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**American Craft Week Turns Six by Celebrating All That Craft Creates
Official Celebration Dates: October 2-11, 2015**

Dec. 16, 2014 – When we think of craft, visions of hand-blown glass or pottery may come to mind. But organizers of American Craft Week, the nation’s largest annual craft celebration, want you to think in broader terms. This year they are celebrating the fact that craft creates jobs, vibrant communities, and beautiful places.

“Craft creates beautiful objects, but there is so much more,” says Diane Sulg, founder of American Craft Week. “Craft creates jobs for thousands of Americans. The impact of this creative economy is profound, for individuals, communities, and the entire nation.”

“When we started American Craft Week, we wanted to involve galleries and festivals so we could draw the public’s attention to craft. But in the course of six years our vision has become so much wider, mainly because craft in this country is so pervasive and exciting.”

In 2014, American Craft Week encompassed events in all fifty states. Several states, including Vermont, Maine and Virginia have official celebrations backed by tourism and economic development dollars. In Pennsylvania and North Dakota, Visitor and Convention Bureaus coordinated craft-centered events, and large areas in North Carolina and California organize large, regional celebrations.

“In addition to the tangibles, such as jobs and tourism that craft creates, there are a host of very real but intangible byproducts of craft that are responsible for the growth of craft. People love knowing who made an item and seeing the hand of the artist in the work. Craft creates connections, memories, and strong emotions that simply do not exist with mass produced merchandise,” explained Diane Sulg.

“We know we are achieving our goal of raising appreciation of craft, because every day we see another article featuring American handmade, even in stores traditionally filled with manufactured imports, they want to get on our bandwagon!”

Everyone in the craft industry is invited to join American Craft Week, from individual artists to galleries, festivals, museums, arts organizations and entire communities. A free Cultural Tourism Kit, a catalyst for large-scale events, is available by request at info@americancraftweek.com. “But large or small, the central idea is for everyone in craft to do something that engages the public at the same time so that craft creates... a lot of attention!”

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ABOUT AMERICAN CRAFT WEEK

The sixth annual American Craft Week will be held Oct. 2-11 in cities and towns across the nation. With thousands of diverse events at galleries, artist studios, museums, schools and festivals, it is the premiere public celebration of handmade craft in America. It is a volunteer managed program of CRAFT (Craft Retailers and Artists for Tomorrow) a trade association dedicated to the growth and vitality of the craft industry. For more information, visit Americancraftweek.com and craftonline.org.