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## **Massachusetts Building Trades Unions and union contractors donate more than \$40,000 to Helmets to Hardhats**

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Boston, MA Ahead of Veterans Day, Massachusetts Building Trades Unions and union contractors honored the vast contributions of local veterans, raising more than \$40,000 for the life-changing career pathways program Helmets to Hardhats.

Helmets to Hardhats is a national nonprofit that connects National Guard, Reserve, and transitioning active-duty military members with meaningful, family-sustaining careers in the union building trades. Massachusetts Building Trades Unions is a longtime supporter of the program, which has placed nearly 900 military veterans in union construction jobs statewide since 2007.

“It is a privilege to partner with Helmets to Hardhats and extend career opportunities to our returning veterans,” said Frank Callahan, president of Massachusetts Building Trades Unions. “The building trades are a steadfast home for these remarkable individuals who personify sacrifice, selflessness, discipline, honor, and dedication.”

Massachusetts Building Trades Unions represent the largest workforce in the state, with more than 75,000 men and women earning great wages and benefits. That also means nearly 250,000 children, spouses, and workers covered by their high-quality union health plans. Building Trades programs, such as Build a Life and Building Pathways, help ensure everyone can benefit from well-paying careers in the union construction trades, including women, people of color, and returning veterans.

“Helmets to Hardhats is an invaluable resource and program for veterans seeking meaningful career transitions,” said Dr. Andrea Gayle-Bennett, deputy secretary of the Executive Office of Veterans Services. “This initiative plays a vital part in linking our service men and women with life-changing opportunities in union construction and building trades, helping veterans find stable, well-paying jobs with secure retirement benefits and family-sustaining wages.”

The partnership between Massachusetts Building Trades Unions and Helmets to Hardhats has been successful because both organizations are committed to creating new employment opportunities and ongoing career advancement through extensive training. The Massachusetts Building Trades Unions spent \$55 million last year alone to ensure workers at every phase of their career had free, world-class training and expertise.

“As a 5th-year apprentice with Local 103, I wanted to continue to be challenged and pursued a

career in electrical construction, despite having no prior experience,” said James Overstreet. “The Marine Corps instilled the values of looking out for one another and ensuring everyone’s safety, and I’ve found that same mindset in union-building trades. The camaraderie and support here are hard to find elsewhere, and I’ve had the privilege of learning from great mentors who have shared their skills, knowledge, and wisdom with me.”

“A career as a sheet metal worker in Local 17 has provided me with a long-term, well-compensated path to support my family and myself. The union offers paid training, making it accessible for those new to the industry. Just in the military, you’re never alone; you always have support,” said John Clem, veteran and second-year apprentice at Sheet Metal Local 17.

For 104 years, Massachusetts Building Trades Unions (MBTU) has been dedicated to helping working people improve their quality of life. The organization is comprised of 62 member locals representing over 75,000 working men and women across the state.

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