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## **Chairman's Message: ABC MA continues work toward developing pipeline of qualified talent - by Vera Vadeboncoeur**

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Vera Vadeboncoeur

Though it feels like the year just started a few weeks ago, somehow this will be my final message as ABC MA chair. I'm honored to serve as our chapter's first female chair, and to have that honor in the same year that Maura Healey, the first woman elected governor of Massachusetts, assumed office.

We are certainly living in hectic times – nowhere more than in the construction industry, which continues to face a labor shortage. Amid the challenges of trying to meet the demand for construction services this year, ABC MA made more progress in our efforts to build a pipeline of qualified talent for member companies.

In 2023, we graduated three more diverse cohorts from our pre-apprenticeship program, which is funded through a competitive grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Additional progress toward developing the talent our companies need was made with the second year of The Gould Construction Institute's (GCI's) successful daytime electrical training pilot. Daytime training is the future of our industry, and I'm pleased to say that Gould is on the cutting edge of change.

Speaking of Gould, another important step forward came in the form of a vote by the GCI board to approve moving forward on a lease for a new facility. The space, located in the North Billerica headquarters of long-time member Medford Wellington Service Company, will for the first time allow Gould to provide both classroom and hands-on training in its own building.

After nearly a year of working to help move our chapter forward, I was heartened by our recent planning conference. The creativity and determination in the room left me with no doubt that we will build on all we achieved in 2023 and maintain our momentum into next year and beyond.

It has indeed been an honor to serve as chair of ABC MA in 2023. Before my term ends, I want to thank both chapter staff and you, my fellow members. Without the great team we have at ABC, we could never have had such a successful year. I wish all of you Happy Holidays and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

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