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ABC-Mass. chapter Chairman's Message: Grant-related opportunities - by Kyle Reagan

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Kyle Reagan

I'd like to draw your attention to the state apprenticeship expansion and construction diversity grant that was recently awarded to our chapter. The \$94,000 grant will allow us to invest in developing the pipeline of qualified talent our companies so desperately need, but maximizing its benefits will require your participation.

Grant-related work is already underway. We're looking for up to 25 participants for a pre-apprenticeship program that will run from January 18 to March 24 and include content such as the NCCER Core Construction Curriculum 6.0, OSHA 10 and Hotwork certification. Please contact Steve Sullivan at steve@abcma.org or 781-281-6860 if you have candidates to take part in the program, or know of potential candidates.

And speaking of Steve, he deserves our congratulations for all his work to secure this grant!

As the grant work progresses, the goal is to bring a diverse group of talent into our industry. Participants will transition from pre-apprenticeship to full registered apprenticeship and construction employment – we hope with ABC member contractors. ABC already operates the state-approved Merit Apprenticeship Program, which currently has over 300 apprentices from 61 companies.

ABC, in conjunction with the Metro North Regional Employment Board, recently graduated its first cohort from the PACMAN pre-apprenticeship program, which is supported by another state grant.

The other part of the newly-awarded grant will fund a diversity, equity and inclusion survey and analysis that will yield a roadmap for our companies to implement best practices in this important area.

As society becomes more diverse, so does our workforce. Workplace diversity encompasses many differences, including cultural, intellectual, gender-related, religious, personality, racial and generational factors. Regardless of these dissimilarities, all employees share a common goal of corporate and individual success. They deserve fair consideration when applying for employment and promotions, and your company can benefit from the talents they possess.

To maximize those benefits, your company should consider evaluating its current hiring, placement, and promotion requirements and business practices, and that's another place where this grant can help. The membership survey on diversity, equity and inclusion we will conduct will provide data and analysis for evaluating your company and implementing policies to help you attract, retain and reap the benefits of a diverse workforce.

But we can't help if you don't complete the survey. It will be distributed via a range of media in the new year. Please keep an eye out and make sure to complete it once it is available.

By recognizing, valuing, and promoting employee differences within your organization, you will be increasing staff morale and job satisfaction, thereby promoting success for individuals and your

business as a whole. We can help you make that a reality for your company. All you have to do is help us by promptly filling out the survey once it becomes available.

Kyle Reagan is the chairman of Associated Builders and Contractors Inc.-Mass. Chapter, and is CEO of DECCO Inc., Townsend, Mass.

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