AGC of Washington Weekly *Toolbox Talk* Safety Meeting

LGBTQ+ Inclusion & The Platinum Rule

Date _____ Jobsite _____ Discussion Leader _____

Attendance Sign- In:

LGBTQ+ inclusion is an important topic for the construction industry, yet our industry has historically failed to recognize its importance to jobsite culture. Why is this?

- lack of understanding (awareness) about the team members who identify with, or are allies to, this community;
- industry-rooted cultural concern about crossing an invisible personal/ professional line;
- blind rejection based on personal beliefs.

June has the national designation of LGBTQ Pride month in recognition of historic harassment of this community. This Toolbox Talk provides a template for discussing with your crew why the topic of LGBTQ inclusion is necessary and welcome on the jobsite.

Whole Teammate, Whole Team Taking the time to discuss the topic of LGBTQ+ Inclusion on the jobsite has many beneficial outcomes. Let's consider the value this discussion and our LGBTQ+ teammates bring the work and industry culture.

Increased Safety, Productivity and Innovation Crew members bring the greatest value to the team when they can act authentically in a welcoming environment. Creating a work culture where crew members are able and willing to communicate their ideas without fear of judgment increases the likelihood that workers will choose to ask for the clarification of safety requirements and they may work with greater focus. With a crew-family mentality, production is improved and the generation of new ideas is motivated.

Workforce Attraction and Retention Our industry continues to suffer a shortage of labor. One of the goals of increasing diversity in our workforce is to grow the pool of candidates. Creating a jobsite culture that values diversity and speaks directly to LGBTQ+ issues, is a critical step toward improving the perception of the construction industry. It will be the personal experience of each worker that determines retention.

Expectations and Discussion When at work, we are expected to conduct ourselves in accordance with jobsite and company policies that prohibit harassment, violence, bullying and discrimination. We were all taught the Golden Rule (treat others how you want to be treated); however, the Platinum Rule is a best way to support your team and crew - treat others how they want to be treated. To do this successfully, you need to build relationships with your team. Deliberate inclusion creates an invitation to discuss what people need. Respectfully learning and using someone's preferred pronouns is an example of the Platinum Rule.

How do we support or avoid offending an identity or association we might not see or know? Unlike some racial or gender identities, a person's association with the LGBTQ+ community might be unseen. Avoid citing false stereotypes or using harmful language/jokes regardless of anyone's known identity.

Why might "guys" be a problematic way to refer to a group? Consider the cultural stereotypes in construction. Women were not historically welcome and feminine characteristics were/are used as slurs. Using "guys" to address a group supports these stereotypes. Consider "OK, team" or "This crew is killin' it!" in place of "Hey, guys."

What could be the impact of sharing someone's sexual orientation without that person's permission? If a person has shared with you their sexual orientation, do not assume you have permission to share it with others. Others may use this information to harm or judge. Respect the impact you can have.

Other safety topics discussed: _____