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ABC Chairman's Message: Careers in construction month - addressing construction's labor shortage

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Vera Vadeboncoeur

October is Careers in Construction Month, and this year's theme is "Building Construction Career Dreams." At a time when ABC estimates that 546,000 additional people will be needed to meet national construction demand, the issue has never been more important.

The good news is that career dreams can indeed come true in construction. Few industries offer more promise of family-supporting careers that are accessible without the crushing debt that is so often associated with a four-year college degree.

I'm proud of what our organization is doing across the country to make career dreams come true. In all, ABC members have invested \$1.5 billion in workforce development and 1.3 million people have taken part in ABC-sponsored training just like what takes place every day at our own Gould Construction Institute.

Simply doing what we've always done when it comes to recruitment and retention won't produce the workforce we need in the 21st century. Recognizing that, ABC MA won a multi-year diversity grant focused on making our companies welcoming to all sectors of our increasingly diverse society. Additional grants have funded pre-apprenticeship programs aimed at attracting non-traditional workers to the industry.

And it doesn't end there. This month, our chapter launches a new Veterans Committee aimed at educating those individuals about the benefits of a career in construction and connecting them with ABC MA members.

For our companies to reach their potential, we need all the qualified partners we can find, regardless of characteristics like gender or country of origin. At their core, "Construction Career Dreams" are really about the American Dream. That's why we focus on careers in construction every October, to highlight what we need to do throughout the year to bring new talent to our industry.

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