



Meet Craig Farley

An artist at heart, Craig Farley's specialty is working with customers and translating their ideas into purposeful pieces. His passion is creating future heirlooms for people who are looking for something personal and meaningful.



His career as a bench jeweler began 22 years ago. He started as a polisher at a small trade shop, and then quickly progressed to general repairs. Next, he tried his hand at fabrication. Craig understood the value of continuing education and took a wide variety of courses ranging from advanced diamond setting at GIA to a mokume gane workshop by Steve Midgett. Wax carving was next on his list of things to learn. After mastering, Craig realized that in order to take his business to the next level, he had to jump into computer-aided design (CAD). "Repairs are the backbone of a good shop," says Craig. "But custom design makes it so much more than just a job to me." Although he doesn't accept tips, he has more happy tears, hugs, cards, and cookies than he knows what to do with.

Craig's deep passion for CAD design gave him the confidence to enter last year's SMART Jewelry Show Chicago's Bench Pressure

Challenge. Craig works well under pressure and demonstrated that last year by taking home top honors for round #1 of the challenge and overall co-champion.

But when it comes to the [Battle of the Benches](#), there can only be one winner. And Craig's hungry for his next title. Being in a competition like this humbles yet energizes him as he enjoys working around other creative minds. "I feel this [Battle of the Benches] will be a fun learning experience, as well as, a great, personal challenge."

Craig's other passions include martial arts and playing guitar in the local music scene. "Maybe the discipline of martial arts training mixed with my inner rock star make me a good challenger," he suggests. The spotlight doesn't bother Craig and he's looking forward to competing in Battle of the Benches!

Here are some of Craig's pieces:



This elegant but edgy piece was designed around a 2 carat princess cut, using 14K palladium white and rose gold.



For this piece Craig used his customer's diamonds from her old jewelry. The center stone is a 4.5 carat sapphire. It was challenging but fun to squeeze all the diamonds into a pleasing shape.



This is one of Craig's favorite pieces. It's hand fabricated in 14KY, set with an emerald shaped ametrine. A flush set yellow sapphire is on the side, and it has shakudo mokume gane inlay to accent the colors of the center stone.



This is a redesign of a common marquise shape cluster ring. Craig took an old worn out ring and created a fun modern look.

Which is your favorite Craig Farley piece? Tell us in the comment section below.