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October is Careers in Construction Month - by Joseph Camilo

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All of you are well aware of the presidential election coming up on November 3rd. But I bet that a far smaller number know that October is Careers in Construction Month. The confluence of these two events provides a reminder of just how big a role construction plays in the national economy.

In recent years, the focus in our industry has been on trying to find enough qualified employees to meet booming demand. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has paused that narrative, it hasn't stopped it. Over time, demand for construction talent is still expected to outpace the supply.

ABC continues to do its part to address this issue. Last year alone, ABC members nationally invested more than \$1.5 billion to provide over 1.1 million course attendees with craft, leadership and safety training. At \$1,100 per employee, safety education accounted for nearly half of member companies' total workforce investment.

Our chapter's education and training efforts continue despite the disruption caused by the pandemic. Thanks to the hard work of its leaders and instructors, the Gould Construction Institute's transition to online learning has been remarkably smooth, with some students commenting that the ability to come home from work and sit down and log on to a computer rather than having to head out to a classroom is allowing them to enjoy better work-life balance.

The construction industry offers talented young people a number of benefits. First, our "earn while you learn" model means employees can go to schools such as the Gould Construction Institute while they're working, and member companies routinely pay for the training. Workers emerge with the skills they need to pursue a high-paying career, and without the debt that goes along with entering so many other lucrative fields.

And the days of construction being just for those who choose not to go to college are long gone. Our ever-more sophisticated and fast-growing industry holds opportunities for individuals with a variety of education levels. And the merit shop model means people can rise as high as their talent and

ambition will take them.

ABC Massachusetts is contributing to this transformation with our Building Mass Careers program. Check out <http://www.buildingmasscareers.com/> for a wealth of information about construction-related career options.

Don't forget to go to the polls or mail in your ballot on November 3rd, and treat your vote as an investment in the construction industry's continued growth. When you do, keep in mind the important role the construction industry will play in Massachusetts' and the country's recovery from the COVID-19 recession.

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