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Local 103 IBEW and NECA Greater Boston unveil new training facility

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Shown (from left) are: Christopher Sherlock, training director, JATC; Louis Antonellis, business manager, Local 103 IBEW; Alan Scharfe, John A. Penney Co. Inc., governor at NECA Greater Boston; Lauren Jones, secretary, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; Robert Sheehan, president, Local 103 IBEW; Bill Weber, Gaston Electrical, president at NECA Greater Boston; Kathleen Guinee, Aetna Fire Alarm Service Co. Inc., vice president at NECA Greater Boston; and Kristen Gowin, executive manager, NECA Greater Boston.

Boston, MA Local 103 IBEW and NECA Greater Boston unveiled a new Joint Apprentice Training Center (JATC) following a transformative \$10 million renovation. The upgraded facility features

technology and expanded classrooms and will train thousands of union apprentices as the demand for clean energy grows.

“No one else trains apprentices like Local 103 IBEW does – no one has a \$10 million annual training budget, three full-time administrators, 13 full-time teachers, 25 part-time teachers, and trains apprentices on the job for over 10,000 hours while providing 6,000 electricians with annual licensing updates,” said Local 103 IBEW business manager and financial secretary Lou Antonellis. “The Local 103 IBEW has brought apprenticeship training to levels never imagined. It will churn out a new generation of electrical workers, ready to take their place in the expanding clean energy sector.”

Community members, local elected leaders, contractors, and union members toured the training center, witnessed electrical demonstrations, met with instructors and current apprentices, and learned about the life-changing apprenticeship program with the state’s largest electrical workers union.

“As many of you know, we’ve been actively applying for grants within our municipality, the Commonwealth, and our federal partners to support our growing and expanding workforce, particularly in the clean energy space. These changes will increase efficiency, engagement, and increase education. They’re always positive and we are confident that these changes will play a pivotal role in our relentless pursuit of excellence in the industry,” said Kristen Gowin, executive manager, NECA Greater Boston.

Since launching in the early 90s, the center has continued to evolve to meet the demands of the electrical industry and now boasts nearly 2,000 apprenticeships.

“We were able to secure nearly \$4 million in the FY24 budget to support what we know is a proven model to train and prepare our talent that is a part of our workforce and to provide meaningful pathways, livable wages, and secure benefits,” said Lauren Jones, secretary of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

The JATC also announced it was improving the apprenticeship application process through a more inclusive approach that reduces barriers to entry. These changes, part of Local 103 IBEW’s commitment to efficiency, engagement, and education, are anticipated to play a pivotal role in their ongoing pursuit of excellence in the industry.

“By completing these renovations, we are positioning the JATC for the apprenticeships of the future,” said Local 103 IBEW Training Director Chris Sherlock.

“I’ve always liked working with my hands. Right now, I’m working in a parking garage in the Seaport, and then I also have classes here. It’s a great opportunity to learn,” said Grace Hogan, 4th year apprentice. “I enjoy what I’m doing, and see myself having a flourishing career.”