

MERIT SHOP

# CONTRACTOR

WISCONSIN



**MERIT SHOP SCORE**  
CONTINUES TO RISE

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
ELECTION RESULTS

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION**  
THE BEGINNING OF  
THE END, AND  
WHAT LIES AHEAD

# ELECTIONS

**2020 WILL DICTATE THE MERIT SHOP'S FUTURE**

ALSO INSIDE:  
**A PLAN TO  
KEEP WINNING**  
PAGE 5





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# ELECTIONS

## 2020 WILL DICTATE THE MERIT SHOP'S FUTURE

### MERIT SHOP **CONTRACTOR**

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT

# A Plan to Keep Winning



**ABC MEMBERS HAVE TOLD ME THEY'VE NEVER BEEN BUSIER.** It is a good problem to have, but as we begin 2020, it is also important to remind ourselves that what we have is often hard-earned. Not everything comes easy.

The same can be said for chapter legislative accomplishments. As we prepare this issue focused on politics and elections, we reminisce. The highlights of our legislative wins over the past few years includes repeal of the state's prevailing wage along with "right to work" and project labor agreement neutrality legislation. Success can be attributed to effective lobbying by chapter staff, but it also requires the support of members like you who are willing to talk to legislators about important issues.

Perhaps just as important, members step forward to donate money to legislators who champion free-market reforms. As a result, we provide legislators with resources to combat misinformation being spread by opponents. ABC provides backing to these legislators by explaining to their respective voters the importance of these laws.

Going forward, we have a chance to help elect two new members to Congress (state Sens. Tom Tiffany and Scott Fitzgerald) who are committed to

repealing Davis Bacon. We also need to re-elect legislators who fought Gov. Tony Evers' attempt to undo all three of these merit contractor measures we sometimes refer as the "Merit Trifecta."

While donating money is not easy, ABC of Wisconsin will try to make it as painless as possible. If you've contributed to the federal PAC in 2019, we will be sending you a 2020 renewal notice. Also, this year's SuperCon on Feb. 12 and 13 will again have a PAC auction and we are adding an on-line component to increase the fun and interactivity. In a few months, ABC members Steve Slawinski of O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing, S.C. and JR Reesman of Reesman's Excavating & Grading will co-sponsor a firing range event in Waukesha. We will also hold an event in May in the greater Fox River Valley.

The most important thing is your membership in ABC, which provides resources for legislative advocacy and a voice for merit construction. However, your willingness to provide personal time and PAC contributions help even more. Please visit [abcwi.org/give](http://abcwi.org/give) to help out or contact John Schulze at [jschulze@abcwi.org](mailto:jschulze@abcwi.org) to let him know you are willing to do a little more so merit construction continues to win.

— John Mielke

“  
SUCCESS CAN  
BE ATTRIBUTED  
TO EFFECTIVE  
LOBBYING BY  
CHAPTER STAFF,  
BUT IT ALSO  
REQUIRES THE  
SUPPORT OF  
MEMBERS  
LIKE YOU.”



**REGARDLESS OF  
POLITICAL  
AFFILIATION,  
EVERYONE NEEDS  
TO KNOW THAT  
PROTECTING FREE  
ENTERPRISE  
ULTIMATELY  
MEANS MORE  
JOBS,  
INCOME AND  
WEALTH FOR  
MORE PEOPLE.**

FOR THE MERIT SHOP

# 2020 IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ELECTION EVER

*By Vance Walter — ABC National Manager of Legislative and Political Affairs*

In the lead-up to every election, you will hear the following line repeated by pundits, fundraisers and most certainly, the candidates: “This is the most important election of our lifetime.” And although every election is important, this time the familiar phrase rings true. For the merit shop construction industry, the stakes could not be higher.

The 2020 election is the fork in the road that will either cement President Donald Trump’s legacy, continuing the surge of conservative judicial appointments and deregulation, or bring a very different vision embodied by the eventual Democratic nominee’s priorities, which would come at the expense of ABC members and small businesses around the country.

In November 2020, all 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 36 U.S. Senate seats are up for election, and perhaps more importantly, 11 governor’s mansions and thousands of state legislative races will be up for grabs in 46 states.

Long after the dust settles from the 2020 election, control of the House for the next decade could be determined by its results. As mandated in the Constitution, new congressional lines will be drawn after the 2020 census, and in many states, the party in control

of the legislature will determine how to draw those lines. Of all of the consequences that will come out of ballot box in November, perhaps there will be none more important than the outcome of state elections.

In Washington, D.C., Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi currently controls a fragile, 36-seat Democratic majority. Of the 435 congressional districts across the country, 106 are considered competitive in 2020. That means less than 25% of those races will decide which party holds the speaker’s gavel next January. Under the control of Democrats this year, we have seen the return of large, anti-business, wish-list bills that are often compiled from prior failed legislative initiatives that faced bipartisan opposition, and regulatory actions that have been rejected by the courts or subsequently revoked or modified for other reasons. There is perhaps no more anti-merit shop bill ever written than the soon-to-be-voted-on Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or PRO Act, which passed a committee vote on party lines in 2019.

Perhaps even more significant than winning back a merit shop-friendly House would be retaining the Republican majority in the Senate. The U.S. Senate has acted as the sure-footed backstop to those large wish-list bills that have now become mainstream in the Democratic-controlled House. Keeping control of the Senate is no guarantee, but with an advantage of a six-seat majority, many handicappers say the odds are in Republicans’ favor. Regardless, because of the high stakes, all eyes will be on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, as anywhere from eight to 17 Senate races are considered competitive. In short, those races will determine control of the U.S. Senate.

As always, ABC and its members will step up to meet these challenges. Last cycle, ABC PAC raised \$1.5 million and contributed to 221 candidates running for the House and Senate, 11 leadership PACs, four national party committees and the federal accounts of 16 state parties. ABC PAC continues to be among the top trade association political action committees in terms of political engagement, which supports ABC's ability to drive the narrative in elections that will directly impact the association and the construction industry.

Specifically, in Wisconsin, ABC PAC has been very active in past cycles, investing in the successful campaigns of merit shop champions like Rep. Glenn Grothman and Sen. Ron Johnson, both Republicans. However, in this election cycle, ABC has stayed true to its reputation as the "Marine Corps of American politics," a phrase that Vice President Mike Pence coined in his initial run for the U.S. House in 1988. ABC has supported two first-time candidates for federal office in state Sen. Tom Tiffany, a candidate for Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District, and state Sen. Scott Fitzgerald, who is running for election to the U.S. House to represent Wisconsin's 5th Congressional District.

Unlike a state PAC, ABC PAC works within the federal election process to further the goals of the association through direct involvement in supporting and opposing candidates for the U.S. House, the Senate and the presidency. We accomplish

this by educating our members on the importance of political activism and through the financial support of pro-merit shop candidates.

As a trade association PAC, ABC PAC is required to obtain "prior authorization" before asking ABC members for contributions. To give prior authorization check on the ABC National website here: <https://www.abc.org/Politics-Policy/ABC-PAC/Prior-Authorization>.

Talking about politics can be prickly, but voting and being involved in the electoral process should not be a sensitive issue. Regardless of political affiliation, everyone needs to know that protecting free enterprise ultimately means more jobs, income and wealth for more people. If you are interested about hearing more from ABC PAC, visit our new website, [PAC.ABC.org](http://PAC.ABC.org). This new website allows ABC members, whose companies have given prior authorization, to make fast, secure, and FEC-compliant decisions about supporting ABC PAC.

Deciding not to engage politically is making a choice to leave the future of merit shop construction businesses to chance. Much is at stake this November, and it is going to require complete political engagement from ABC members and their employees to ensure candidates that support free enterprise and open competition are sent to state capitals and Washington, D.C., next year. 



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# ON THE RISE

WISCONSIN'S MERIT  
SHOP SCORE CLIMBS  
TO NO. 8 IN U.S.

*By John Schulze —  
ABC of Wisconsin Director of  
Government and Legal Affairs*

The Merit Shop Philosophy is the belief that people and companies succeed based on free enterprise principles within the free market system, which is characterized by open and fair competition and diverse participants. It is the belief that all branches of government should be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars and that government should award contracts based solely on merit to the lowest responsible bidder, regardless of labor affiliation.

For several years now, Associated Builders and Contractors has created the Merit Shop Scorecard to review and rank state-specific information that is significant to the construction industry. The scorecard is a tool to identify states that are embracing the merit shop philosophy through legislation, policies and priorities. It also serves as a “heads-up” for states that need to create a better



environment for free enterprise in construction. Core merit shop construction priorities of right to work, prevailing wage and project labor agreement neutrality are assigned the most weight in the survey. Additional consideration is given to other factors like public-private partnerships and efforts to address the construction skills gap.

### Scoring breakdown

Every state and the District of Columbia receives a score in seven categories, with an overall comparative ranking assigned to each state.

- **Project Labor Agreements (PLAs):** Grade determined by whether a state's policies prohibit, require, encourage or are silent on whether a contractor can be required to agree to a PLA as a condition of winning a state or state-assisted construction contract.

- **Wisconsin Grade: A.** Government neutrality is the law in the Badger state effective April 18, 2017.

- **Prevailing Wage:** States with no prevailing wage received the highest grade, and states with far reaching exemptions received the next highest grade. Remaining scores were based on the state's dollar threshold for triggering prevailing wage coverage.

- **Wisconsin Grade: A.** No state prevailing wage effective Sept. 23, 2017.

- **Right to Work:** Graded pass/fail depending on whether a state is a right to work state or not.

## WISCONSIN NATIONAL RANKING IN MERIT SHOP SCORECARD.

2015 • 26

2016 • 21

2017 • 15

2018 • 12

2019 • 8

- **Wisconsin Grade: A.** Signed into law March 11, 2015.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (P3s):** Grade depends on whether state law authorizes P3s on all projects, allows unsolicited bids, authorizes on transportation projects only, authorizes on social infrastructure projects only, or not at all.

- **Wisconsin Grade: B.** State law authorizes P3s on transportation projects and vertical construction projects associated with transportation projects.

- **Workforce Development:** Grade is based on how much a state spends, per business establishment, on workforce preparation and development programs, which includes programs that educate, train and recruit workers in order to improve the state's labor base and boost economic development. Using labor projection data, states are also graded on the current construction labor supply's ability to meet peak labor demand.

- **Wisconsin Grade: C.** Current labor supply satisfies 97.1% of peak labor demand. State offers \$1.9 million in grants and incentives for workforce preparation and development in 2019.

- **Education:** Grades were reflective of the percentage of career and technical education high school graduates that were placed in college or careers.

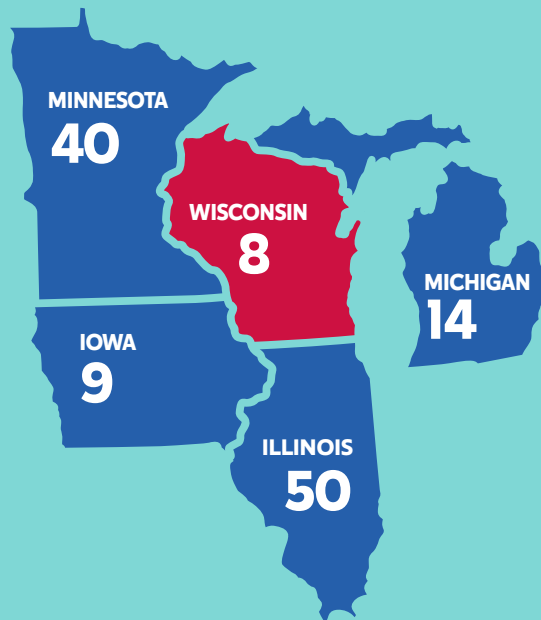
- **Wisconsin Grade: A.** 97% of CTE high school graduates are placed in colleges or careers.

- **Job Growth Rate:** Data provides the 5-Year Compound Annual Growth Rate in construction from 2015 to 2019 using data from the month of September.

- **Wisconsin Grade: A.** 3.6%

## TOTAL WISCONSIN GRADE

8th highest in the nation, and best in the Midwest when compared to Iowa (9), Michigan (14), Minnesota (40), and Illinois (50).



### How far we've come

**Total Wisconsin Grade.** Eighth highest in the nation, and best in the Midwest when compared to Iowa (9), Michigan (14), Minnesota (40), and Illinois (50). Being in the top 10 is even more impressive when you consider that it was not that long ago that Wisconsin was ranked 26th (2015) before starting the climb to 15 (2017), and 12 (2018). The two-year Wisconsin anniversary of the "Merit Trifecta" of Right to Work, Project Labor Agreement Neutrality and the repeal of prevailing wage was commemorated on Sept. 23, 2019 with lapel pins for members, legislators and other stakeholders who helped make the achievement a reality.


### How to maintain this performance

While Wisconsin should be happy with the ranking, we cannot be complacent. There are several proposals in the legislature that could not only raise Wisconsin's workforce development ranking, but also help bridge the construction skills gap:

- **Assembly Bill 45 / Senate Bill 45:** authored by state Rep. Rob Stafsholt and state Sen. André Jacque. Currently, the cost of tech college and university tuition can be deducted from the amount owed in income taxes. This legislation would apply the same tax treatment to apprenticeship tuition.

- **Assembly Bill 36 / SB 44:** authored by state Rep. Dave Murphy and state Sen. Jacque. Would provide 100 grants of up to \$1,000 to apprenticeship students to cover costs of purchasing tools, clothing, equipment and supplies.

- **SB 529 / AB 606:** authored by state Rep. Scott Krug and state Sen. Dan Feyen. Would allow apprenticeship programs and tech colleges the ability to market to students who have dropped out of a UW system school.

While improvement is always a priority, it is important to maintain our hard-fought gains. Gov. Tony Evers attempted to undo all three merit trifecta achievements in his state budget. Fortunately, ABC's champions in the legislature successfully fought Gov. Evers and maintained these free enterprise achievements, but it is important to keep a pro-merit majority in the Legislature. 

# 2020:

# POLITICAL EXPRESSION

## IN THE WORKPLACE

*By Lane Ruhland — Senior Counsel, Husch Blackwell*

It seems like the 2020 election started years ago, and in many ways it has. However, with perhaps one of the most contentious Presidential elections in history just around the corner, your employees' urge to engage in political expression will only increase. This means you will likely grow more concerned with how that expression might affect workplace productivity, morale, safety, not to mention your company's brand or reputation. Soon, talk of the candidates, debates, political talking heads and campaign ads will dominate our airwaves; but it does not necessarily have to invade the workplace. While it is almost impossible to avoid politics altogether, employers are not helpless to assert control and institute limitations on political activity at their businesses. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for effective management of political expression in the workplace, but becoming familiar with applicable state and federal laws, consistent application of carefully crafted policies and fair judgement will go a long way to avoiding potential downfalls of politics at the workplace.

Consider the following, more common types of political activity that may occur at the workplace:

- ❶ An employee distributes political commentary or satire using a work computer
- ❷ An employee sends e-mails to co-workers soliciting funds or support for a cause
- ❸ An employee sticks a campaign bumper sticker on his or her car
- ❹ An employee dons or displays political cartoons or insignia in the workplace

What can an employer see in each of the scenarios above? Unfortunately, the answer is, "it depends."

### **Political Speech**

This typically comes as a surprise to employees, but they do not have a constitutional right to discuss politics at work, and unlike race, age, gender, age, national origin, religion, disability, etc., political affiliation is not generally protected in the workplace. While many believe the First Amendment protects the right to speech, what it truly protects individuals from is government action that infringes on free speech rights. This means there is no constitutionally protected right to free speech for private employees. This does not mean then, that it is prudent, even necessarily legal, to prevent all political speech at the workplace.

### **Political Dress; badges, buttons, posters, etc.**

When it comes to employees wearing badges, buttons, or other political dress, an employer may establish a neutral dress code that prohibits the employee from wearing T-shirts or other types of clothing with political slogans or otherwise offensive or profane contents. However, with respect to badges and buttons, federal law will allow employees to wear badges or buttons that are related to a union or to unionization if doing so does not create a safety hazard or impact another legitimate business purpose. In general, if an employee is wearing a political button that also includes a union message, employers should refrain from prohibiting that activity.

### **Limitations on employer restrictions**

There are two general exceptions to the principle that private employers may implement a "no political speech or political activity" policy: (1) any state law provisions protecting an employee's speech or activity; or (2) Section 7 of National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

## 2020 WISCONSIN ELECTION DATES:

- **SPRING PRIMARY – FEBRUARY 28TH**
  - **SPRING ELECTION AND PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY – APRIL 7TH**
  - **PARTISAN PRIMARY – AUGUST 11TH**
  - **GENERAL AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION – NOVEMBER 3RD**
- VISIT [ELECTIONS.WI.GOV](https://www.elections.wi.gov) FOR MORE INFORMATION .**

Wisconsin generally does not deviate far from federal law regarding permissible activity or speech in the workplace. However, the city of Madison prohibits discrimination based on political beliefs. Additionally, Wisconsin law requires, at a minimum, three hours to vote. The employee must request the time off and the employer can designate the time of day for the absence.

On the federal level, the NLRA restricts an employer's right to limit both union and non-union non-supervisory employees' communications about hours, wages, or other conditions of employment. These protections may apply both in and out of the workplace and during non-working times. While an employer cannot restrict these incidentally political communications, an employer may still prohibit communications and activity that is purely political and has no nexus to employment conditions. However, as you can imagine, distinguishing between what is purely political communication and what is protected by the NLRA is as clear as mud. Therefore, it is critical that employers establish clear, nondiscriminatory policies which delineate prohibited and acceptable political communications.

Subject to NLRA restrictions and applicable state laws, employers can prohibit employees from:

- 1 distributing "political" materials in the workplace
- 2 displaying campaign or issue materials at their desks or work stations
- 3 soliciting support or money for candidates or issues
- 4 wearing buttons, shirts or other paraphernalia advocating candidates or issues
- 5 using the employer's computers to express their thoughts on social media
- 6 using a work email to solicit political contributions, attendance at political events, or to promote a candidate or party.

Employees who violate such policies may be legally disciplined or discharged. Be aware that because of Section 7 of the NLRA, certain communications such as "vote for Candidate X - Raise the minimum wage!" might satisfy that Section 7 nexus to working conditions for certain types of employees. It is best when drafting or implementing any policy that your legal counsel reviews it.

Therefore, when considering a policy to regulate political expression in the workplace, employers should consider the following:

- Applying a neutrally enforced policy that restricts solicitation/activity only during work hours (not on lunch or rest breaks), employers can refuse to let employees distribute or post political flyers at work.

- It is prudent to send out a reminder to employees of your policy in the weeks leading up to election day.

- If an employer prohibits wearing buttons or posting political posters, the company should be certain that the prohibition is followed without exception.

- Employers can also ban political slogan buttons or T-shirts as part of your dress code policy, particularly for employees who work directly with clients or customers.

The ban must be uniformly applied. If anyone (including the employer) wears a political button, the ban can lose its force and an employee disciplined for violating the policy may have a claim for wrongful discharge or discipline, or even coercion under state law. Also, keep in mind that litigation can arise when political discussions or beliefs intertwine with or are confused with racial, religious, sexual orientation or religious issues.

With all this uncertainty, it is critical that an employer has clear policy that defines permissible employee conduct, which includes workplace conduct, attendance, dress and grooming standards, social media policies, etc. The degree to which political expression is prohibited comes down to an employer's judgement, so long as it comports with federal law and applicable state law. Some employers believe that discussion of current events builds morale and helps develop relationships among colleagues. Other employees would prefer to avoid it all together.

If you have concerns about certain political activity at work, consider the following:

- 1 Did the employees conduct violate your company's policy?
- 2 Is the employee's speech protected by law? (i.e., Section 7 of the NLRA)
- 3 Has your company conducted an independent and thorough investigation?
- 4 How has the company handled these matters in the past?

If you have any uncertainty, err on the side of caution and consult with your legal counsel.



*The information provided in this article does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice and does not create an attorney-client relationship between you and Attorney Lane Ruhland of Husch Blackwell. Lane Ruhland can be reached at [Lane.Ruhland@huschblackwell.com](mailto:Lane.Ruhland@huschblackwell.com).*



THE BEGINNING OF THE END AND WHAT LIES AHEAD

# LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*By John Schulze — ABC of Wisconsin Director of Government and Legal Affairs*

Although 2020 is only days old, the work of elected state government officials is wrapping up. Wisconsin legislative Republicans' focus has been quality, not quantity, and adopting the Hippocratic oath: first, do no harm. Considering the name calling, lawsuits, and vetoes of 2019, it would be difficult for this year to match last year's level of tension.

For the limited legislative session left, here's what you should watch:

■ **What won't happen.** One thing that everyone can agree upon is that a legislative Republican priority has been and will continue to be thwarting Gov. Tony Evers' and legislative Democrats' priorities, including Medicaid expansion, gun



## **HOMEOWNERS ARE BRACING FOR THE LARGEST AVERAGE PROPERTY TAX INCREASE IN A DECADE.**

control, tax increases on employers and decriminalizing of marijuana.

■ **What will happen.** With Republicans unable to get enough Democrat support to override any of Gov. Evers' vetoes, legislators from both parties are expected to unite to pass legislation to improve water quality, promote adoption, prevent suicide and address homelessness. Also, building on his record-setting first term, Gov. Evers is expected to issue even more executive orders in 2020.

■ **What could happen.**

• **Confirmation battles** — After approving some of Evers' cabinet choices and voting down his pick to run the Agriculture Department, Senate Republicans are taking a wait-and-see approach on the remainder. Specifically, concerns have been raised about Dawn Crim for Department of Safety and Professional Services due to the delay in commercial plan review wait times. ABC of Wisconsin members and government affairs staff have been working with Secretary-designee Crim and her executive team on legislation that will hopefully pass into law before the end of session and Wisconsin's construction season really gets rolling.

• **Battle over property taxes** — Homeowners are suffering sticker shock from receiving the largest property tax increase in a decade, partially driven by increases in per-pupil revenue limits approved by Gov. Evers and lawmakers

COUNTY PROPERTY TAXES WILL ALSO TICK UP BY MORE THAN

**2%**

STATEWIDE, WITH

**66**

OF THE STATE'S

**72**

COUNTIES

RAISING THEIR LEVIES.

in the state budget, and ballot referendums voters signed off on to exceed those limits and higher enrollment in the Racine and statewide voucher school programs. County property taxes will also tick up by more than 2% statewide, with 66 of the state's 72 counties raising their levies. Meanwhile, three-quarters of the state's tech college districts have property tax increases totaling a statewide bump of more than 3%. State Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald has floated the idea of using state tax dollars to eliminate property taxes levied by the state's technical colleges, which make up roughly 4% of the annual statewide levy. In an effort to control future property tax increases, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos suggested local

spending referendums should require more than just a simple majority of the vote to be approved. In contrast, Gov. Evers has been cool to the idea and would prefer that any state budget surplus be used for either a rainy day fund or increased K-12 education spending. Unlike other issues, this may be one that legislative Democrats will support over the governor's objections.

• **DNC to MKE.** The world will be watching Milwaukee, and not just because of the Bucks and Brewers. The Cream City beat out Miami in crucial swing state Florida, and the fourth-largest city in the U.S. (Houston) to host the 2020



ABC member Don Fearing (left) of Fearing's Audio, Video and Security with state Sen. Scott Fitzgerald.



ABC member Julie Yahnke (left) of Olympic Builders General Contractor with state Sen. Tom Tiffany.

Democratic National Convention on the international stage to nominate a Democrat to face Republican President Donald Trump on Nov. 3. This will mark the first major-party convention in Wisconsin's history and will be the first Midwest convention since Chicago's in 1996. Up to \$200 million in economic impact could be made by the 50,000 delegates, media and volunteers as attendees will stay, eat and celebrate from July 13–16, 2020. The \$70 million cost of hosting the event is being raised from private donors. Republicans, including Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and then-Gov. Scott Walker, have been very supportive of the DNC convention coming to Milwaukee because of the impact on the state's economy, but there has been opposition to using tax dollars to pay for it. The majority of the events will be at the Fiserv Forum, Wisconsin Center, UW-Panther Arena and Miller High Life Theatre, but expect most restaurants, hotels and bars to be booked. Getting around downtown Milwaukee is never easy, but will be especially difficult with the U.S. Secret Service overseeing the security operation for the convention.

**Trump.** Here's another sign of how influential Wisconsin will be in deciding who will win the 2020 Presidential

election. By the narrowest of margins, most recent polling shows (conducted by The University of Marquette's Charles Franklin, who will be presenting at SuperCon20) Wisconsin voters are still undecided about whether to re-elect Donald Trump over his likely potential Democrat opponents Biden, Sanders, Warren or Buttigieg (listed in order of support among Wisconsinites polled). The same polling shows that a majority of those surveyed in Wisconsin oppose impeachment. Interestingly enough, Wisconsin Gov. Evers will not weigh in on Trump impeachment, but the Wisconsin Congressional delegation voted with their parties, including Democratic Congressman Ron Kind, whose Western Wisconsin district voted for Trump in 2016 and whose voters oppose impeachment.

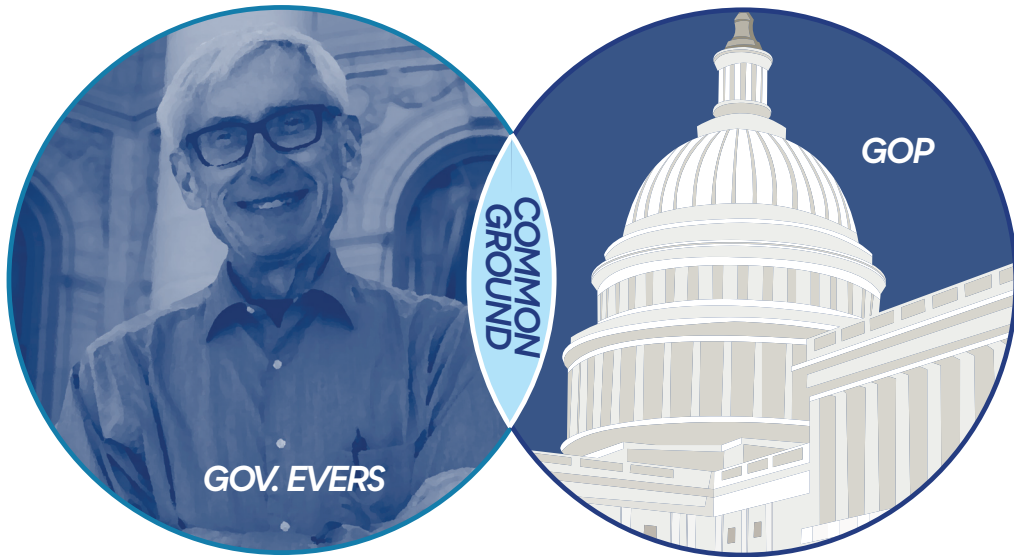
**Wisconsin Congressional Races Could Result in Pro-Merit Gains.** Up until fall 2019, we were not expected to have spirited congressional races in Wisconsin. That changed when Congressman Sean Duffy announced that he was resigning from Congress immediately. Then soon afterwards, Congressman James Sensenbrenner announced he was leaving Congress. In the Sensenbrenner and Duffy seats, there are clear choices, with state Sen.




**THE WORLD WILL BE WATCHING MILWAUKEE, AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE BUCKS AND BREWERS.**



How many perceive the amount of common ground today.



Tom Tiffany running in the northern 7th Congressional District, and state Sen. Scott Fitzgerald running in the southeast Wisconsin 5th District. Both Tiffany and Fitzgerald have been ABC's champions in the Legislature and, we expect, will continue their hard work in D.C. In the 3rd Congressional seat, no significant candidate has emerged to challenge Ron Kind, but due to his vote in favor of impeachment, the only question is who and when.

**Taxes go down for those in Southeast Wisconsin.** On Aug. 31, 2020, the 0.1% Miller Park Stadium tax will sunset. When it was first enacted in 1995, the Miller Park tax was expected to collect \$300 million and was set to expire in 2010, then 2014, then 2015, then 2018. Interest, maintenance, and ongoing contractual obligations will result in \$600 million being paid by the taxpayers of Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, Milwaukee and Racine counties. 



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# 2020

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION RESULTS

*The following members were elected in late fall 2019 to serve in the leadership of ABC of Wisconsin:*

**CASEY MALESEVICH** is president and third-generation family owner of Sure-Fire, Inc., a residential and commercial HVAC mechanical contractor serving central and southern Wisconsin. After obtaining his law degree from Marquette University and working for an electrical contractor out of Racine, Casey rejoined Sure-Fire in 2011 as its risk manager. In 2015, he was promoted to Sure-Fire's vice-president/general manager, and in 2017 took on the president's role from his father, Tom Malesevich. Before obtaining his J.D. from Marquette, Casey received a bachelor's degree in Management and Human Resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Casey also completed ABC of Wisconsin's Emerging Leader program in 2016 and served on the Marketing & Business Development Committee for six years and on the Board of Directors the past year.

### CHAIR-ELECT CASEY MALESEVICH



### BOARD MEMBER JEFF DISHER



**JEFF DISHER** has been in the electrical field for more than 23 years. He and his wife are owners of Disher Electric, Inc. in Stevens Point, which they established in 2003. The company has been a member of ABC since 2007. Early in his career, Jeff worked at various jobs, including logging and ranching in Montana, while going to school to get his associate degree in electrical engineering. Jeff shares the same conservative values that ABC upholds. "I strongly believe in an 'earn it to receive it' philosophy and will be an advocate for fellow businessowners in the merit shop trades," Jeff said.

### BOARD MEMBER JON KOCH



**JON KOCH** is the director of project management and a shareholder at Stevens Construction Corp. Jon oversees a team of approximately 15-20 project managers, project engineers and interns and is responsible for the successful execution of all Stevens' Wisconsin projects. Jon is a graduate of UW-Madison and holds both an undergraduate and masters' degree in Civil Engineering. Over the past 20 years, Jon has had a diversified career within the construction industry including roles as an owner, general contractor, subcontractor, estimator and in business development.



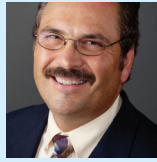
DAN BERTLER



JOE DANIELS



PAT HOLZEM



NICK MAY

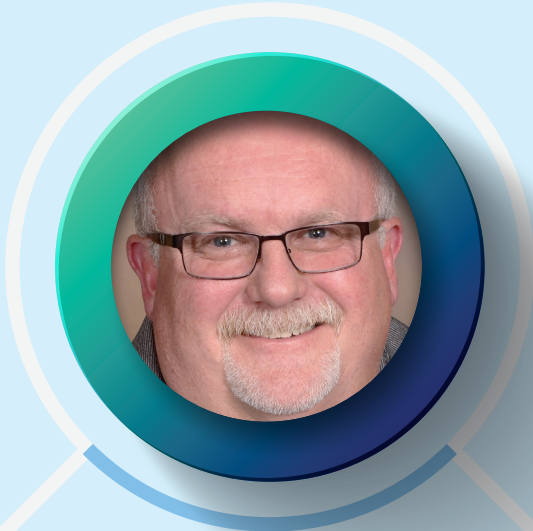
*Individuals leaving the Board of Directors include Past Chair **Dan Bertler**, Supreme Structures, Inc.; **Joe Daniels**, Joe Daniels Construction Co.; **Pat Holzem**, McGann Construction, Inc.; and **Nick May**, Refrigeration Installation Specialists. ABC of Wisconsin thanks them for their service and dedication.*

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## BOARD MEMBER DAVID MURPHY

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**DAVID MURPHY** serves as director of construction operations at PDC – Electrical Contractors, where he oversees the day-to-day operations of the construction and estimating teams, a position he has held since 2003. David started at PDC in 1987, where he began his career as an electrician’s helper. Between 1987 and 2003, he worked his way up through the company as a journeyman electrician, estimator/project coordinator and senior project estimator until taking his current position. David has been active with ABC of Wisconsin serving on the Membership Involvement Committee since 2001 and serving as the committee’s chair from 2002 to 2005.



## BOARD MEMBER ERIC WELLHOUSE

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**ERIC WELLHOUSE** is vice-president of business development at Catalyst Construction, southeast Wisconsin’s fastest-growing construction firm. His career in construction started when he was young as he worked alongside his father. He continued with the carpentry apprenticeship program, and then worked his way up to project superin-

tendent. He has served Catalyst Construction for the last seven years, where his role evolved into the director of field services, overseeing all field operations and personnel. His uncompromisable safety standards, partnerships with subcontractors and knowledge of each process have contributed to a long list of successful projects.



- **PVC 101 FOR HVAC TECHNICIANS**  
Madison, Jan. 23
- **MEMBER LUNCHEON**  
Monroe, Jan. 28
- **SKILL COMPETITION**  
West Bend, Jan. 31
- **NETWORKING SOCIAL**  
West Bend, Jan. 31
- **ISOMETRIC DRAWINGS FOR PLUMBING APPRENTICES**  
Madison, Feb. 4
- **SUPERCON**  
Wisconsin Dells, Feb. 12-13
- **PROJECTS OF DISTINCTION AWARDS BANQUET**  
Wisconsin Dells, Feb. 13
- **INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING PROGRAM**  
Madison, Feb. 27
- **BASIC ELECTRICAL FOR THE HVAC TECHNICIAN**  
Madison, Feb. 27
- **THE CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN**  
West Bend, Feb. 28
- **NETWORKING SOCIAL**  
Appleton, March 5
- **THE CONSTRUCTION LEADER**  
West Bend, March 6
- **ENTRY LEVEL AIR CONDITIONING FOR HVAC TECHNICIANS**  
Madison, March 10
- **CRITICAL SKILLS (SOFT SKILLS)**  
West Bend, March 27
- **THE CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN**  
Stevens Point, March 27

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# NEW MEMBERS

For membership information contact **Bill Stranberg**, Membership Director  
Associated Builders and Contractors of Wisconsin — 608-244-5883

## NOVEMBER 2019

### • Kain Construction, LLC

Kevin Kain

W331 N5948 Cedar Bay Drive  
Nashotah, WI 53058

**Phone:** (262) 370-9303

**Description:** General Contractor

**Sponsor:** Troy Carlson, McClone

Beam Club Members-to-date: 16

### • Vierbicher

Randy Kolinske

999 Fourier Drive, Suite 201  
Madison, WI 53717

**Phone:** (608) 821-3950

**Description:** Planning/Engineering Advisors

**Sponsor:** Greg Jones, Dave Jones, Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 28

## DECEMBER 2019

### • Accelerated Plumbing, Inc.

Chris Hendrickson

2526 Lombard Ave.

Janesville, WI 53545

**Phone:** (608) 774-9254

**Description:** Mechanical Contractor

**Sponsor:** Bill Monfre, Quality Insulators, Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 16

### • Coldspring

Karen Olah

17482 Granite West Road

Cold Spring, MN 56320

**Phone:** (630) 915-2463

**Description:** Granite/Limestone Supplier

**Sponsor:** Dan Bertler, Supreme Structures Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 43

### • HM Brandt, LLC

Mike Brandt

N59 W28135 Ainsworth Road

Sussex, WI 53089

**Phone:** (414) 397-8908

**Description:** Demolition/Concrete Contractor

**Sponsor:** Roger Thimm, Wondra Construction, Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 18.5

### • Prism Design Electrical Consultants, Inc.

Bill Halgren

21 S. Barstow St. #1

Eau Claire, WI 54701

**Phone:** (715) 797-0602

**Description:** Electrical Engineering

**Sponsor:** Jim Bunkelman, Royal Construction, Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 3

### • Reedy Concrete Construction, Inc.

Marilyn Reedy

16451 S. 15th Street

Galesville, WI 54630

**Phone:** (608) 582-4335

**Description:** Concrete Contractor

**Sponsor:** Brian Wieser, Wieser Brothers General Contractor, Inc.

Beam Club Members-to-date: 46.5



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