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Developing a workforce through apprenticeship

Recruiting, educating and upskilling our workforce is a cornerstone of the U.S. construction industry, and an essential component to supporting our most important asset – our people – who live in communities all over Wisconsin. In 2018 alone, Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) contractor members across the country spent \$1.6 billion – up from \$1.1 billion in 2013 – to develop employees, which equates to more than 980,000 courses taught on craft, leadership and safety education.

This 45% increase in spending from 2013 shows the ever-growing commitment our industry has to creating and expanding pathways for people of all backgrounds and education levels to join and excel in construction, primarily through apprenticeships. Our extensive outreach to community-based organizations and our support for legislation that allows qualified high school seniors to begin their apprenticeships before graduation are just a couple of examples. We are also leading the way in youth apprenticeship, which allows high school students to explore construction as a potential career.

With construction spending at an all-time high, there's an estimated 440,000 construction jobs that need to be filled now to meet current demand. Apprenticeship is the solution. The ABC Apprenticeship Program is a 501(c)(3) educational organization working closely with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and 11 state technical colleges to educate nearly 1,600 apprentices in 12 skilled trades. This fall, ABC's apprenticeship program is training nearly 450 additional new apprentices in communities across Wisconsin.

ABC believes strongly in the earn-while-you-learn apprenticeship model, which provides careers with limitless opportunities for advancement and high earning potential. Graduates of our most popular trade program – electrical – earn more than \$70,000 at graduation. After a few years of experience, many become managers and even company owners. There are plenty of opportunities for growth.

ABC is proud to be part of Wisconsin's deep apprenticeship tradition. Since 1987, we have graduated thousands of apprentices who have great careers as skilled craft persons. To learn more about apprenticeship, visit www.BuildYourCareerWI.org.

Sincerely,

John Mielke, President