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ABC Chairman's Message: A new school year is nearly upon us

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Luiza Mills

There is still time to enjoy the fleeting summer but before we know it, back to school will soon be upon us. The start of a new school year always brings excitement, new opportunities and continued realization that the construction industry offers competitive family-sustaining wages without the need for long-term debt that is so often associated with a college degree. With that in mind, we are happy to report that in July, our chapter awarded 10 “Building Our Future Scholarships” to worthy apprentices who attend the Gould Construction Institute (GCI).

In September, GCI will commence the school year in its new state-of-the-art Billerica training facility. Between our outreach about the vast opportunities available in the trades and continuing labor shortages, Gould enrollment has been booming.

With that in mind, I'd like to take a moment to highlight Paul O'Loughlin, a long-time ABC MA member and prior GCI board chair. Paul has retired from his business but that hasn't dulled his devotion to our industry or our chapter. He now works as a Gould sheet metal teacher, passing along his expertise to a new generation of construction professionals.

“My days as a sheet metal worker are behind me, but my commitment to the trade is not,” Paul said. “There are few things more rewarding than working with the young people who will be the future leaders of our industry.”

It continues to be a challenge to fill these teaching positions. If you or someone you know might be interested in becoming a teacher, now would be a great time to act on it. All you need is a passion for your trade, a current license and a desire to mentor the future leaders of our industry and our chapter. If you have those things, GCI will help you with the rest! Please consider reaching out to GCI instructor liaison Mike Maloney at Mike@gwgci.org. Your knowledge is needed to train our future industry innovators and leaders. I think you'll be glad you did.

Luiza Mills is the chairman of Associated Builders and Contractors Inc.-Mass. Chapter and is a senior vice president at Interstate Electrical Services Corp.

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