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ABC Chairman's message: Apprenticeship - a model that works

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Luiza Mills

Given the time and resources all our ABC member companies devote to workforce development, I didn't want to let National Apprenticeship Day on April 30 pass without noting the work of ABC MA in support of our collective efforts.

It's gratifying to see so many people appreciate the benefits of apprenticeship. The Healey administration and the legislature have increased state support for it. While we applaud them for this, we continue to press on the critical need for ratio reform so we can expand apprentice employment.

Last year marked the 10th anniversary of National Apprenticeship Week, and it included over 2,500 events and proclamations across all 50 states showcasing the value of apprenticeship as a way to create pathways into in-demand jobs and develop a highly skilled workforce to meet industry needs and strengthen the economy. This year, the U.S. Department of Labor moved the observance to the Spring with a one-day event and beginning next year it will again be a week-long celebration.

ABC MA works in tandem with our education and workforce affiliates the Gould Construction Institute and Building Mass Careers to support an ongoing apprenticeship pipeline for our member firms. Our members, in turn, know the value of apprenticeship. You are the reason why GCI now educates over 1,100 students each year and has a new training facility to provide state-of-the-art hands-on training.

Our new non-profit Building Mass Careers works with GCI to meet your workforce development needs. BMC attends career fairs and provides pre-apprenticeship training with funding awarded through competitive grants. We're launching a new Capstone program that will bring interested high school students to GCI's new Billerica facility each spring to introduce them to construction and expose them to the vast opportunities available within the trades.

Construction offers careers with tremendous opportunities and family-sustaining wages and without the burden of endless college debt. Apprenticeship is how we make this happen. I am excited to see how ABC MA, GCI and BMC can further develop and expand our support of members in apprenticeship and workforce development. Let's take a moment to commit to building on our success as we salute the apprentices who are the future of our companies and industry!

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