



The Sewing Labs™  
Create. Inspire. Thrive.

# TSL THREAD

For the Heart & Hands of our Supporters



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The Sewing Labs is an inclusive and welcoming community teaching the legacy of sewing for employment, entrepreneurship, and enrichment.

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## It's Gala Time!

# TICKETS & SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!

THE SEWING LABS PRESENTS

## Stitching Futures Annual Gala

FRIDAY **22** AUGUST

MARRIOTT KANSAS CITY DOWNTOWN

### **Tickets and Sponsorships Now Available**

Join us for The Sewing Labs' Stitching Futures Annual Gala Fundraiser, an inspiring evening celebrating creativity, community, and second chances stitched with purpose. This signature event is more than a fundraiser. It is a heartfelt celebration of our mission to empower individuals through the textile arts. If you are interested in our room block, e-mail [info@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:info@thesewinglabs.org).

### **Sponsor Deck and Opportunities:**

To request a Sponsor Deck or learn more about sponsorship options, please email [fundraising@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:fundraising@thesewinglabs.org)

Speaking of the Gala, we are still looking for some fabulous last minute **Silent Auction donations!** Reach out to [donations@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:donations@thesewinglabs.org) to coordinate your silent auction donation.

**Get Your Gala Tickets!**



# SEEKING GALA VOLUNTEERS

SIGN UP TO HELP MAKE  
THE MAGIC HAPPEN  
AT OUR ANNUAL GALA!

You may have heard that our Gala is coming up, and we need your help! This fabulous event is not possible without many hands pitching in. We are seeking volunteers to help out at our Stitching Futures Gala fundraiser. Volunteer activities range from creating floral decorations, setting up the silent auction, checking guests in, and more! Please e-mail [volunteer@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:volunteer@thesewinglabs.org) to sign up or if you have any questions!

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**Looking to Take a Class? Check out our Current Calendar!**

[Click Here to See Our Current Classes!](#)



**Your Contributions Help Support our Students and Community!**

[Click Here to Donate!](#)

## A Message from the CEO



Robyn Kerkaert SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CCEP, CHPC  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends,



The countdown is on. We're just weeks away from The Sewing Labs' Annual Gala on August 22, and we cannot wait to celebrate with you. This is our biggest and most joyful gathering of the year, a festive evening filled with laughter, community, and stories of transformation. If you haven't secured your ticket yet, now is the time. Every ticket purchased brings us one step closer to a more sustainable future for our mission.

Why does this event matter so much? Because the need is urgent. Our largest source of workforce development funding will sunset in September 2026, and while we're actively seeking new partnerships, your support at the gala helps bridge the gap. This is our chance to come together not only to enjoy a beautiful night but also to invest in the lives and futures of our students, many of whom are working hard right now in our Sewing Salon Training Program.

And speaking of hard at work, our building is buzzing. We're running fun, skill-building summer workshops for all ages before school kicks back in across Kansas City. Our classrooms are full, our community is growing, and yes, both of our Gammill longarm machines are fully up and running. If you've got a quilt top you've been meaning to finish, bring it our way. We'd love to help you complete it with care and craftsmanship. Plus, that service directly supports our programs and helps fund our mission.

There's one more big change on the horizon. We'll be moving into a new space in January 2027. That's right, TSL is evolving, and while growth is exciting, it takes resources and readiness. That's why your support through gala attendance, sponsorships, donations, and partnerships means more now than ever before.

Whether you've volunteered with us, donated fabric, enrolled in a class, or simply followed our journey, thank you. We hope to see you in August for an evening that celebrates everything we've accomplished and everything still to come.

With gratitude,

Robyn Kerkaert  
CEO, The Sewing Labs

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# AUGUST WORKSHOPS!



## FANNY PACK, BUCKET HAT, WRAP PANTS, AND KICKING IT WITH KNITS

Our Summer of Fun Sewing Workshops continues in August! Click on the links to learn more and sign up for one or *all* of them!

**Fanny Pack Flashback: Cross Body Bag** (2-part series) Fridays, August 1st and 8th, 5:30pm-8:00pm

This cross-body bag is perfect to take on your summer adventures! Hiking, biking, traveling, or every day on the go activities. This bag is fully lined, and has a zipper, buckle and slider so it can adjust to be worn across the body or on the hips. This is a great project for confident beginners.

**Bucket Hat:** (2-part series) Fridays, August 1st and 8th, 3:00pm-5:30pm

Join us for a fun and hands-on class where you'll learn to sew your very own trendy bucket hat. Perfect for beginners, we'll guide you through each step, from cutting fabric to the final stitch. You'll leave with a custom-made hat and the confidence to tackle future sewing projects! All basic materials and patterns are provided.



**Kicking it with Knits:** (6-part series) Mondays, August 4th - September 15th, 5:30pm-8:00pm

Ready to tackle stretchy fabric without the stress? In this class, you'll learn the essential techniques for sewing with knit materials! Whether you want to sew comfy tees, leggings, or loungewear, this class is the perfect place to start. No serger required. We'll show you how to get great results with a regular sewing machine. From pinning, marking, cutting, and sewing, you will be ready to tackle knits in any project! Sewing experience is recommended.

**Wrap Pants:** Friday, August 15th, 3:00pm-8:00pm

These wrap around Palazzo pants are super flowy and comfortable, and they will make the perfect addition to your summer wardrobe! This pattern is so simple it is perfect for beginners and seasoned sewists alike. The pattern is available in size XXS to XXL (up to 51" hip measurement).

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## Community Days of Service



A big Thank you to the Saint Thomas Episcopal Church Youth Group who came and helped us clean and organize our classroom! There are always plenty of volunteer opportunities for individuals or groups to come and participate in Community Days of Service with us! To find out more, e-mail [volunteer@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:volunteer@thesewinglabs.org).

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## Quilter's Corner

**Things Are Hopping in the Quilting Corner!**

We've had a busy and exciting month in the Quilting Corner!

First, a big thank you to everyone who visited our booth at the Kansas City Regional Quilt Festival in June. We loved reconnecting with familiar faces, making new friends, and sharing all the amazing things happening at The



Sewing Labs.

If you haven't had a chance to stop by yet, we'd love to welcome you for a visit. There are so many ways to support our nonprofit mission, from having your quilt professionally finished by our team, to learning to use our Gammill longarm machines and renting time to quilt your own.

Even if you or your friends are out of town, you can still support our mission: we accept shipped quilt tops for longarm services! Every dollar earned from these services goes directly toward funding our Certified Industrial Sewing Apprenticeship Program.

And of course, we offer quilting and sewing classes throughout the year. Coming up in August is a workshop on half-rectangle triangles. Plus, due to popular demand at the Festival, we're bringing back the *Luminary Quilt* class in September! (Pictured here.)

Want to stay in the loop or have questions? Just email us at [Quilting@TheSewingLabs.org](mailto:Quilting@TheSewingLabs.org), we'd love to hear from you.

Until next time,  
**Happy Quilting!**





# Half-Rectangle Triangles

August 13th  
6 – 8:30 PM

Discover the versatility of half-rectangle triangles in this hands-on workshop! You'll learn effective techniques for cutting and trimming these unique blocks—no special ruler required.



**Half-Rectangle Triangles Workshop:** Wednesday August 13th, 6:00pm-8:30pm

Discover the versatility of half-rectangle triangles in this hands-on workshop! You'll learn effective techniques for cutting and trimming these unique blocks, no special ruler required. We'll also explore the optional use of specialty rulers and how they can streamline your process.



Students will see inspiring sample projects and gain insight into how this block can be used in creative patterns. One such example is the *Growing Wild* pattern (not included in the class.) Come explore the possibilities and decide if this dynamic block is a good fit for your next quilting adventure!

**Sign Up!**



# SHARE YOUR STORIES

Has something inspiring, fun, meaningful or otherwise impactful that happened to you at the Sewing Labs? We want to hear your stories! Having testimonials from individuals about our organization helps us write better grant applications and secure the funds needed to continue to teach the legacy of sewing. You can also help people find out about the Sewing Labs by leaving us a Google review. ♥



# Community Service Sewing: Gala Bags!



## Help Us Get the Party Started!

Excitement is building for our Annual Gala this August, and this year, we’re doing something special to give our guests a meaningful reminder of our mission.

Instead of the usual paper gift bags, we’re stitching *reusable fabric gift bags!* But with a goal of 250 bags, we could really use your help.

Join us for one (or more!) of our **free community sewing sessions**, fittingly called **Get the Party Started**, over the next month. It’s a fun, hands-on way to support the cause and help us put a piece of our mission into every guest’s hands.

Let’s sew, celebrate, and make something wonderful together.

**Sign Up for August 1st**

**Sign Up for August 8th**

We also have kits available for Cass County Navigation Bags, and Saint Luke's Walker Bags and Children's Activity Bags. Come pick up a kit and lend your sewing skills to a good cause! Kits are available for pick up during our normal business hours Monday through Friday 9:00am-3:00pm.

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# Did You Know?



The Sewing Labs accepts  
donations of; fabric, notions,  
and gently loved sewing  
machines!

We accept Monday - Friday  
From; 10am - 3pm



Your generous donations help fuel our mission! You can drop off donations of fabric (1 yard or more), notions, sewing patterns and working sewing machines during our normal business hours Monday through Friday 9:00am-3:00pm. If you have a large donation, please e-mail [donations@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:donations@thesewinglabs.org) to coordinate a drop off.

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# OOPS

Sometimes we make mistakes

Oops! Correction: In our last e-mail we announced our NEW auxiliary classroom space at Sacred Stitches. (Which we are SO excited about), *and* within our excited haste we spelled Betsy Saxer's last name wrong. Thank you for gracefully pointing this out!



## Ask Zelma

Have a sewing question?  
Zelma has you covered!

Do you have a sewing-related question? In our new column, 'Ask Zelma,' we will do our best to address your stitching queries.

Zelma can be reached at [editor@thesewinglabs.org](mailto:editor@thesewinglabs.org).

Dear Zelma,

I love to sew, but I never seem to have time to do it. How do you make the time to sew?

Sincerely,  
Seldom Sewist

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Dear Seldom Sewist,

I hear you. One of the biggest challenges of having a creative life is making time in our busy everyday lives for it.

Here are some strategies that have helped me:

Remove barriers to starting and carve out literal space for your sewing: If you have to take your sewing machine out of the closet every time before you use it, you are going to use it significantly less than if it is already threaded and ready to go out on a worktable (or kitchen table, or folding TV dinner table).

Try having a morning practice: Lately I have been getting up earlier and sewing before I start anything else in my day. I have gotten so much more sewing time in by chipping away at a big project a little at a time.

Audit your downtime: When you're at home, how much time do you spend scrolling on your phone, or watching shows? How much more sewing would you get done if you try taking a hiatus from your screens? Even just one night a week would be significant.

Trust me, I know we are all busy and stressed and tired, but you know what's a great stress reliever? Sewing! I hope you find value in some of these suggestions.

Happy sewing,  
Zelma

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