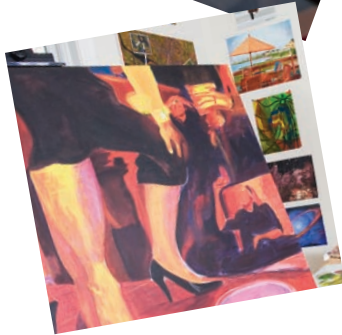


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home work

For some people who work at home, their “office” is the dining room table or anywhere in the house with enough room for a laptop, paperwork and a cup of coffee. For others, a separate work space ranks high on the priority list. They invest the time and energy to set up an area for their work that reflects who they are, what they do and how they do it. These five Bethesda-area professionals work in home offices that fit their lives like a favorite sweater. Each office is different, but they share a common theme—they make home a great place to work. ➤

By Kate Kuhn

Photos by Erick Gibson



The center island and table in master knitter Margaret Fisher's home office were custom made to avoid back strain.

DESIGNING Woman

After years of working in a tiny room on the second floor of the bungalow she shares with her husband and their two cats in Cabin John, Margaret Fisher, a nationally recognized master knitter, decided it was time to create some space for her expanding knitting business, Margaret Fisher Designs (www.fisher-designs.com).

A former corporate executive with an MBA, Fisher opted to leave the corporate world behind and focus on her passion—knitting. Until last year, she worked in a room that could barely hold her, let alone her reference books, needles, yarn and files. Her new second-floor office is a great-looking, functional space that Fisher rarely leaves because she loves it so much. Three skylights and banks of windows on two sides bathe the studio in light, with additional help from some sleek track lighting over desktops and counters. Light oak floors, neutral walls, built-in shelves and a kaleidoscope of color on her yarn wall hit a perfect note aesthetically.

Fisher worked with architect Dean Brenneman to make sure her office met her unique needs. “I needed an island with drawers and a countertop to spread out my designs and block them.

The height is custom made for me at 39 1/2 inches so there is no strain on my back,” Fisher explains. In addition, a custom-made table in the center of the room is the same height as the perimeter desktop, which allows a seamless transition between the two work areas.

“Another priority when designing the space was having enough shelf space to hold my books and materials now, but with room to spare for the future. My business is growing, and I don’t want to outgrow this studio.” With custom built-ins and the smart use of wall and closet space, Fisher has plenty of room to expand.

Her studio also serves as the headquarters of her publishing company, Vanduki Press. In 2008, she published her first book, *Seven Things That Can “Make or Break” a Sweater™*. Whether Fisher is knitting, writing or running her business, her home studio supports the task at hand. “I spend all day in here. I get so much accomplished, and I feel like I’m in a beautiful tree house.” **B**

Kate Kuhn is a freelance writer and senior editor at Gryphon House Inc. She lives in Bethesda with her husband and two sons.