery studio in Harrisonburg, Va., focusing on window treatments, pillows, bedding, and cushions. While her mother taught her to sew and think creatively, she credits a year spent building houses with Habitat for Humanity for giving her a great foundation in measuring and engineering — as well as her time spent helping a family remodel a historical house — for sparking her love of fabricating soft furnishings. She is a current member and past co-president of the Richmond Chapter of WCAA. Find out more at www.smithlandcustominteriors.com, Facebook, and Instagram.

Let's Take a Break - Together!

Join Us for Our WCAA Sponsored Coffee Break at
the Custom Workroom Conference

Monday, September 28th | 3-4 PM



Stop by, grab a coffee, and connect with your community - because the best conversations happen when we slow down and spend time together.

Stronger Together Starts Here

Visit us at Booth #25



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B&B Hardware is proud to sponsor the coffee break on Monday, September 28th, 10:00-10:45am.
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Rebuilding Lives... and an Industry

Keynote address and lunch buffet on Monday, September 28, 2026

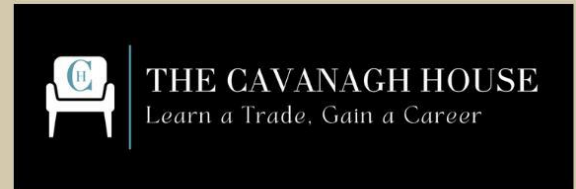


On a rainy morning in early 2017, **Stacy McAleer** extended a lunch invitation to a man begging by the side of the road. As they ate their lunches, they talked for two hours, mostly about his life and how he ended up where he was. She left that conversation with a clearer sense of the fragile line between stability and homelessness, as well as a desire to do something about it.

But just what could she do about it? After a conversation with someone who works with the unhoused population, Stacy was advised to find one thing to do to help and do it. She had 35 years of home-sewing experience, so she used that as her platform to raise money, making pillows and other home-décor items to sell at craft fairs while also asking for donations. Along the way, people learned of her mission and offered to help in profound ways, helping shape what would become The Cavanagh House, which opened in October 2019 in the Baltimore area.

While the program itself has evolved somewhat since its beginning, the mission has not. Primarily, The Cavanagh House helps underserved and underemployed people gain financial stability by providing them with paid training in upholstery and home-dec sewing while working on actual projects for residential and commercial clients. Closely related to that are the wrap-around services the organization provides directly or indirectly in order to help the students succeed personally.

The organization's secondary mission, Stacy later realized, is to help revitalize the upholstery and home dec-sewing industries as current professionals age out and retire.



She'll walk you through the four phases of the program, and discuss the challenges the organization faces, as well as the successes. In addition, Stacy will share what she and her dedicated instructors, volunteers, and board members are doing to strengthen The Cavanagh House and its mission, and the investments they're making to ensure long-term success for the students, the organization, and the craft.



Growing up in Stacy McAleer's household, you didn't buy something in a store just because you liked it ... you figured out how to make it. Her mother sewed rather than shopped, and creativity was less a hobby than a household value. Like many inherited gifts, Stacy didn't fully appreciate it at the time.

What she did take to heart, early and deeply, was a sense of obligation to others. Her father's career, from lawyer to politician to judge, modeled what it looked like to show up for your community. That same drive eventually led Stacy to nursing. She graduated from Wheeling College in 1989 and spent nine years in practice, where she developed the patience, compassion, and listening skills that would prove just as essential in running a nonprofit as they were at a patient's bedside.

Today, Stacy channels all of it — the creativity, the caregiving instinct, and the belief that people deserve a safety net — into The Cavanagh House, where she serves simultaneously as executive director, grant writer, fundraiser, workroom manager, social media manager, all-purpose volunteer, and tireless advocate. Learn more at www.thecavanaghhouse.org, and on Facebook and Instagram.



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Hanes Booth #21/32

Tuesday, September 29

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Class Schedule: Choose one from each class session

Monday September 28, 2026

Session 1, 8:30 – 10:00 am

- BIZ-1 Plan Your Conference Strategy with Kathy Geffen
- GEN-1 Direct Smocking for Home Decor with Heather Taylor
- WT-1 The Art and Science of Bed Hangings with Julie Thome
- UPH-1 Work That Skirt! with Jonathan Bennett

Session 2, 10:45 am – 12:15 pm

- BIZ- 2 Find Focus ... and Your Ideal Clients with Ruti Wajnberg
- GEN-2 Pillow Flanges and You with Will Linn
- WT-2 Pleating to Pattern With Precision – Heidi Yoder
- UPH-2 Reupholstering an Antique Chair With Modern Methods with Michelle Minner

Session 3, 1:45 – 3:15 pm

- BIZ-3 Surefire Ways to Improve Your Google Visibility with Lauren Volper
- GEN-3 Your Guide to Understanding and Working With Velvet with Jeanelle Dech
- WT-3 How to Make Lambrequins and Manage Large Projects with Kari Culberson
- UPH-3 Repairing and Refinishing Show Wood with Sohn Lewis

Session 4, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

- BIZ-4 Establishing Value, Setting Boundaries & Building a Profitable Workroom with Manuel Fernandez
- GEN-4 How to Dress Tables to Impress with Terry Sandlin
- WT-4 Long Live the Kingston Valance! with Robin Matthews
- UPH-4 The Crown Goes To... with Jonathan Bennett

Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Session 5, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

- BIZ-5 Building Your Team: From Solo Operator to Empowered Leader with Jeanelle Dech
- GEN-5 Getting Creative with Slipcovers with Heather Taylor
- WT-5 Made in the TDBU Shade with Deborah Cronin and Jennifer White
- UPH-5 Building Confidence – From Frame to Finished Project with Aaron Studham
- PRO-5 Industry Grade, Artisan Made with Grant Trick

CWC CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

Class categories: **BIZ** Business, **GEN** General Interest, **WT** Window Treatments, **UPH** Upholstery

Session 1, Monday, September 28, 2026, 8:30 - 10:00 am

BIZ-1

Plan Your Conference Strategy

Whether you're new to workroom conferences or are a seasoned pro, you have a pretty good idea that you'll learn *a lot*. But then you return to the day-to-day grind of your workroom, and all that new knowledge collects dust. **Kathy Geffen** will show you how to approach your classes with an eye toward sorting through all the new tips on the fly and deciding what you'll implement sooner than later. She'll also help you identify which supplier opportunities are most relevant to *you*. You'll leave with ideas for setting a realistic action plan for after the conference buzz fades.

GEN-1

Direct Smocking for Home Decor

Direct smocking, also referred to as Canadian smocking, is a manipulating technique that adds dimensional volume to fabric using patterned grids and stitches. Picking up from her CWC-25 Marketplace stage presentation, **Heather Taylor** will demonstrate how to transfer a variety of patterns directly to fabric and easily smock using tools you already have. She'll show how sheers, novelty fabrics, and prints create special effects, and how fabric types and scale can change an overall look. Samples of smocking used as drapery panels, valances, cushions, and trims will inspire you to create impressive products, as well.

WT-1

The Art and Science of Bed Hangings

Thanks to "maximalist" trends in home interiors - along with the continued popularity of English-inspired décor - bed hangings are back! While similar to draperies and valances, full and half-testers have more complex components and installation considerations. **Julie Thome** will tell you everything you need to know to confidently accept that next bed-hanging opportunity. She'll share the history of bed hangings, and discuss what full and half-testers are, how to price, how to measure for, how to style, and what the default fullnesses are. In addition, she'll talk about various bed types, including four-poster, as well as other suspension and mounting options.

UPH-1

Work That Skirt!

Regardless of how hard you've worked to tie those springs eight ways or place that motif just so, the success of your skirted project comes down to ... well ... the skirt. Never fear! **Jonathan Bennett** will show you how to make a beautiful and properly fitting skirt whether you're working on slipcovers, upholstered furniture, or a bed skirt. He'll share various ways to design and fabricate them, as well as how to self-line and reduce bulk at the seams. Plus, he'll show you multiple ways to make "corner blocks" to create a faux box pleat at the corners.

BIZ-2

Find Focus ... and Your Ideal Clients

While operating as a generalist and offering everything to everyone can keep work flowing, it often prevents you from standing out and being known for what you truly do best. In this class, **Ruti Wajnberg** will use real-world examples and case studies from her own journey to illustrate how narrowing your focus will help you communicate more clearly, price confidently, and create work that feels more rewarding. You'll leave knowing how to identify your ideal clients and your unique strengths, increase referrals and client trust, name your ideal audience and services, and immediately implement one actionable focus change.

GEN-2

Pillow Flanges and You

Will Linn's breakthrough with pillow flanges came when he figured out how to get the right scale and shape for scalloped edges, along with realizing that most curved supplies in the workroom work well for making templates. Whether scalloped flanges are your challenge - or figuring out how to insert a zipper into a double-flanged pillow - you'll receive a comprehensive course in all things flange: double flanges, double contrast flanges, scalloped flanges, ruffled flanges, pleated flanges, and more. He'll demonstrate how to calculate and draft the flange of your choice, as well as how to tackle a difficult-looking project with ease.



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WT-2

Pleating to Pattern With Precision

While repeatedly stabbing pins into a drapery heading one day trying to determine pleat placement, **Heidi Yoder** knew there had to be a better - mathematical - way. So she developed a chart, which has since saved her hours of trial and error. In this class, she'll show you how to use that chart to quickly figure multiple pleat-to-pattern options for any horizontal repeat, whether it's every pleat or another spacing that best accentuates the motif. From there, you can easily calculate the exact flat panel width. She'll also share how to use the chart to space vertical rings on Roman shades.

UPH-2

Reupholstering an Antique Chair With Modern Methods

It's commonly believed that reupholstering 100-year-old furniture will ruin the value. Not true: Such furniture was *designed* to be reupholstered. In this class, **Michelle Minner** will walk you through how to reupholster antique pieces, starting with the frame: stripping old materials, addressing minor wood repairs, and touching up the finish. She'll then discuss coil springs, padding, and traditional materials like horsehair to help you understand how these pieces were originally built. From there, Michelle will talk about incorporating modern materials so the furniture is comfortable and usable again. Finally, you'll learn how thoughtful trim details can elevate a piece.

Session 3, Monday, September 28, 2026, 1:45 - 3:15 pm

BIZ-3

Surefire Ways to Improve Your Google Visibility

Where do people go when they need an upholsterer or drapery fabricator? Google. Where do they check your reputation? Google. Behind every search is SEO — and it's not as complicated or expensive as you may think. **Lauren Volper** will explain what Google really cares about and how to optimize your Google Business Profile. You'll learn how to improve local visibility, choose the right keywords, strengthen your reputation through reviews, and make simple website updates that drive results. This class will give you a clear, practical roadmap you can start implementing immediately — no tech background required.

GEN-3

Your Guide to Understanding and Working With Velvet

Velvet brings unmatched richness and texture to any project - but it can also bring frustration if you don't know how to handle it properly. Drawing on decades of textile expertise, **Jeanelle Dech** will share everything she knows about velvet, including how it's made and why understanding its construction is key to working with it successfully. You'll discover practical methods for managing the nap, preventing and revitalizing crushed pile, storing properly to avoid ripples, and pressing to enhance the luxurious texture. Demonstrations will include cutting and seaming techniques, pattern matching, and heading construction for draperies, and pulling and tacking for upholstery.

WT-3

How to Make Lambrequins and Manage Large Projects

Imagine that you're asked to fabricate two 13-foot-wide lambrequins with matching oversized functional relaxed Roman shades for a nursery with a vaulted ceiling. You're a solo workroom ... what do you do? If you're **Kari Culberson**, you say, Yes, and figure it out. In this class she'll walk you through the project from creating the estimate to dividing the components into manageable pieces to sourcing the materials. She'll also show you how she upholstered the lambrequins and fabricated the shades. Finally, she'll share lessons she learned along the way, preparing you to tackle any large-scale project that comes your way.

UPH-3

Repairing and Refinishing Show Wood

When you encounter show wood that could use some TLC, is your first instinct to find other pros to repair and refinish those parts? Not if you're **Sohn Lewis**. He'll show you how to evaluate a piece and assess its condition before quoting, and then walk you through the structure and explain why it's built as it is. He'll also demonstrate how to make repairs without tearing the furniture apart, as well as clean and polish the wood — a process he calls “buff and fluff.” Finally, he'll share the everyday and inexpensive materials to make it all happen inhouse.



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**Session 4, Monday, September 28
4:00 - 5:30 pm**

BIZ-4

Establishing Value, Setting Boundaries and Building a Profitable Workroom

Running a successful workroom takes more than technical skill — it requires confidence, clarity, and the courage to run your business on your own terms. In this class, **Manuel Fernandez** will share his story, as well as the eureka moment that changed everything. You'll learn strategies for calculating profitable pricing, presenting numbers without apology, and attracting clients who respect craftsmanship. He'll also cover how establishing boundaries and saying “no” to projects that aren't the right fit will actually strengthen your brand and business. Novice or veteran, you'll leave knowing how to make your business more sustainable - and more enjoyable - to run.

GEN-4

How to Dress Tables to Impress

A table can be just for decoration, but it can also be functional. Either way, it deserves to look its best. **Terry Sandlin** will show you where to start, including how to measure for a good fit, which questions to ask (e.g., What is the purpose of the table and the table covering? Will drawers need to be accessed?), and how to recognize whether a fabric is appropriate. She'll also talk about table felt and fusible lining, and demonstrate how to add a flat embellishment to the bottom of a circle skirt and fabricate corner options for rectangular tables.

WT-4

Long Live the Kingston Valance!

With their relaxed folds and timeless style, Kingston valances have an elegance unmatched by other top treatments. Somehow, they've also earned a reputation for being complicated. **Robin Matthews** will show you how to draft and alter the pattern, select appropriate fabrics and linings, plan the pattern placement, fabricate without fear, add trim, mount by board or rod, and use the best installation methods to ensure a polished finish. Robin will also bring samples of each step to increase your understanding of the process. After discovering just how easy they are to make, you'll want to make Kingstons all the time.

UPH-4

The Crown Goes to ...

Contrary to popular belief, cushion crowns start with planning, not with overstuffing. To help you make your cushion the "crown jewel" of your project, Jonathan Bennett will show you how to achieve that whether you're working with foam and batting, feather and down, or foam with a feather/down envelope wrap. He'll also show you how to adjust the boxing height to achieve a quick crown for foam and batting inserts, and how to make the proper allowances for a feather filling. Finally, he'll discuss the proper overhang of a cushion so it will always perfectly fit into the chair.

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Session 5, Wednesday, September 30, 2026, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

BIZ-5

Building Your Team: From Solo Operator to Empowered Leader

Growing a business isn't just about scaling revenue - it's about building something bigger than yourself. It's also not the right path for every workroom owner given the financial risk. Whether considering your first hire or already navigating the complexities of a larger team, **Jeanelle Dech** will share practical insights on recognizing the stages of growth, creating a culture that attracts and retains talent, and developing systems that maintain your quality standards. This class will help you honestly assess whether team building is for you and then give you concrete strategies to move forward while preserving what makes your business special.

GEN-5

Getting Creative With Slipcovers

When a piece of furniture still has usefulness, restyling with a creative slipcover is a fun solution. **Heather Taylor** will showcase unique ideas for personalizing furniture with dynamic skirts, closures, trims, and even some unexpected features. She will demonstrate how to construct various slipcover styles, along with tips on reshaping a chair for improved comfort. Heather will show how slipcovers are an easy solution for special events for both indoor and outdoor furniture. From casual to a more well-fitted look, slipcovers are a fantastic additional service from any workroom.

WT-5

Made in the TDBU Shade

For **Deborah Cronin** and **Jennifer White**, the most-asked question lately is, "Can a top-down/bottom-up shade be motorized?" In short, Yes! Together, they'll give an overview of TDBU operating systems, including beaded chain loop and cordless, and discuss the variables when considering motorization. Will it need to coordinate with a home system? What about budget? Does the homeowner need *both* TD and BU? Deborah and Jennifer will also talk about step-by-step fabrication and review the necessary calculations, including for adding bottom trim or hobbled folds. Finally, they'll tackle how to motorize your shade, and share samples of headrails, motors, and more.

UPH-5

Building Confidence - From Frame to Finished Project

If you already have basic upholstery skills and tools, you, too, can build your own furniture. With a slipper chair as his model, **Aaron Studham** will show you how to plan the project, tackle complex shapes, and create cut lists. He'll then demonstrate how to build a good foundation, install springs, and choose the proper methods for upholstery. Aaron will also explain how to apply these skills to other projects. Before you know it, you'll have the confidence to make your own low-cost high-value furniture projects.

PRO-5

Industry Grade, Artisan Made

If you've ever wanted to take a peek into the world of large-scale furniture manufacturing - here's your chance. Join **Grant Trick** as he discusses the advantages afforded large manufacturers, including specialized machinery and the selection of supplies not available to most markets, how these materials differ from what most workrooms have access to, and how to source and apply them. He'll demonstrate methods for outsourcing, applying skirts and sewing miters, plus tips for making these processes faster, cleaner, and more consistent. Whether you run a small artisan shop or a larger custom operation, you'll gain practical knowledge you can apply directly to your own work - elevating quality, efficiency, and profitability while keeping the craftsmanship and care you're known for.



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THE CWC EXHIBITOR MARKETPLACE

The CWC Exhibitor Marketplace is a dedicated time and place where you can connect with friends and like-minded business owners, explore the exhibits, meet favorite suppliers in person, experience product demonstrations, and seek out new companies for workroom products and services. Tune in to the Education Station on the show floor for educational seminars every half-hour.



The CWC Exhibitor Marketplace is open on Tuesday, September 29, 2026

9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Bayfront Convention Center - North Great Hall

[Click here to see a list of participating companies > Exhibitors](#)

The CWC Exhibitor Marketplace is not open to the public. Business owners, employees, associates and guests are welcome to attend. Please sign in with your company information to receive a visitor badge at the entrance. Breakfast and lunch concessions available.



Exhibitors include companies that sell drapery hardware and shade systems, window treatments, fabric, leather, machinery, workroom tools and supplies, and related services for drapery, upholstery, window treatment, and decorating businesses.

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Stitched Together – Integrating Drapery and Upholstery Workrooms
Flat Tape on a Circle Skirt
The Path to Efficiency
Sheer Bliss – Working with Sheer Fabrics
Day/Night Shade Featuring the Centurion Widget
Elevated Zipper Pouches
Simplify Your Roman Shade Techniques
Sew How – Lapped Zippers for Pillows and Cushions
Pleats and Spaces for Multi-width Panels
Your Iron As A Problem-Solving Tool

**Don't miss these live demos every half hour during the
CWC Exhibitor Marketplace on Tuesday, September 29**

Featuring some of your favorite instructors:

Jonathan Bennett, Deborah Cronin, Ceil DiGuglielmo, Elki Horn, Ann Johnson, Will Linn, Laura Nelson,
Terry Sandlin, Susan Souza, Judi Turner, and a panel discussion with the NUA and Susan Woodcock

LODGING AND TRAVEL

The 2026 Custom Workroom Conference will be held at the Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafra Pier, Erie, PA 16507. This beautiful venue, located on the shores of Lake Erie's Presque Isle Bay, offers world-class facilities, amenities, and services. Whether you are in the convention center, hotel or neighboring parks and restaurants, there's always going to be a scenic view!



This waterfront location is flanked by the Courtyard Erie Bayfront and Sheraton Erie Bayfront hotels with the convention center connected to both hotels. The CWC group rate for standard guest rooms at both hotels is \$179.00. Book your room online using the reservation link below. Space is limited. *A full breakfast is included for CWC Attendees each morning at the Bayfront Convention Center, Ballroom West, 7:00 - 8:30 am.*

[Reserve your room: CWC Group Rate - Bayfront Reservations](#)

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See a map of the Bayfront Landing complex here: [Bayfront Landing](#)



Airports

The Bayfront Convention Center is 7 miles from the [Erie International Airport](#) with complimentary [airport shuttle](#).

For larger airports, the Buffalo-Niagra International Airport in New York is 100 miles, the Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport in Ohio is 115 miles, and the Pittsburgh International Airport in Pennsylvania is 140 miles from the convention center.

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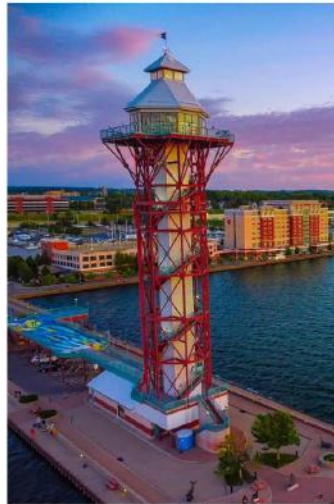
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To learn more about Erie and the surrounding area go to www.visiterie.com



Across the bay from the convention center is **Presque Isle State Park**. Pennsylvania's only "seashore," Presque Isle is a day-use park that provides year-round recreational opportunities. The neck of the peninsula is attached to the mainland four miles west of downtown Erie. A National Natural Landmark, Presque Isle is a favorite spot for migrating birds. Because of the many unique habitats, Presque Isle contains a greater number of the state's endangered, threatened, and rare species than any other area of comparable size in Pennsylvania. Whether you come to enjoy the sandy beaches, study ecological diversity, or learn about the historical significance of the peninsula, there is something for everyone at Presque Isle State Park.

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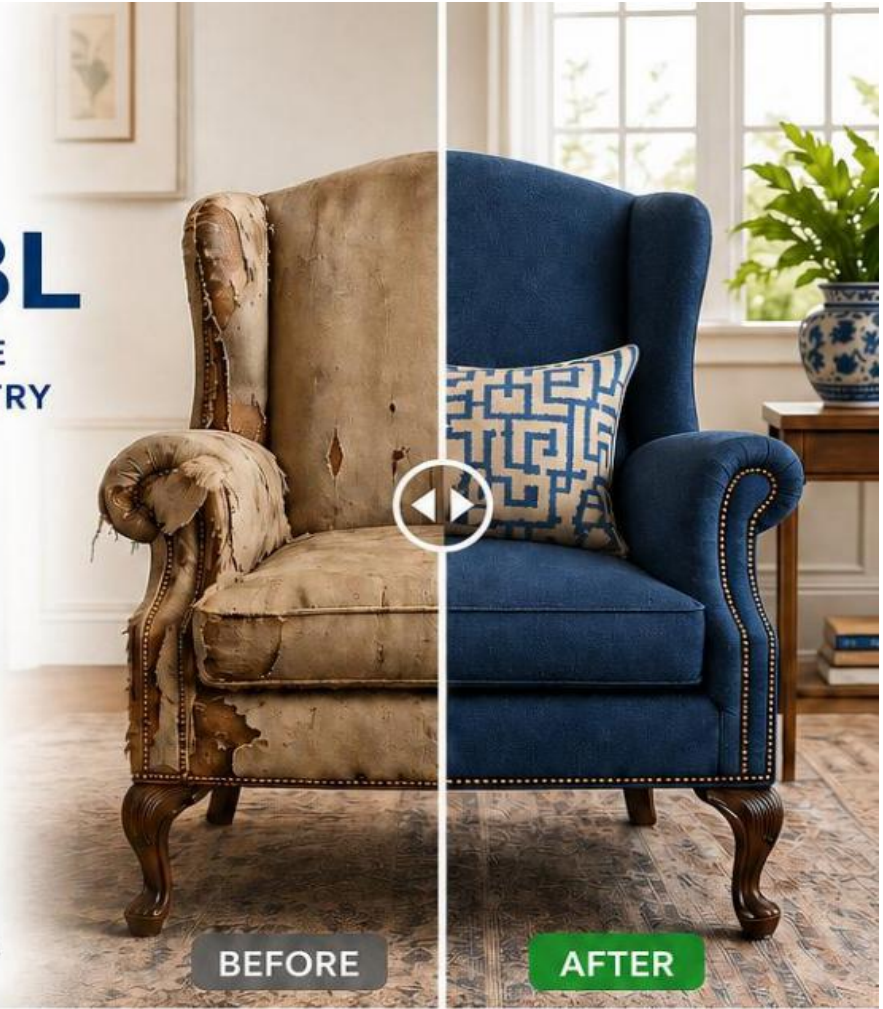


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