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Commodore Builders and the Herren Project expand resources

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Shown (from left) are: Lisa Ulbrich, Chris Herren, Kevin Mikolazyk, and Joe Albanese

South Boston, MA Commodore Builders and the Herren Project, a national nonprofit organization providing free resources for the treatment, recovery and prevention of substance use disorder, are expanding their substance-use disorder recovery program aimed at helping employees find treatment and resources to take the crucial first step in their journey towards recovery.

The program—the only one like it in the construction industry—will now expand its free services for employees to each of the 500 subcontractors/tradespeople working on Commodore Builders construction sites.

This expansion comes at a critical time in the battle against substance addiction: A recent paper reveals how the COVID-19 pandemic has halted much of the progress made by coalitions to expand treatment and recovery options and destigmatize substance addiction. This is particularly troubling for the construction industry, where workers are much more likely to become addicted to opioids and other substances as compared to workers in similar fields.

In recognition of the landmark initiative, the Commodore Builders and Herren Project teams held an event on August 5th at Commodore Builders' construction site in South Boston. Speakers included Commodore Builders CEO Joe Albanese, a U.S. Navy veteran and current governor of Massachusetts Charlie Baker's chief recovery officer during the Merrimack Valley gas disaster; Chris Herren, a former Boston Celtic and the founder of the Herren Project; Kevin Mikolazyk, executive director of the Herren Project; and Lisa Ulbrich, vice president at Commodore Builders. Ulbrich, who has had personal struggles with substance addiction in the past, and has been through the recovery process, spoke to the power and impact of this program and its ability to change lives.

"Having come out on the other side of substance addiction, I know how invaluable these resources can be to someone in the throes of this unfortunate, yet incredibly common disease," said Ulbrich. "I'm very proud to help establish such a forward-thinking initiative alongside my colleagues at Commodore Builders and I hope that anybody who needs the help and has access to the program

takes advantage of the recovery services that are now available to them.”

“With the help of our friends at the Herren Project, we’ve been able to establish a revolutionary program that’s designed to provide the necessary assistance to our employees, subcontractors and tradespeople who are battling, or have previously struggled with substance use disorder,” said Albanese. “Now more than ever, it’s imperative that we allocate the resources necessary to support those who are most vulnerable, and providing treatment and therapy to anyone who needs it is certainly a step in the right direction.”

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