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Gould Construction Institute - a powerful ABC resource

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Over the past 20 plus years, the Gould Construction Institute (GCI) has grown from a small but respectable training program to one of the preeminent construction training schools in Massachusetts. As Associated Builders and Contractors of Massachusetts' (ABC MA) fully-accredited training affiliate, GCI's mission is to provide high-quality construction training to equip individuals with the knowledge they need to enjoy long and successful careers in construction.

We at ABC can take great pride in the fact that we are the only local construction association that operates a state-licensed school that is training our members and the industry at large. The Gould Construction Institute was named in honor of the late George Gould, a two-term ABC MA chair who strongly believed training was the key to opportunity and success. GCI is actively and enthusiastically fulfilling this important mission at a time when it has never been so critical to bring skilled men and women into construction to meet the growing workforce demand.

For the 2016-2017 school year, GCI enrollment eclipsed 800 students. GCI, through its faculty of 83 instructors, is providing not just trade related classes, but safety and professional development programs across the state. Beyond growing enrollment, GCI is working to continue to evolve and expand with the industry to provide the opportunities necessary to attract and develop the workforce for tomorrow.

GCI is an active partner, along with ABC MA and MAP – ABC's Merit Apprenticeship Program - in a new initiative we are launching called "Building Mass Careers." The goal of this program is to promote construction as a rewarding career and to make it easy for students, parents and educators to get information about the industry and what it offers. A key part of this will be a new website launching later this year. "Building Mass Careers" will be a great opportunity to showcase our unique trio of assets: GCI, to provide training; MAP, to provide apprenticeships, and ABC MA and our members to employ individuals and provide good careers. You will be hearing more on this soon.

Along with this new career outreach initiative, GCI expanded its executive staff earlier this year with the hiring of Julie Kelliher to serve in the newly-created role of education director. With the addition of this position, GCI can grow in some key areas that GCI president Barbara Lagergren and the board of directors agree are important to the school's evolution.

GCI has launched several new initiatives including a professional development series that allows

ABC MA members to share their knowledge and expertise with other ABC members; the Supervisor Certificate program recognizes supervisors for proficiency developed through on-the-job and professional development training; a program that educates construction foreman and supervisors on “jobsite Spanish” for the safety of all contractors; and on-line training for continuing education requirements.

GCI currently offers training for more than 10 different trades including carpentry, electrical, HVAC, pipefitting, plumbing and sheet metal. The Gould’s correspondence program allows students to learn construction-related courses at their own pace, offering the flexibility needed in such a demanding industry. And a full range of safety training is offered to ensure our construction workforce is up to date and equipped with the most relevant information to keep jobsites safe.

But it’s not just the core training that has developed GCI into one of the best construction schools in Massachusetts – it’s the ongoing career and professional development GCI provides to help individuals thrive in the construction industry for their entire career. What’s behind this is the strong and dedicated leadership of GCI president Lagergren and the GCI board comprised of ABC members and leaders from institutions including Wentworth Institute of Technology and the Greater Lawrence Technical School. As ABC chairman this year, I sit on the GCI board, and it is a privilege to be among such dedicated leaders.

At this important juncture for our industry, we are fortunate to have the Gould Construction Institute as a powerful ABC resource to train our members’ current and future employees and leaders. And on top of quality training, ABC MA members receive discounted rates. If you are not using GCI to develop your company’s workforce, I encourage you to learn more about how they can help your company by contacting Barbara Lagergren or Julie Kelliher at 781-270-9990 or barbara@gwgci.org or julie@gwgci.org. As an ABC member, GCI is your school – take full advantage!

Joe Barbone is the 2017 chairman of the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. – Mass. Chapter, Woburn, Mass. and is the president and CEO of Methuen Construction, Plaistow, N.H.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540