

Form 5500

Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan

OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089

2024

This Form is Open to Public Inspection

Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code).

Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.

Part I Annual Report Identification Information

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

- A This return/report is for: [] a multiemployer plan [] a multiple-employer plan... [X] a single-employer plan [] a DFE... B This return/report is: [] the first return/report [] the final return/report... C If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan... D Check box if filing under: [X] Form 5558 [] automatic extension... E If this is a retroactively adopted plan...

Part II Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information

1a Name of plan THE BERNARD GROUP INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN 1b Three-digit plan number (PN) 002 1c Effective date of plan 01/01/2013 2a Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan) Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box) City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions) THE BERNARD GROUP INC. 19011 LAKE DRIVE EAST CHANHASSEN, MN 55317 2b Employer Identification Number (EIN) 41-1944077 2c Plan Sponsor's telephone number 952-934-1900 2d Business code (see instructions) 541400

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

Table with 4 columns: SIGN HERE, Signature, Date, and Name. Rows include: 1. Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature, 09/12/2025, JODY ONEIL (plan administrator); 2. Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature, 09/12/2025, JODY ONEIL (employer/plan sponsor); 3. Signature of DFE, Date, Enter name of individual signing as DFE.

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 5500.

Form 5500 (2024) v. 240311

3a Plan administrator's name and address <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Plan Sponsor	3b Administrator's EIN	
	3c Administrator's telephone number	
4 If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: a Sponsor's name c Plan Name	4b EIN	
	4d PN	
5 Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year	5	962
6 Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines 6a(1) , 6a(2) , 6b , 6c , and 6d). a(1) Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year a(2) Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year b Retired or separated participants receiving benefits..... c Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits d Subtotal. Add lines 6a(2) , 6b , and 6c e Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits. f Total. Add lines 6d and 6e g(1) Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) g(2) Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) h Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested.....	6a(1)	758
	6a(2)	737
	6b	23
	6c	212
	6d	972
	6e	11
	6f	983
	6g(1)	863
6g(2)	979	
6h	42	
7 Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item)	7	

8a If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:
2I 2P 2Q 3I

b If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

9a Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply)	9b Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply)
(1) <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance	(1) <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance
(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts	(2) <input type="checkbox"/> Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts
(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust	(3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust
(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor	(4) <input type="checkbox"/> General assets of the sponsor

10 Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

a Pension Schedules

- (1) **R** (Retirement Plan Information)
- (2) **MB** (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (3) **SB** (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (4) **DCG** (Individual Plan Information) – Number Attached 0
- (5) **MEP** (Multiple-Employer Retirement Plan Information)

b General Schedules

- (1) **H** (Financial Information)
- (2) **I** (Financial Information – Small Plan)
- (3) **A** (Insurance Information) – Number Attached _____
- (4) **C** (Service Provider Information)
- (5) **D** (DFE/Participating Plan Information)
- (6) **G** (Financial Transaction Schedules)

Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

11a If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) Yes No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

11b Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) Yes No

11c Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2024 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2024 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code _____

SCHEDULE C (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Service Provider Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small> 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
--	--	---

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning **01/01/2024** and ending **12/31/2024**

A Name of plan THE BERNARD GROUP INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	002
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 THE BERNARD GROUP INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 41-1944077	

Part I Service Provider Information (see instructions)

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

1 Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation

a Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions)..... Yes No

b If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b) Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation. Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Part I Service Provider Information (continued)

3. If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received \$1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information

4 Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

Part III Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)
(complete as many entries as needed)

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

SCHEDULE H (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Financial Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small> 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
--	--	--

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024	
A Name of plan THE BERNARD GROUP INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 002
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 THE BERNARD GROUP INC.	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 41-1944077

Part I	Asset and Liability Statement
---------------	--------------------------------------

1 Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

Assets	(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
a Total noninterest-bearing cash	1a	
b Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):		
(1) Employer contributions	1b(1)	
(2) Participant contributions	1b(2)	
(3) Other	1b(3)	
c General investments:		
(1) Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit)	1c(1)	
(2) U.S. Government securities	1c(2)	
(3) Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):		
(A) Preferred	1c(3)(A)	
(B) All other	1c(3)(B)	
(4) Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):		
(A) Preferred	1c(4)(A)	
(B) Common	1c(4)(B)	
(5) Partnership/joint venture interests	1c(5)	
(6) Real estate (other than employer real property)	1c(6)	
(7) Loans (other than to participants)	1c(7)	
(8) Participant loans	1c(8)	
(9) Value of interest in common/collective trusts	1c(9)	
(10) Value of interest in pooled separate accounts	1c(10)	
(11) Value of interest in master trust investment accounts	1c(11)	
(12) Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities	1c(12)	
(13) Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	1c(13)	
(14) Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts).....	1c(14)	
(15) Other.....	1c(15)	

1d Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities.....	1d(1)	116400000	122500000
(2) Employer real property.....	1d(2)		
e Buildings and other property used in plan operation.....	1e		
f Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e).....	1f	116400000	122500000
Liabilities			
g Benefit claims payable.....	1g		
h Operating payables.....	1h		
i Acquisition indebtedness.....	1i		
j Other liabilities.....	1j	5676790	5438640
k Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j).....	1k	5676790	5438640
Net Assets			
l Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f).....	1l	110723210	117061360

Part II Income and Expense Statement

2 Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

Income		(a) Amount	(b) Total
a Contributions:			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: (A) Employers.....	2a(1)(A)	913588	
(B) Participants.....	2a(1)(B)		
(C) Others (including rollovers).....	2a(1)(C)		
(2) Noncash contributions.....	2a(2)		
(3) Total contributions. Add lines 2a(1)(A), (B), (C), and line 2a(2).....	2a(3)		913588
b Earnings on investments:			
(1) Interest:			
(A) Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit).....	2b(1)(A)		
(B) U.S. Government securities.....	2b(1)(B)		
(C) Corporate debt instruments.....	2b(1)(C)		
(D) Loans (other than to participants).....	2b(1)(D)		
(E) Participant loans.....	2b(1)(E)		
(F) Other.....	2b(1)(F)		
(G) Total interest. Add lines 2b(1)(A) through (F).....	2b(1)(G)		0
(2) Dividends:			
(A) Preferred stock.....	2b(2)(A)		
(B) Common stock.....	2b(2)(B)		
(C) Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds).....	2b(2)(C)		
(D) Total dividends. Add lines 2b(2)(A), (B), and (C).....	2b(2)(D)		0
(3) Rents.....	2b(3)		
(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets:			
(A) Aggregate proceeds.....	2b(4)(A)		
(B) Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions).....	2b(4)(B)		
(C) Subtract line 2b(4)(B) from line 2b(4)(A) and enter result.....	2b(4)(C)		0
(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets:			
(A) Real estate.....	2b(5)(A)		
(B) Other.....	2b(5)(B)	6100000	
(C) Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines 2b(5)(A) and (B).....	2b(5)(C)		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts	2b(6)		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts	2b(7)		
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts	2b(8)		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities	2b(9)		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	2b(10)		
c Other income	2c		
d Total income. Add all income amounts in column (b) and enter total.....	2d		7013588

Expenses

e Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers.....	2e(1)	533129	
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits	2e(2)		
(3) Other.....	2e(3)		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines 2e(1) through (3)	2e(4)		533129
f Corrective distributions (see instructions)	2f		
g Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions).....	2g		
h Interest expense.....	2h		142309
i Administrative expenses:			
(1) Salaries and allowances	2i(1)		
(2) Contract administrator fees	2i(2)		
(3) Recordkeeping fees	2i(3)		
(4) IQPA audit fees	2i(4)		
(5) Investment advisory and investment management fees	2i(5)		
(6) Bank or trust company trustee/custodial fees	2i(6)		
(7) Actuarial fees	2i(7)		
(8) Legal fees	2i(8)		
(9) Valuation/appraisal fees	2i(9)		
(10) Other trustee fees and expenses	2i(10)		
(11) Other expenses.....	2i(11)		
(12) Total administrative expenses. Add lines 2i(1) through (11)	2i(12)		0
j Total expenses. Add all expense amounts in column (b) and enter total.....	2j		675438

Net Income and Reconciliation

k Net income (loss). Subtract line 2j from line 2d	2k		6338150
l Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan.....	2l(1)		
(2) From this plan	2l(2)		

Part III Accountant's Opinion

3 Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

a The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

(1) Unmodified (2) Qualified (3) Disclaimer (4) Adverse

b Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

(1) DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 (2) DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) (3) neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

c Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

(1) Name: CLIFTONLARSONALLEN LLP

(2) EIN: 41-0746749

d The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** as part of Schedule H because:

(1) This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, DCG or MTIA. (2) It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

Part IV Compliance Questions

4 CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l. DCGs do not complete lines 4e, 4f, 4k, 4l, and 5, and DCGs generally complete the rest of Part IV collectively for all plans in the DCG, except as otherwise provided (see instructions).

During the plan year:

	Yes	No	Amount
a Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.)		X	
b Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
c Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
d Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.)		X	
e Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	X		1000000
f Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?		X	
g Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
h Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		X	
i Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	X		
j Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.)		X	
k Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?		X	
l Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?		X	
m If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)		X	
n If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3.			

5a Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year? Yes No
If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year _____.

5b If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

5b(1) Name of plan(s)	5b(2) EIN(s)	5b(3) PN(s)

5c Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) Yes No Not determined

If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year _____.

SCHEDULE R (Form 5500) <small>Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service</small> <small>Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration</small> <small>Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation</small>	Retirement Plan Information This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	<small>OMB No. 1210-0110</small> 2024 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
--	---	---

For calendar plan year 2024 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2024 and ending 12/31/2024

A Name of plan <u>THE BERNARD GROUP INC. EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN</u>	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶	<u>002</u>
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 <u>THE BERNARD GROUP INC.</u>	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) <u>41-1944077</u>	

Part I	Distributions
---------------	----------------------

All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.

1 Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions.....

1		0
---	--	---

2 Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits):
 EIN(s): 42-0127290

Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.

3 Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year.....

3	
---	--

Part II	Funding Information (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)
----------------	---

4 Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)? Yes No N/A
If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.

5 If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. **Date:** Month _____ Day _____ Year _____
If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.

6 a Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived)	6a	
b Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year	6b	
c Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount).....	6c	

If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.

7 Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline?..... Yes No N/A

8 If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change? Yes No N/A

Part III	Amendments
-----------------	-------------------

9 If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box..... Increase Decrease Both No

Part IV	ESOPs (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.
----------------	---

10 Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan? Yes No

11 a Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock? Yes No

b If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.) Yes No

12 Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market? Yes No

Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

13 Enter the following information for each employer that (1) contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year or (2) was one of the top-ten highest contributors (measured in dollars). See instructions. Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: Hourly Weekly Unit of production Other (specify): _____

14 Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for:

a The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: <input type="checkbox"/> last contributing employer <input type="checkbox"/> alternative <input type="checkbox"/> reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment).....	14a	
b The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	14b	
c The second preceding plan year. <input type="checkbox"/> Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment).....	14c	

15 Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to:

a The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year	15a	
b The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year	15b	

16 Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year:

a Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year	16a	
b If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers.....	16b	

17 If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment

Part VI Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

18 If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment

19 If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) and (b):

a Enter the percentage of plan assets held as:
 Public Equity: _____% Private Equity: _____% Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets: _____%
 High-Yield Debt: _____% Real Assets: _____% Cash or Cash Equivalents: _____% Other: _____%

b Provide the average duration of the Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets:
 0-5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years 15 years or more

20 PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements. If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20.

a Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero? Yes No

b If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box:
 Yes.
 No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date.
 No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date.
 No. Other. Provide explanation: _____

Part VII IRS Compliance Questions

21a Does the plan satisfy the coverage and nondiscrimination tests of Code sections 410(b) and 401(a)(4) by combining this plan with any other plans under the permissive aggregation rules? Yes No

21b If this is a Code section 401(k) plan, check all boxes that apply to indicate how the plan is intended to satisfy the nondiscrimination requirements for employee deferrals and employer matching contributions (as applicable) under Code sections 401(k)(3) and 401(m)(2).
 Design-based safe harbor method
 "Prior year" ADP test
 "Current year" ADP test
 N/A

22 If the plan sponsor is an adopter of a pre-approved plan that received a favorable IRS Opinion Letter, enter the date of the Opinion Letter ___/___/____ (MM/DD/YYYY) and the Opinion Letter serial number _____.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND
ERISA-REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE**

**AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023 AND
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**



CPAs | CONSULTANTS | WEALTH ADVISORS

CLAcconnect.com

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
TABLE OF CONTENTS
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023 AND
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT	1
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	
STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	4
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	5
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	6
ERISA-REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE (ATTACHMENT TO FORM 5500)	
SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i—SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)	14



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Plan Administrator
The Bernard Group, Inc.
Employee Stock Ownership Plan
Chaska, Minnesota

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan (the Plan), an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), which comprise the statements of net assets available for benefits as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related statement of changes in net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the net assets available for benefits of The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the changes in its net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2024, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Management is also responsible for maintaining a current Plan instrument, including all Plan amendments, administering the Plan, and determining that the Plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the Plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

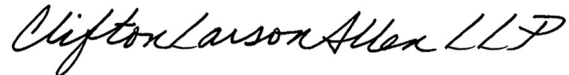
Plan Administrator
The Bernard Group, Inc.
Employee Stock Ownership Plan

Supplemental Schedule Required by ERISA

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental schedule of assets (held at end of year) as of December 31, 2024 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements but is supplementary information required by the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedule, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedule, including its form and content, is presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In our opinion, the information in the accompanying schedule is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements as a whole, and the form and content are presented in conformity with the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.



CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

St. Cloud, Minnesota
August 27, 2025

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

ASSETS	<u>2024</u>			<u>2023</u>		
	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u>	<u>Total</u>
INVESTMENTS (AT ESTIMATED FAIR VALUE)						
The Bernard Group, Inc. Common Stock	\$ 49,144,791	\$ 73,355,209	\$ 122,500,000	\$ 42,806,116	\$ 73,593,884	\$ 116,400,000
LIABILITIES						
NOTE PAYABLE	<u>-</u>	<u>5,438,640</u>	<u>5,438,640</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,676,790</u>	<u>5,676,790</u>
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS	<u>\$ 49,144,791</u>	<u>\$ 67,916,569</u>	<u>\$ 117,061,360</u>	<u>\$ 42,806,116</u>	<u>\$ 67,917,094</u>	<u>\$ 110,723,210</u>

See accompanying Notes to Financial Statements.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u>	<u>Total</u>
ADDITIONS TO NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS ATTRIBUTABLE TO:			
Net Appreciation in Estimated Fair Value of Investments	\$ 2,243,276	\$ 3,856,724	\$ 6,100,000
Employer Contributions	533,129	380,459	913,588
Allocation of 33,432 Shares of Common Stock of The Bernard Group, Inc. at Estimated Fair Value for the Year Ended December 31, 2024	<u>4,095,399</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,095,399</u>
Total Additions	<u>6,871,804</u>	<u>4,237,183</u>	<u>11,108,987</u>
DEDUCTIONS FROM NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS ATTRIBUTABLE TO:			
Interest Expense	-	142,309	142,309
Benefits Paid to Participants	533,129	-	533,129
Allocation of 33,432 Shares of Common Stock of The Bernard Group, Inc. at Estimated Fair Value for the Year Ended December 31, 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>4,095,399</u>	<u>4,095,399</u>
Total Deductions	<u>533,129</u>	<u>4,237,708</u>	<u>4,770,837</u>
NET INCREASE (DECREASE)	6,338,675	(525)	6,338,150
NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS:			
Beginning of Year	<u>42,806,116</u>	<u>67,917,094</u>	<u>110,723,210</u>
End of Year	<u>\$ 49,144,791</u>	<u>\$ 67,916,569</u>	<u>\$ 117,061,360</u>

See accompanying Notes to Financial Statements.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 1 DESCRIPTION OF PLAN

The following description of The Bernard Group, Inc. Employee Stock Ownership Plan (the Plan) provides only general information. Participants should refer to the Plan document for a more complete description of the Plan's provisions.

General

The Bernard Group, Inc. (Company) established the Plan on January 1, 2013. The Plan was last amended and restated effective January 1, 2023. The Plan is a defined contribution plan intended to constitute an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) and is designed to comply with Section 4975(e)(7) and the regulations thereunder of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). The Plan covers all employees of the Company who have completed the eligibility requirements including the completion of one year of service and attainment of age 18. The Plan excludes employees who are classified as independent contractors, leased employees and employees whose employment is governed by a collective bargaining agreement. An eligible employee will begin participation on January 1 or July 1 following the completion of the eligibility requirements. The Plan is designed to invest primarily in securities issued by the Company and is authorized to borrow money for such investments. It is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), as amended.

The Plan purchased Company common stock using the proceeds of a note payable to the Company and holds the stock in a trust established under the Plan (see Note 5). As the Plan makes debt payments, an appropriate percentage of stock will be allocated to eligible employees' accounts in accordance with applicable regulations under the IRC.

The Company's borrowing is collateralized by the Plan's unallocated shares of The Bernard Group, Inc. common stock. As the Plan makes debt payments, an appropriate percentage of stock is allocated to eligible participant's accounts. Shares are allocated to each participant's account based upon the individual participant's annual compensation, as defined, in relation to the total compensation for all participants. The lender has no rights against shares once they are allocated under the Plan. Accordingly, the financial statements of the Plan as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and for the year ended December 31, 2024, present separately the assets and liabilities and changes therein pertaining to:

- (a) The account of employees with vested rights in allocated common stock (Allocated)
and
- (b) Common stock not yet allocated to employees (Unallocated)

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 1 DESCRIPTION OF PLAN (CONTINUED)

Contributions

Each year, the Company may contribute to the Plan up to 25% of covered compensation as determined annually by the Company's Board of Directors. Contributions may be in the form of shares of common stock or cash. Contributions for each year are never less than the amount required to enable the Plan to discharge its current obligations, without regard to whether some or all of such contribution may fail to qualify for an income tax deduction by the Company. In order to receive an allocation of Company contributions, a participant must complete 1,000 hours of service and be employed on the last day of the Plan year unless termination is due to death, disability or retirement. Contributions by Plan participants are not permitted by the Plan. Contributions are subject to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) limitations.

Participant Accounts

Each participant's account is credited with the Company contributions and investment income or losses. Company contributions are allocated proportionately based on eligible compensation of all eligible participants. Eligible compensation excludes compensation in excess of \$100,000. Income is allocated annually based on each participant's share of the fund. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided by the participant's account.

Vesting

Vesting of participant's accounts is based on years of credited service with the Company. A participant's account becomes fully vested after six years of credited service with the Company, under a graded vesting schedule. In addition, each participant employed on December 31, 2012 and as of January 1, 2013, shall be credited for vesting purposes an additional year of service for every four 12-month periods of continuous employment performed prior to January 1, 2013, up to a maximum credit of three years of service.

Notwithstanding the above, participants shall, however, become 100% vested in the account upon attaining normal retirement age of 65, their death, or becoming permanently disabled.

Distributions

Distributions from the Plan will be made after a participant retires, dies, becomes disabled, or otherwise terminates employment. If a participant terminates employment and the participant's account balance does not exceed \$1,000, the Plan administrator will authorize the benefit payment without the participant's consent. If the balance of the terminated participant's account is between \$1,000 and \$5,000, the Plan Sponsor may authorize that the benefit payment be rolled into an individual retirement account in the participant's name. If the vested balance of the terminated participant's other investment account exceeds \$5,000, the value will be paid in one lump sum payment and the Company stock account will be paid in five substantially equal installments. Special rules extending the five-year installment exist for Company stock accounts greater than \$1,015,000.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 1 DESCRIPTION OF PLAN (CONTINUED)

Diversification

Diversification is offered to participants close to retirement so that they may have the opportunity to move part of the value of their investment in Company common stock into investments which are more diversified. Participants who are at least age 55 with at least 10 years of participation service in the Plan may elect to diversify a portion of their account. Effective January 1, 2023, Diversification is offered to each eligible participant over a six-year period. Participants who elect to diversify receive a cash distribution.

Voting Rights

Each participant is entitled to exercise voting rights attributable to the shares allocated to his or her account and is notified by the trustee prior to the time that such rights are to be exercised. The trustee is not permitted to vote any allocated share for which instructions have not been given by a participant. The trustee is required, however, to vote any unallocated shares on behalf of the collective best interest of Plan participants and beneficiaries.

Put Option

Under federal income tax regulations, the Company stock that is held by the Plan and its participants and is not readily tradable on an established market or is subject to trading limitations includes a put option. The put option is a right to demand that the Company buy any shares of its stock distributed to participants for which there is no market. The put price is representative of the fair market value of the stock. The Company may pay for the purchase with interest over a period of five years. The purpose of the put option is to ensure that the participant has the ability to ultimately obtain cash.

Forfeited Accounts

Allocations of forfeited nonvested accounts for the Plan year ended December 31, 2024 totaled \$176,879. These amounts are allocated to participants who have completed a year of service and are employed on the last day of the Plan year or terminated employment due to death, disability, or normal retirement age. There were no unallocated forfeiture accounts at December 31, 2024 and 2023.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Plan are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

Allocations

The financial statements of the Plan present separately the assets and liabilities and changes therein pertaining to (a) the accounts of employees with rights in allocated stock (allocated) and (b) stock not yet allocated to employees (unallocated), including shares that are committed to be released. Shares are released from collateral and become allocated generally in the period in which debt service is actually paid.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires the Plan administrator to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and changes therein, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Valuation of Investments and Income Recognition

The Plan's investments are reported at estimated fair value. See Note 4 for discussion of fair value measurements.

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Net appreciation (depreciation) includes the Plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

Payment of Benefits

Benefit payments are recorded when paid.

Administrative Expenses

The Company pays all administrative expenses on behalf of the Plan.

Subsequent Events

The Plan has evaluated subsequent events through August 27, 2025, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

NOTE 3 INVESTMENTS

Investment in Company Securities

The Plan's initial investment in Company securities consisted of 1,000,000 shares of the outstanding common stock of The Bernard Group, Inc. The shares were acquired on April 12, 2013 for \$8,000,000 (\$8.00 per share). The estimated fair market value, determined by an independent appraisal as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 was \$122.50 and \$116.40 per share, respectively. During the Plan year ended December 31, 2024, 33,432 shares were released to eligible Plan participants.

	2024			2023		
	Allocated	Unallocated	Total	Allocated	Unallocated	Total
The Bernard Group, Inc. Common Stock:						
Number of Shares	401,182	598,818	1,000,000	367,750	632,250	1,000,000
Cost	\$ 3,209,456	\$ 4,790,544	\$ 8,000,000	\$ 2,942,001	\$ 5,057,999	\$ 8,000,000
Market (at Estimated Fair Value)	\$ 49,144,791	\$ 73,355,209	\$ 122,500,000	\$ 42,806,116	\$ 73,593,884	\$ 116,400,000

THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

NOTE 4 FAIR VALUE OF INVESTMENTS

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Level 1 – Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2 – Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly, such as:

- quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets;
- quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets;
- inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the assets or liability;
- inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the Level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 – Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the valuation methodologies used at December 31, 2024 and 2023.

Company Common Stock: The fair value of the Company common stock held by the Plan is valued at fair value based on an independent third-party appraisal. This appraisal is based upon a combination of the market and income valuation techniques consistent with prior years. The appraiser took into account historical and projected cash flow and net income, return on assets, return on equity, market comparables, and estimated fair value of Company assets and liabilities.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 4 FAIR VALUE OF INVESTMENTS (CONTINUED)

The following tables set forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's assets at fair value as of December 31:

	2024			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
The Bernard Group, Inc. Common Stock (Estimated Fair Value)	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 122,500,000</u>	<u>\$ 122,500,000</u>
	2023			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
The Bernard Group, Inc. Common Stock (Estimated Fair Value)	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 116,400,000</u>	<u>\$ 116,400,000</u>

The following table represents changes in the Plan's Level 3 financial instruments for the year ended December 31 attributable to:

	Company Common Stock 2024
Purchases	\$ -
Issuances	-
Transfers In	-
Transfers Out	-

NOTE 5 NOTE PAYABLE

On April 12, 2013, the Plan entered into an \$8,000,000 term loan agreement with the Company. The proceeds of the loan were used to purchase the Company's common stock. The Plan has a note payable related to the purchase of Company common stock on December 31 as follows:

Description	2024	2023
Note Payable – The Bernard Group, Inc., interest at a rate of 2.50%, due December 31, 2042; secured by unallocated The Bernard Group, Inc. common stock purchased with proceeds from this note	<u>\$ 5,438,640</u>	<u>\$ 5,676,790</u>

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

NOTE 5 NOTE PAYABLE (CONTINUED)

While the Company reserves the right to change the amounts and the timing of contributions to the Plan, the scheduled amortization of the Plan's loan and related Plan contributions for the next five years are as follows:

Year Ending December 31,	Amount
2025	\$ 244,493
2026	250,605
2027	256,870
2028	262,971
2029	269,866
2029 and Thereafter	4,153,835

NOTE 6 PLAN TERMINATION

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, the Company has the right under the Plan to discontinue its contributions at any time and to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event of Plan termination, participants will become 100% vested in their accounts.

NOTE 7 PARTY-IN-INTEREST TRANSACTIONS

The Plan's assets, which consist primarily of Company common shares, are held by the trustee. Company contributions are held and managed by the trustee, who invests cash received as a result of cash contributions and interest income and makes distributions to participants.

The Plan is administered by the Company and certain administrative functions are outsourced to a third-party administrator. Certain administrative functions are performed by officers or employees of the Company. No such officer or employee receives compensation from the Plan.

NOTE 8 RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Plan provides for investment primarily in Company common stock. In general, these investments are exposed to various risks, such as interest rate, credit, and overall market volatility risk. The stock of the Company is valued annually by an independent third-party valuation specialist. Because of the inherent subjectivity in any valuation, those estimated values may differ significantly from the values that would have been used had a ready market for the securities existed, and the differences could be material. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investments, it is reasonably possible that changes in the values of the investments will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect participants' account balances and the amounts reported in the statements of net assets available for benefits.

THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

NOTE 9 TAX STATUS

The IRS has determined and informed the Company by a letter that the Plan is qualified and the trust established under the Plan is tax exempt under the appropriate sections of the IRC. The Plan has been amended since receiving the determination letter. The Plan administrator believes that the Plan is designed and is currently being operated in compliance with the applicable requirements of the IRC.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require Plan management to evaluate tax positions taken by the Plan and recognize a tax liability (or asset) if the Plan has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by the IRS. The Plan is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

**THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
E.I.N. 41-1944077 PLAN NO. 002
SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i—SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)
DECEMBER 31, 2024**

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Identity of Issue, Borrower, Lessor, or Similar Party	Description	Cost	Current Value	
*	The Bernard Group, Inc.	Common Stock: Allocated – 401,182 Shares Unallocated – 598,818 Shares	\$ 3,209,456 <u>4,790,544</u>	\$ 49,144,791 <u>73,355,209</u>
		Total Assets (Held at End of Year)	<u>\$ 8,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 122,500,000</u>

* *Designates Party-in-Interest*



CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP) is a network member of CLA Global. See CLAGlobal.com/disclaimer. Investment advisory services are offered through CliftonLarsonAllen Wealth Advisors, LLC, an SEC-registered investment advisor.

THE BERNARD GROUP, INC.
EMPLOYEE STOCK OWNERSHIP PLAN
E.I.N. 41-1944077 PLAN NO. 002
SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i—SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)
DECEMBER 31, 2024

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Identity of Issue, Borrower, Lessor, or Similar Party	Description	Cost	Current Value	
*	The Bernard Group, Inc.	Common Stock:		
		Allocated – 401,182 Shares	\$ 3,209,456	\$ 49,144,791
		Unallocated – 598,818 Shares	<u>4,790,544</u>	<u>73,355,209</u>
		Total Assets (Held at End of Year)	<u>\$ 8,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 122,500,000</u>

* Designates Party-in-Interest