



The Daily

Business Edition

An illustration of a hand in a suit sleeve watering a small green plant with a watering can. The plant has a dollar sign (\$) on top of it, symbolizing business growth.

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[Architecture] Sports Feed Growth at Fawley Bryant

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Whether it's a baseball stadium in downtown Bradenton, a BMX track in Sarasota or a rowing facility at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, architecture firm Fawley Bryant has played a critical role in designing many of Southwest Florida's sporting venues. As the firm approaches its 20-year anniversary this year, principals for the firm say sports is only playing a greater role, both for the company and the community as a whole.

"The blooming sports industry will have a huge effect, and not just in these obvious things but in the residual development that follows—medical, residential, professional, all of these industries that support sports," said Mike Bryant, Fawley Bryant executive vice president.

The company was responsible for the award-winning McKechnie Field renovation and has a Pirate City expansion on the boards. It is planning the USF Rowing Aquatic Center. But perhaps the biggest long-term project has been the continuous expansion at IMG Academy, which will continue with a 40,000-square-foot fieldhouse, a student union, a new academy school and a second dormitory project. President Rick Fawley said the recent sale of IMG to William Morris Endeavor seems only to have accelerated efforts for that property to grow.

"And we have clients not that far from IMG that are capitalizing on what IMG is doing," Fawley said. "More mixed-use developments are incorporating fitness activities." Steve Padgett, vice president, has managed much of that expansion, and both Fawley and Bryant are quick to credit their growing staff for much of the firm's success.

Bryant said the benefits reach into community planning in a way that benefits even those not directly involved. "If you bring younger, cleaner industry, you have a need for more housing that families can afford, you create vibrant cities at night, and have all this incentive to bring more business into the community," he said. "It's a collaborative effort."

The projects have certainly contributed to the firm's greater financial success. The company in December hired two new senior project architects, and that followed five strategic hires in the second quarter of 2013. SHARE: [f](#) [in](#) [t](#)