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By Mark Roberts - ABC Mass. chairman's message: Be proactive and promote safety

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Personal responsibility is at the very core of the merit shop philosophy. But there is an exception to every rule. In our business, safety is the exception. All of us share responsibility for ensuring our own safety and that of our colleagues.

During the last three years in particular, our attention has been focused on finding work, making payroll and staying afloat. But even with those very basic concerns to distract us, we can't forget that we have chosen to work in a very dangerous industry.

Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts (ABCMA) and our training affiliate, the Gould Construction Institute, certainly haven't forgotten that. In May, during the Gould's seventh annual S.T.E.P. awards, we again took a couple of hours to celebrate our colleagues who have gone above and beyond to ensure that their employees and all those who work with them are safe. Three \$19,000 George Gould Memorial Scholarships were also awarded to future leaders of our industry.

Proper training is the surest route to construction safety, and ABCMA and the Gould are always available to assist you with your training and educational needs. "Safety by accident" is a term often used to describe a contractor that hasn't invested their company's safety program, but has yet to suffer an accident. But it is, unfortunately, just a matter of time. And there's nothing more tragic than when companies come to Gould after the fact to get the training they need. By then it is too late for the affected tradespeople and their families. Be proactive; act today to get the training you need to ensure safety at your company.

As always thank you for your membership and for maintaining a safe workplace for all 22,000 employees of ABCMA companies.

Please visit the Gould Construction Institute website at www.gwgci.org/ to view all the safety training opportunities available.

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