

WORKS IN WOOL

A GALLERY OF WINNING ENSEMBLES IN A BELOVED NATURAL FIBER

Sewing skills are expressed at a high level in the annual Make It With Wool competition. This national contest encourages sewers to create marvelous ensembles in wool and other select natural fibers, such as mohair, alpaca, and cashmere.

Each year *Threads* shares a selection of MIWW winning garments. These pieces are wonderful achievements by their makers, many of whom are in their teens. Junior competitors are 13 to 16 years old; seniors are 17 to 24, and adult winners are 25 and older. Every garment represents significant effort and skill. The pieces are judged on the quality of construction, appropriate use of materials, and the usefulness of the garments in the maker's lifestyle. They are inspiring examples of well-chosen and well-executed techniques.

To learn more about the competition and how to enter, visit MakeItWithWool.com.

Compiled by the Threads editors.

A three-dimensional felted wool calla lily embellishment graces the lapel of a 2022 Make It With Wool winning coat.

Adult Winner

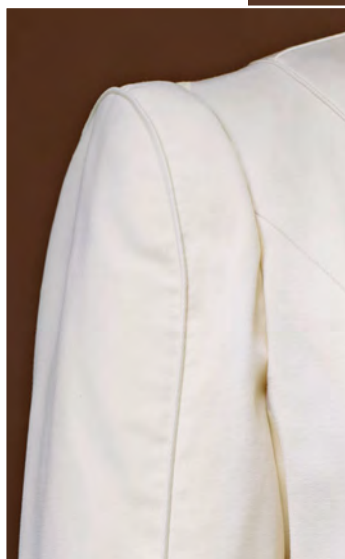
Kim Vogley

Quilcene, Washington

"I want to sew garments that are unique to me and contain creative details," Kim says. She found inspiration in a Gabriela Hearst coat worn by the First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden. Kim followed Vogue 7144 (out of print) to create the coat in Pendleton wool purchased on Etsy. She felted the fabric in 2-yard pieces in her washing machine, stitching the yardage into rings first to reduce distortion.

The double-breasted coat has silk piping along the princess seams, bound buttonholes, a weighted front hem, and calla lily embellishments. To Kim, the lilies represent sympathy and promise in the wake of the pandemic. The realistic lily on the right lapel was formed from stiffened felted wool and hand-knit elements. The embroidered lilies near the hem are an original digitized motif.

The fitted, columnar dress is Kim's own design. It includes a sleeve cap derived from Roberta Carr's *Couture: The Art of Fine Sewing* (Palmer-Pletsch, 1993). The fabric is Italian double-faced wool from Metro Textiles, New York City. Kim continued the lily motif with appliques on the front and back. Kim plans to wear her ensemble to host fundraising events.



The fitted dress has a seven-piece collar and dropped waistline. Sculpted sleeve caps required precise drafting to design and fit to the armscye. Front and back pleats maintain the silhouette while facilitating movement.

web extra

To examine more images of this winning ensemble, visit [ThreadsMagazine.com](https://www.threadsmagazine.com).

Tone-on-tone embellishments enhance the ensemble's overall harmony and draw you in for a closer look.



Senior Winner

Exemplary Construction Winner

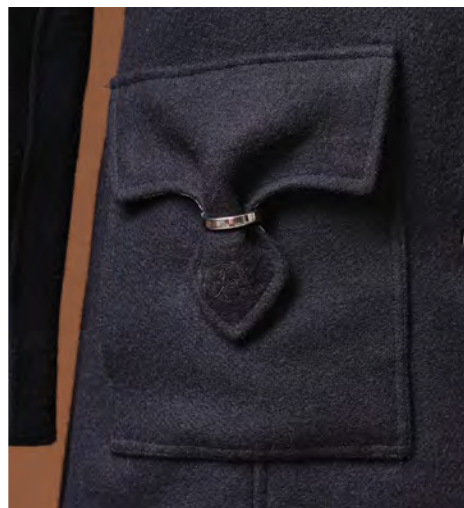
Whitney Black

Spanish Fork, Utah

Whitney faced new sewing challenges to create her prize ensemble but persevered with guidance from her sewing mentor, her mother. Together, they brainstormed how to pattern and construct Whitney's concept of a two-in-one flap coat pocket, with separate bags accessible from the top and the side. The coat is based on Butterick 6385. Whitney made the garment using 100 percent wool Pendleton melton she had won in a previous MIWW competition.

The dress is an original design, sewn in 100 percent wool fabric gifted by a neighbor. Whitney says she could not find a single pattern that included the elements she wanted for her dress, so she started with a base pattern and drafted the rest. The garment was the first project she had sewn with lined flounces. "It turned out great, but the sleeves and I had some stern talks," she says.

Whitney wears her ensemble to work as a teacher, to church, and to professional events.



The coat pockets, an original design, have bags accessible underneath the flap and from the pocket side. There are tone-on-tone machine-embroidered monograms on the tabs that pass through D-rings to secure the flaps.



Whitney modified pattern elements to personalize the style of her wool coat and dress.

Junior First Runner-up Exemplary Construction Winner Outstanding Use of Mohair, First Place

Isabelle Mairose

Kimball, South Dakota

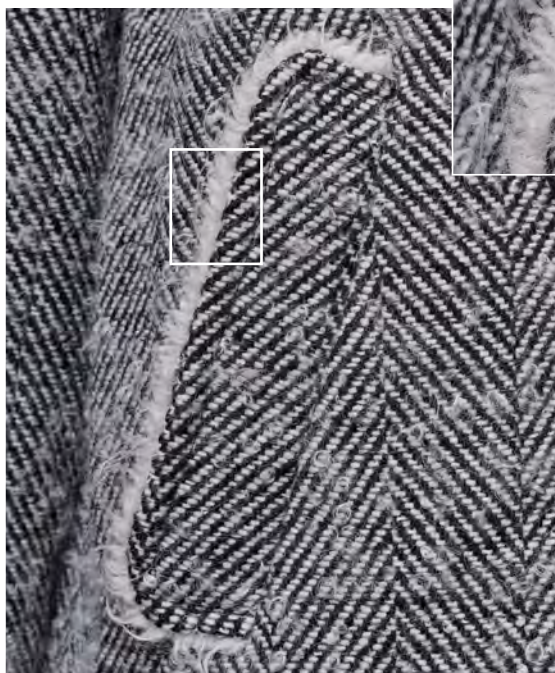
"Sewing is a skill that has been passed down in my family, and I'm lucky to have this ability," Isabelle says. She competed in MIWW for six years, and 2022 was the first time she reached the national level. Her mother competed in high school, as did her older sisters.

Isabelle used fabrics won from previous contests. The top is based on Simplicity/Threads 8604 (out of print), a jacket design from which she copied the bodice. The skirt follows Burda Style 7303 (out of print). Both garments are 100 percent wool.

The double-breasted coat is a 90 percent wool, 10 percent mohair blend. It is based on Burda 6462, but Isabelle sought a closer fit and, in making modifications, made it double-breasted. She saved the white selvage to trim the edges and pocket flaps.

For this project, Isabelle learned to sew custom shoulder pads, bound buttonholes, and welt pockets. What she says she loves most about her ensemble is its versatility. She wears the pieces in different outfits, to dress up or down.

Isabelle admired the white selvage on her coat fabric, and decided to make it a design detail. She says the trim is one of her favorite additions to the outfit she sewed.



The three-piece ensemble includes an ivory peplum top, burgundy skirt, and a black-and-white herringbone coat in wool and mohair.

Junior Winner

Marissa Sanchez

Brentwood, California

Marissa's interest in sewing was sparked by seeing her grandmother sew her childhood dance outfits. "I would watch and help her cut threads and glue crystals onto my costumes," Marissa says. When Marissa was 9, her best friend encouraged her to join 4-H, and she has been sewing since. She entered the California MIWW for five consecutive years and made it to the nationals the past four years.

Her outfit consists of a gabardine dress (Simplicity 9481, out of print) and a hounds-tooth coat (Simplicity/Threads 4403, out of print). The 100 percent wool materials came from Britex Fabrics in San Francisco.

Marissa sewed a muslin for each garment. She made minor fitting adjustments, shortened the dress, and added a lining to it. The dress neckline was her first time sewing scallops, and she hand-understitched the lining along the edges.

The coat was her introduction to matching a motif across seams. It was a challenge, and required hours of pinning and unpinning, plus study of videos and books, to achieve results she was pleased with.



Marissa added a lining to her green wool gabardine dress. For a neat finish around the scalloped neckline, she hand-understitched the lining in place.



Marissa's touches on the interior of her coat include a bright pink lining, green piping, a hanging chain, and a label with her initials.

Senior First Runner-up Handwork, Second Place

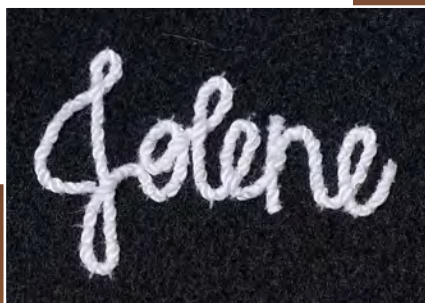
Jolene Bomgardner

Lebanon, Pennsylvania

When Jolene earned a letter for volleyball, she decided to make a custom varsity jacket. The outfit she created for MIWW includes a bomber-style jacket with ribbed trim, welt pockets, and hand-sewn details; a lined skirt; and a knit top.

Jolene's shirt is based on McCall's 6962 (out of print). For the skirt, she followed See & Sew B4897 (out of print). The jacket is based on McCall's 7637. She made a full-bust adjustment to the jacket and altered the skirt pattern for a better fit at the waist and hips.

Jolene wore her outfit through her senior year, then added an academic pin as valedictorian. If she could change one thing about her MIWW experience, it would be to have had her grandmother, who taught her to sew and passed away in 2015, see her winning garments.



Jolene hand-stitched her school's name and her year of graduation on the jacket back. She couched her first name on the jacket front.



The cuffs and hem include elastic thread Jolene stitched in to maintain the ribbing's stretch recovery.