

IBEX Super Session

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABBRA Takes National Lead on Defining Marine Trades Workforce Needs, Challenges and Solutions

Newport (R.I.) August 29, 2015 — The American Boatbuilders and Repairers Association (ABBRA) has taken the lead on defining the U.S. recreational marine industry's workforce needs, challenges and solutions with a nationwide survey and a follow-up working session with experts, to be held at the International Boatbuilders Exhibition & Conference (IBEX) on September 14th in Louisville KY on September 14, from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, at the IBEX conference in Louisville KY. To register to attend the session, [Click here](#)

The nationwide survey is gathering data on the skill level of the current workforce, basic demographic information on marine workers, hiring needs, labor shortages, areas of skill deficiency, and effective training solutions. The survey is now being distributed throughout the country via each region's marine trade association. Employers who have not yet received the survey [may click here](#) to participate. The survey results will be revealed at the day-long working session. "I encourage every recreational marine industry employer in the U.S. to complete this important survey," said Pam Lenzion, Executive Director of ABBRA. "The resultant data will be a powerful tool--both to define our existing workforce, and to help us create solutions for building a workforce that meets the technological challenges of our industry."

The IBEX day-long Super Session titled "**Help Wanted - How to Find, Train, and Retain a Quality Workforce for Your Business**" is being produced by the American Boat Builders & Repairers Association (ABBRA), Maine Marine Trades Association (MMTA), and Rhode Island Marine Trades Association (RIMTA). The speakers include industry experts, Department of Labor representatives, grant writers, and training organizations who are focused on developing a technically skilled workforce for the recreational marine industry. Topics to be covered during the super session include employers' options for hiring and training technically skilled workers, working with the U.S. veteran placement agencies, how to access state and federal funding, an overview of on-the-job (OJT) training, especially apprenticeship programs, and why they are a viable training option for the recreational marine industry. Facilitation methods for in-house training programs will also be addressed.

Steve Kitchin, VP of Corporate Education at New England Institute of Technology will moderate the session. Rich Difede, Principal of Gold Coast Yachts will provide the Keynote. Chris van der Hor, COO of the New Zealand Marine Industry Association and General Manager of the New Zealand Marine Industry Training Organization, Campbell Black and Peter Dahl, owners and operators of Quadrant Marine Institute, Scott Ellsworth, Director of Business Leaders United, Sarah Blusiewicz, RI Department of Labor and Training, Jen Cornwell, Program Director of RIMTA, Susan Swanton, Executive Director of Maine Marine Trades Association; Wendy Mackie, CEO of Rhode Island Marine Trades Association RIMTA; Chip Dickison, Dir. of Educational Programming for the Nova Scotia Boatbuilders Association will also share their experiences and expertise.