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Chairman's Message: Construction careers are fulfilling - by Vera Vadeboncoeur

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Vera Vadeboncoeur

One of the biggest challenges our industry faces is finding enough qualified workers to meet the demand for construction services. In that environment, we don't have the luxury of ignoring any pool of potential talent. ABC MA recognizes this fact – that's why we're conducting an ongoing diversity survey with proceeds from a state grant. One result of this accelerating search for talent is the growth in the number of women working in our industry. This year, March 5-11 is Women in Construction Week.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the share of women in construction is currently the highest on record, as more women are learning that construction offers unique benefits and opportunities. Construction pays well for everyone, regardless of gender. Average hourly earnings are nearly \$3 higher per hour than all other private industries, and those earnings are up 5% year over year.

A labor shortage also translates to the potential for advancement and career mobility. From executives and project managers to building inspectors, business developers, engineers, equipment operators, craft professionals and marketing, the opportunities are endless. Construction provides careers, not just jobs. And those family-supporting careers often don't require a college degree – and the crushing debt that can go along with it.

Construction careers are fulfilling. Workers find purpose in building America, from megaprojects and manufacturing plants to airports and hospitals. A recent report based on the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics' American Time Use Survey found that construction was among the sectors in which workers reported the highest levels of satisfaction, compared to other industries.

ABC MA believes that recruiting and retaining the best workers will deliver the greatest value to our member companies and the larger community. As we salute the role of women in our industry, I am honored to be the first woman to chair the board of ABCMA. I applaud the many talented women in our organization. To learn more about opportunities in construction during 2023 Women in Construction Week, visit workforce.abc.org/.

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