



Photo by Enoch Holloway

For nearly three decades, Kevin Eades has played a key role in shaping New Mexico's infrastructure landscape. Now President and CEO of Molzen Corbin—one of the state's most prominent engineering and architecture firms—Eades continues to lead with a focus on innovation, community impact and employee ownership. Since joining the firm in 1994, he's contributed to transformative projects like the I-25/NM 14 Diverging Diamond Interchange and the Los Lunas Corridor Project, and in 2021, he helped usher in a new era by transitioning Molzen Corbin to a 100% employee-owned company. Albuquerque Business First Publisher Will Martinez sat down with Eades to discuss his journey and the firm's evolution.

WILL MARTINEZ: Kevin, thank you so much for having us. I would love to hear a little bit about your background

KEVIN EADES: I was born in Salt Lake City and then moved here when I was 8. I've lived here since. I grew up in Kirtland, outside of Farmington, about a mile off the Navajo Reservation.

MARTINEZ: So, by all accounts, you are an adopted native New Mexican! And then you went to New Mexico State. Was Molzen Corbin your first job out of college?

EADES: Yes, it was my first real adult job. That was 1994. You might be surprised, but there are a bunch of us here

with that story. There are probably five, six, seven of us, with more than 30 years, that this was the only job we ever had.

MARTINEZ: That's really incredible. I think it shows how special Molzen Corbin is. Could you talk a little bit about your journey from being an employee to basically becoming the employee-owner in charge.

EADES: We kind of have that reputation; of it being more organic. I'd be lying if I said that it was my dream. It just kind of happened.

MARTINEZ: That's usually how it happens to the best of us, hopefully.

EADES: I'd say it was lucky. Being in the right place at the right time. When I came here, Molzen Corbin hired me out of college. I had other offers. Some were government and some were construction. I worked in construction during college, so I think that helped me a lot. When I came here, I started out in the field in construction. Then things just kind of happened. We had some people leave and they gave me a lot of responsibility early with some of our major clients. I was excited about it, and I didn't have anything else going on. I was young. I wasn't married and didn't have kids yet. So, I jumped in. The job was a lot of night meetings. A lot of council and P&Z meetings, so that led me to get to know those communities really well. At the time, I didn't know that it was our legacy clients. I just started working. Later, we had another opportunity and I ended up being the department leader for our civil department at a very young age.

You've probably discovered in your research, but we have civil, water resources, airports, architectural, electrical and then our Las Cruces and El Paso offices.

A lot of it I just learned being involved here and there and then as Del Archuleta started to look towards retirement, he told me, "You can start driving the car. Here are the keys and I'm going to keep an eye on you and make sure you don't drive outside the lanes."

MARTINEZ: Well, it sure seems like you have driven the car well. Could you maybe walk us through the origin story of your company, and how have its mission and values evolved under your leadership?

EADES: Molzen Corbin got its start back in 1960 as D.F. Molzen & Associates, founded in Albuquerque by Dayton Molzen. A few years later, Albert Corbin joined him, and it became Molzen Corbin. Together they built a strong reputation across New Mexico for integrity and personalized service. They believed in doing business on a handshake and their word—values that still guide us today. The firm really expanded under Del Archuleta, who became sole owner and CEO, growing our water resources work while staying true to that original vision. I stepped into the CEO role in 2021, we had transitioned to being 100%



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employee-owned—a major milestone and a meaningful way to carry that legacy forward.

MARTINEZ: Well congratulations to you all! This May marks a major milestone for Molzen Corbin as your firm will be celebrating 65 years serving New Mexico's communities. How has your mission evolved to meet the changing needs of municipalities while staying true to your roots?

EADES: For over 65 years, Molzen Corbin has been right there alongside New Mexico's communities. Our mission— inspired professionals defining excellence—has guided us from day one, but at the heart of it, our work has always been about more than just infrastructure. It's about helping communities grow and thrive. Over the years, the challenges have definitely changed—things are more complex, and the needs are more diverse—but we've kept pace by evolving our approach, expanding our capabilities, and staying ahead of the curve technically. What hasn't changed is our commitment to serving with purpose and heart, and with a deep respect for the people and cultures that make New Mexico so special. Because we're locally based, this isn't just where we work—it's

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home. Our team reflects the spirit and diversity of the Southwest, and that connection helps us deliver practical, lasting solutions rooted in the realities of the communities we serve. I think that authenticity and adaptability are what have helped us build trust across generations.

MARTINEZ: As a 100% employee-owned company, how does employee ownership influence your culture, decision-making, and the long-term commitment of your team?

EADES: Being 100% employee-owned really enhances the game. When everyone has a stake in the company's success, it naturally creates a culture where people take pride in their work and look out for one another. It's no longer just about completing tasks—it's about building something together. That ownership mentality shows up in how we make decisions, how we collaborate, and how we go the extra mile for our clients. For our employee-owners, the benefits are both personal and financial. Ownership means having a real, tangible stake in the value we create—and as the company grows, so does their equity. It's a long-term wealth-building opportunity that provides security beyond a traditional paycheck. That sense of financial empowerment motivates people to stay, contribute at a high level, and take real pride in the future, they're helping to build—for themselves, their families, and their communities.

MARTINEZ: I really think you all have an incredible model that builds that "we" mentality in your people from the start. Apart from employee ownership, what sets Molzen Corbin apart from other engineering and architecture firms?

EADES: That is easy - we have incredible employees! At Molzen Corbin,



Photo provided by Molzen Corbin

we don't just design projects, we help shape the communities we call home. A lot of our employee-owners grew up in the very towns and neighborhoods we now serve, so there's a personal connection to the work that's hard to replicate. And with 100% employee ownership, that connection runs even deeper. Everyone has skin in the game, which fuels a culture of pride, accountability, and real collaboration. What really sets us apart is our commitment to staying rooted. While other firms may grow by acquisition or chase markets far from home, we've made a deliberate choice to focus on New Mexico and El Paso.

In short, we're proud of "delivering state-of-the-art projects with a local touch"!

MARTINEZ: Molzen Corbin is known for nurturing "homegrown talent." How

do you support employee development and foster a culture where professionals feel valued and empowered?

EADES: At Molzen Corbin, we don't look at talent development as just an HR box to check—it's a key part of our long-term strategy. As I said, a lot of us started here right out of college and have built our entire careers with the company. That's not unusual for us. Over 24% of our employee-owners have been with Molzen Corbin for more than 25 years. For a company of almost 100 employees, that kind of continuity is rare in the AEC industry. We want people to grow, step into leadership, and stay connected to the bigger mission along the way. We encourage a real sense of ownership from those who are closest to the work and the communities we serve. These aren't just projects on a spreadsheet; they're the parks our kids play in, the roads we drive every day, the fire stations that protect

our families, and the water systems that serve our neighborhoods. Our team lives in the same places we work and that lived connection brings a level of care and responsibility that you can't fake.

MARTINEZ: Molzen Corbin has led high-profile projects like Spaceport America, the UNM PIT renovation, and the \$240 million Los Lunas Corridor. How do you balance pushing the boundaries of innovation with meeting the practical needs and tight budgets of municipalities?

EADES: At Molzen Corbin, we see innovation and fiscal responsibility as two sides of the same coin. The communities we serve often face tight budgets, so our challenge—and opportunity—is to deliver creative, forward-thinking solutions that are also practical, affordable, and built to last. We've learned how to make a big impact without overspending. Whether it was Spaceport America or the renovation

of The PIT, our approach has always been grounded in smart planning. We use tools like phasing, life-cycle cost analysis, and strategic grant funding to help municipalities stretch every dollar while still reaching their goals. The Los Lunas Corridor project is a great example. It's the largest "Local Lead" project in New Mexico history and includes a new I-25 interchange, the longest bridge in New Mexico (across the Rio Grande) and a critical connection between I-25 and NM 47. It's innovative not just in design, but in how it was phased, funded, and planned in close partnership with the Village over more than two decades. To us, innovation isn't about chasing the latest trends, it's about solving real-world problems with discipline and creativity. We focus on delivering solutions that reduce long-term costs, enhance sustainability, and meet the true needs of the community. At the end of the day, it's about creating value that lasts—not just a finished product.



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MARTINEZ: Sustainability is increasingly important in public infrastructure. How does Molzen Corbin incorporate greener, more sustainable solutions into your engineering and architectural projects?

EADES: At Molzen Corbin, sustainability isn't a buzzword, it's a responsibility we bring to every project. It's not just about checking boxes or chasing awards; it's about making thoughtful, lasting choices that serve communities now and for generations to come. We're proud to

have led the way in New Mexico with the state's first Envision Sustainable Infrastructure Silver Rating for the I-25/ University Interchange Project in Las Cruces. We've also earned LEED Silver Certifications for major projects like The PIT renovation and the Santa Fe Regional Airport Terminal Expansion. But for us, sustainability goes beyond certifications—it's about designing smart, efficient infrastructure that balances environmental stewardship with real-world practicality and cost-effectiveness.

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earned a number of notable awards and accolades over the years. How do you see these recognitions influencing your company's culture and reputation?

EADES: While we're honored to receive industry awards, what means the most to us are the compliments from our clients and seeing our projects truly serve the communities they were built for. Whether it's renovating the iconic UNM "PIT" (a venue that holds meaning for generations of New Mexicans as well as being one of the top college basketball venues in the nation), designing a community center that gives kids a safe place after school and seniors a place to connect, designing a runway for future space travel, or bringing clean drinking water to a rural community for the very first time—those are the moments that define success for us. That said, formal recognition does play a role in reinforcing our culture. It validates the high standards our employee-owners hold themselves to and builds pride across the organization. It also strengthens our reputation with clients, helping them see that they're partnering with a firm that consistently delivers excellence.

MARTINEZ: Looking at the future, what is your vision for Molzen Corbin's growth, and how are you preparing the next generation of leaders to carry the firm forward?

EADES: At Molzen Corbin, our vision is centered on intentional, meaningful growth. We're not chasing size—we're focused on deepening our impact across New Mexico, staying true to our values,

and preparing the next generation of leaders to carry the torch. That means investing in people who want more than just a job—they want to build something that matters. We look for professionals who take the initiative, think beyond their roles, and genuinely care about the communities we serve. Leadership here isn't about titles—it's a mindset we expect from everyone. As a 100% employee-owned firm, that mindset runs deep. Ownership fosters a shared sense of responsibility and a culture of trust, mentorship, and empowerment. We give our people the tools and space to lead because our future depends on them. At the end of the day, our success comes down to leaders who care, think boldly, and act with integrity—and that's exactly the kind of foundation we're building on.

MARTINEZ: How do you maintain strong relationships with your municipal clients over the years? What sets Molzen Corbin apart in that regard?

EADES: At Molzen Corbin, our relationships with municipal clients go far beyond the transactional. They're built on trust, consistency, and a shared sense of purpose. Some of our earliest clients—like the Village of Los Lunas and the City of Belen—have been with us since the 1960s. Today, about 90% of our work comes from repeat clients. That kind of long-term loyalty doesn't just happen, it's earned by consistently showing up, solving problems, and honoring our commitments year after year. And because we live and work in the same communities, we bring a level of insight and accountability that's tough to replicate. At the end of the day, everything comes back to trust. Whether it's a small upgrade or a major infrastructure investment, every conversation is an opportunity to build that trust—through responsiveness, follow-through, and a real commitment to serving the public good. We often say, "We take our client's pain away"—and that's really the Molzen Corbin difference.

MARTINEZ: Well thank you for all that you do for New Mexico, Kevin. Cheers to another 65 years' worth of success for Molzen Corbin!