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## **Chairman's message: We all depend on membership - by Joe Barbone**

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Whether it's a fully licensed school that trains employees of our member companies, access to a pipeline of qualified workers through the Merit Apprentice Program (MAP), or working on behalf of members on Beacon Hill, all these programs have one thing in common: They depend on membership.

Our membership numbers have been on the rise in recent years. As a result, we were able to establish MAP, members helped the Gould Construction Institute achieve record student enrollment, and we have been able to advocate successfully for our priorities on Beacon Hill.

It's not just the organization as a whole that benefits from membership, member companies also enjoy valuable benefits. There is our new multi-employer 401(k) program, assistance on legal matters, money-saving insurance options and discounts on everything ranging from vehicle purchases and gas to telephone services and shipping. And don't forget opportunities to be recognized for company accomplishments through our Excellence in Construction and STEP - Safety, Training and Education Program - awards.

We continue to expand member offerings with our recently invigorated Future Leaders group ([abcmafutureleaders.org](http://abcmafutureleaders.org)), which engages company personnel at all levels. Employees gain professionally through active participation, which will lead to stronger, better run member companies and an even a more vibrant ABC organization.

Our ABC Workforce Taskforce is developing solutions to the labor shortage, which is one of the paramount problems confronting the construction industry, by engaging schools, government officials, and community leaders to connect men and women to needy employers. And by the end of the year, ABC will launch its Legal Roundtable aimed at keeping our members and attorneys informed of changes in the law and sharing emerging legal trends and resources.

All of these programs and opportunities are made possible through you, our members, who are the foundation for everything our chapter does.

Thanks to the hard work of membership director Ken Ledwak, participating members and ABC staff, we had another successful membership drive bringing in 27 new members this October!

But we can't stop now. There are countless companies that could benefit from ABC membership and, in turn, ABC from their membership. To help achieve our potential and build on the success of the membership drive, I am issuing a challenge for each member to nominate a firm you do business with and send Ken ([ken@abcma.org](mailto:ken@abcma.org)) contact information for that company. For each firm that joins this month, the nominating individual from the member firm will receive \$100 Amazon gift card.

There is so much we can accomplish together - from increasing the pipeline of qualified employees to our work on Beacon Hill and so much more - if we redouble our efforts now to maximize membership growth.

ABC has come a long way in recent years, but it's just the beginning. The more members we have, the more we can do to help each one.

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.