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## **ABC Chairman's Message: New Gould facility to be ready for fall semester**

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Joe Camilo

The groundbreaking for the first-ever bricks and mortar facility for the Gould Construction Institute (GCI) was held on May 2, at the building in Billerica. GCI has entered into a long-term lease on the approximately 6,300 s/f space at 9 Executive Park Dr. that is owned by long-time ABC MA member Medford Wellington Service Company, Inc. The ceremony included a gold sledgehammer and shovel and was attended by staff from Gould, ABC Massachusetts, Medford Wellington and project construction manager Windover Construction.

“This is a major step forward for GCI,” said Gould president Julie DeStefano. “Being able to provide hands-on training with shop space and virtual simulators will enhance the quality of training we can provide for our students.”

The facility will also allow GCI and ABC MA to offer workforce programs that will bring more people into the trades, such as pre-apprenticeship cohorts, youth summer camps and career fairs.

Windover is working with several fellow ABC MA contactors on the 12-week project to build six classrooms with state-of-the-art shop and equipment space for hands-on practical education in multiple trades, including sheet metal, electrical, refrigeration tech and pipefitting. The facility is scheduled to be complete in time for the start of the school year in September.

Gould’s current model of renting space at night in existing schools has become increasingly difficult as more schools host their own after-dark programs. While GCI will continue to offer classes in various locations around Massachusetts, the new space gives the school more flexibility by allowing Gould to host daytime training classes in its own facility.

There are a variety of options for members interested in supporting the new GCI facility. They include sponsorship, fundraising and company recognition opportunities. For information, please contact Julie DeStefano at [julie@gwgci.org](mailto:julie@gwgci.org) or Greg Beeman at [greg@abcma.org](mailto:greg@abcma.org).

“This is the start of a new era for GCI,” DeStefano said. “We now have the ability to add new programs for all phases of the industry. “We believe this will be a great template for other areas of the state and are very enthusiastic about GCI’s future in support of ABC members and the industry at large.”

Joe Camilo is the chairman of Associated Builders and Contractors Inc.-Mass. Chapter and is the vice president/general manager at Tocco Building Systems, Billerica, Mass.