



Executive of the Month: Braganti of HAP Construction blends innovative technology with expertise, passion & adaptability

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New York, NY The New York Real Estate Journal (NYREJ) sat down with Stefano Braganti, for a question and answer session. Braganti, executive vice president at HAP Construction is this month's executive of the month.

47 East 117th Street - East Harlem, NY

NYREJ: How did you get started in the construction industry?

Braganti: My grandfather along with my grandmother, later helped by my father, had a small

construction company in my hometown of Imperia, Italy. When I was young, I spent my afternoons helping workers tie up rebars, but I always told myself I didn't want to be in construction. After receiving a dual master's degree in engineering from the University of Bologna and Columbia University, WSP offered me a job in New York City. A few years later, I was managing the structural design of several buildings including 56 Leonard St., the 821-ft.-tall skyscraper in Tribeca. One of my clients joined HAP Construction and recommended me, and the rest is history.

NYREJ: In what ways has your training shaped your approach to leadership?

Braganti: The training I received at WSP, HAP Construction, and elsewhere taught me a number of soft skills that I continue to follow today, from looking for out-of-the-box ideas to always making sure to meet deadlines, helping our clients accomplish what they want, and never using "no" as an answer until trying every possible way to make something work.

I also believe sports have positively shaped my life, and how I deal with challenges. I grew up playing water polo, which taught me that hard work and sacrifice always pays off – training twice a day every day brought me and my teammates to several national podiums almost every year I played. Nowadays, I do triathlons and endurance bike races, which is also great training for the mind and work ethic. You learn that hiccups and hard challenges can always be worked out.

NYREJ: What is your vision for the future of HAP Construction?

Braganti: We would like to continue growing the company by offering our capabilities to more developers and architects throughout New York City. HAP Construction is a full-service construction company dedicated to building and renovating high quality projects that are delivered on time and on budget. Comprised of experienced engineers, architects, construction professionals, and project managers, our firm offers a unique approach integrating innovative technologies with expertise, passion, and adaptability. To help achieve our goals, we have put into place detailed procedures, a bidding/estimating department, and marketing and business development strategies, as well as the technical team dedicated to the construction of projects.

We also started a new department that focuses primarily on renovations, single family houses, and all construction work for the end user, providing a new level of competency, technology, quality, and affordable prices in a market that is historically dominated by smaller players with less resources and leverage with their vendors.

The Maverick at 215-225 West 28th Street - Manhattan, NY

NYREJ: What projects are you most excited about?

Braganti: The Maverick at 215-225 West 28th St. in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan, and 247 East 117th St. in East Harlem.

The Maverick is comprised of two 20-story buildings totaling 312,500 s/f, which is our biggest project to date. The mixed-use residential development features 87 one- to four-bedroom condominium residences and 112 rental units, along with a 60-ft.-long swimming pool, state-of-the art gym with sauna and steam room, children's playroom, yoga room, roof deck, and a smart parking facility. I have personally been working on the Maverick for more than three years, first during preconstruction, helping to coordinate the design phase, planning logistics, buying and safety, and later in charge of construction. I also hired and manage a great team of women and men, who have worked persistently throughout the different construction phases of the building.

247 East 117th St., a 14-story residential building, has been in preconstruction and will be ready to break ground soon.

NYREJ: What do you think are the biggest opportunities for HAP Construction right now?

Braganti: With many building projects that were on hold during the pandemic restarting, New York City's economy is poised to benefit greatly. In addition to private developers ramping up activity, the city announced it is restarting \$17 billion in spending across 1,700 projects. Having continued to work on construction projects throughout the pandemic, HAP Construction is well positioned to take on new jobs as the economy continues to reopen. Among the experience our team has gained over the past 15 months is the ability to ensure proper COVID protocols and procedures are in place, which will continue to help safeguard the health of everyone on our sites. Moreover, our technological approach to construction that we started pre-pandemic, and mastered in the last year, is being understood and appreciated more and more by developers and owners. Cameras, monitoring, and web-based project management tools are the future, and we are already living it.

It is essential to always keep learning how to implement the newest available technologies. Good customer service is also a pillar of our philosophy and helps differentiate us from our competitors.

NYREJ: What are the biggest challenges facing the construction industry?

Braganti: One of the main problems affecting job sites today is delays caused by logistics and supply chain issues. The lockdowns and work stoppages at factories serving the industry continue to have a major impact on construction throughout the city, and the effects may linger for years to come. This includes higher costs for materials such as wood, insulation, natural stone, and tiles, along with the continued backlog of appliances and many other items. However, there are a number of things HAP Construction is doing to help combat this situation, including maintaining a dedicated logistics team and inexpensive space for storing items. This allows us to save a significant amount of money by avoiding subcontractor surcharges, and most importantly, helps avoid delays to the construction timeline and completion of the project.

Another big challenge has been ensuring that our entire team remains energized throughout the construction of a building, which can take several years to complete. I believe the key to keeping people motivated, especially during these times, is to provide them with specific goals and a clear

path to personal growth. Whatever interests they have, related or not to construction, we support their learning experience.

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