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ASM president's message: Taking the reigns - by Susan Coghlin Mailman

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I'm honored to become the chair of the board of the Associated Subcontractors of Massachusetts. To be able to represent the board that works for the interests of subcontracting firms across Mass. is really cool! I can tell you after nine years on the board that you are being represented by passionate, engaged individuals. It has been an honor to work with Joe Bodio, CEO of LAN-TEL Communications, Inc. for the past two years. Joe has really focused his thought process on the future of technology, and how it will impact our businesses and our customers. He's also given considerable thought to how change will be around every corner, and our ability to succeed as organizations will depend on our ability to be nimble. Joe has been incredibly active in our legislative work and I will promise to follow in his footsteps. I'm excited to work with Carrie Ciliberto, ASM's new CEO. I believe her background fits perfectly with our mission. She has big shoes to fill and I believe the fit is perfect!

I believe our industry is a story of workforce development. ASM represents entrepreneurs, as well as 4th generation family-owned business like my company, Coghlin Electrical Contractors, Inc. We are the backbone of the construction industry: we provide the labor across trade after trade after trade. In total we represent 325 organizations and thousands of employees. Legislators care about what we have to say. They should – we vote – and we represent a LOT of working class families.

If I had been asked to chair this board when I was 40, I would have been quiet about some of the things I want to say. Because I'm 55, I will not be quiet. Our industry needs to diversify its workforce. We need to welcome women, and I mean REALLY welcome women – as respected colleagues that work alongside in the field, that manage our projects on jobsites, that serve as estimators and CAD engineers and purchasing and accounting folks, and ultimately own and operate our businesses.

We need to embrace our diverse ethnic populations. Our state has stagnated in natural born citizens, yet our immigrant populations are growing. The success of our businesses, I believe, will hinge on our ability to train and develop a diverse work force. A nod to the Gaming Commission for their work in the state on behalf of women and people of color – they are impacting families lives with good paying jobs. The entire industry will benefit because of the effort being made today.

Lastly, but very important to me is that my company's home has always been in Worcester – we are fortunate to work all over the state. I hope during my tenure that we can increase the members from central and western Massachusetts and Cape Cod, as the work that gets done at our organization truly represents all of us.

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