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Mass. Bulding Trades Council and partners honored with Ayers Award by North America's Building Trades Unions

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Shown (from left) are: Frank Callahan, Mary Vogel, Maryanne Ham, and Susan Moir

Boston, MA The Mass. Building Trades Council (MassBTC), the Policy Group on Tradeswomen's Issues (PGTI), Building Pathways, and Mass. Girls in Trades were honored with the Mark Ayers Community Achievement Award by North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU).

These Mass. initiatives were recognized for leading the nation on gender equity and inclusion.

Because of their efforts:

- In Massachusetts, the percentage of women in union apprenticeship programs is almost triple the national average of women in the construction workforce.
- 95% of all women apprentices in Massachusetts are enrolled in Union Sponsored Apprenticeship Programs

"I am thrilled that NABTU is recognizing the stellar work of the Massachusetts building trades unions, PGTI, Building Pathways, Massachusetts Girls in Trades, and the successful Build a Life movement," said Frank Callahan, MassBTC president.

The Massachusetts building trades unions represent more than 75,000 hard-working men and women across the state.

The Unions of the MassBTC:

- offer industry-leading wages with guaranteed equal pay for equal work
- invest over \$55 million in training, with 40 training facilities across Massachusetts
- offer health plans to more than a quarter of a million children, spouses, and workers

- pay \$1 billion every year on healthcare to make sure families are healthy and have access to medical care when they're sick

This nationally recognized success is the result of years of work and dedication from unions and their partners. PGTI, a collaborative of more than 75 industry partners, started to address the lack of access to good jobs for women in the construction trades more than 10 years ago.

“At PGTI, we offer support to any union, apprenticeship program, contractor or organization looking to increase women apprentices, members and employees, and it’s wonderful to see our work is having a clear and successful impact on the success of women in the trades,” said Susan Moir, PGTI research director. “Gender equity in construction not only helps women, but also helps entire communities. I’m grateful to NABTU for recognizing PGTI’s important work.”

Working alongside PGTI is Building Pathways, a Union Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship Program that provides a gateway for low-income Boston area residents, particularly in underserved communities, by offering apprenticeship preparedness training and advocacy.

“Massachusetts building trades unions have a proud tradition of serving workers and lifting up communities, and in the 21st century, that means investing in the economic success of low-income and under-served communities,” said Mary Vogel of Building Pathways. “Building Pathways is incredibly proud to receive recognition for our success providing opportunities for workers, particularly women and people of color, to obtain family-sustaining careers in construction.”

Massachusetts Girls in Trades is leading the effort to break down barriers for women by promoting the trades to girls. At its first ever Girls in Trades Conference in 2016, the organization hosted over four hundred female students from eighteen high schools across the state.

“We founded Massachusetts Girls in Trades to pave a pathway for girls from Career and Technical high schools to access careers in the union construction trades.” said Maryanne Ham, chair of Massachusetts Girls in Trades. “This is an opportunity for young girls majoring in the trades in high school to be mentored by women in the same trade. Our Equity in The Trades Student Leadership Council is providing leadership opportunities and equity training for student leaders to confidently and appropriately promote an inclusive classroom/workplace. I’m looking forward to building on our exciting success supporting girls and women in the trades.”

These impressive organizations are revolutionizing the building trades, and have launched a public awareness campaign, Build a Life, with a goal of reaching twenty percent women in the building trades by 2020.