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55 YEARS

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2025 Ones To Watch - Rising Stars: Mike Cornoni, HFA Architecture + Engineering

May 23, 2025 - Spotlights



Mike Cornoni
Architect

“I’ve worked with Mike for nearly three years. He quickly adapted to new sectors at HFA, using his background in sports and higher ed to improve design processes. Mike’s dedication, rare in our industry, and his natural ability to build strong relationships have made him a respected leader. He’s become a mentor and manages multiple projects with a collaborative, thoughtful approach – consistently delivering quality and inspiring those around him.” - Aksel Solberg, Development Design Studio Lead at HFA Architecture + Engineering.

What’s one challenge you’ve overcome in your career so far, and what did it teach you? A major challenge I faced was a complex renovation and new construction project with multiple stakeholders and unclear goals. Aging infrastructure and inaccurate existing drawings added difficulty. To align the team, we held a stakeholder workshop that fostered communication and set a shared direction. Regular meetings helped us adapt as issues arose, leading to successful value engineering. Clear communication and trust proved key, resulting in a stronger design and future work with the client.

Who has played a pivotal role in your development, and how have they influenced you? I’ve had great mentors at pivotal points in my career. Early on, one mentor stood out by explaining the “why” behind tasks, encouraging independent thinking, and involving junior staff in client interactions. His trust and guidance helped me grow quickly and become a subject matter expert. Now, I apply the same approach – equipping junior staff with context and support. It’s rewarding to see them develop strong skills, just as I did under his mentorship.