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ABC Mass. ahead of the curve with MAP program

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After a long and deep recession, the construction industry and the economy as a whole are on the rebound. With the demand for labor growing, so are apprenticeship programs, and ABC Mass. is ahead of the curve with the Merit Apprenticeship Program (MAP).

Increasing demand for qualified workers isn't the only force that has apprenticeship programs on the rise. The ever-increasing debt burden faced by college graduates also has more young people looking at apprenticeship programs that allow them to emerge with little or no debt and go directly into a job that affords them a middle-class lifestyle.

The economy wasn't looking quite so good when we launched MAP almost four years ago. But even then, many member companies recognized that the program allows them to augment their hiring process and find qualified candidates from the nine labor pools located across Massachusetts and in southern New Hampshire. MAP can also free human resource personnel or owners from much of the bureaucratic maze of paperwork, thus allowing them to focus on other important responsibilities. And MAP provides member companies with the opportunity to bid on virtually any public sector prevailing wage job - be it federal, state, local or out-of-state - because the program is registered with the Department of Workforce Development's Division of Apprentice Standards.

Even The New York Times has covered the growth of apprenticeship programs and the issue is already having a bipartisan impact on the 2016 presidential race. Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton has proposed offering companies a \$1,500 tax credit for every slot they fill.

On the Republican side, Gov. Scott Walker has promoted apprenticeships in Wisconsin and increased funding for them even as he has cut aid to the state's vaunted university system. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio has also vowed to expand apprenticeships and vocational training if he's elected. U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez wants to double enrollment in apprenticeship programs by 2018. If you want to learn about how ABC's apprenticeship program can help you grow your business, contact John Rich at (781) 273-0123 or John@abcma.org.

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