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## Barone, Sikes cooperation



Barone



Sikes

**B**arone Design Group, an architecture and interiors firm, and Sikes Group, an architecture and construction management firm, have formed a strategic alliance.

"What made us form the alliance was that last year in particular we were looking at changes in the business," says **Dean Barone**, president and co-founder of Barone Design Group. "Our business was not growing where we wanted it to grow. We realized we needed to look at new strategies – and this is why we began an initial dialogue with **Herschel Sikes** about the direction of his firm."

President-founder of Sikes Group, Herschel Sikes says, "I had several projects coming down the line, and I had been through the ups and downs of a growing business. It just made sense to share resources. We decided to team up and come together under one roof."

Barone adds, "We knew that Sikes Group was about the same size as ours, and two smaller companies can create a larger force."

The two men have known each other for many years – just have not "really" worked together. Sikes has four people on staff and Barone has eight, so together they are a 14-person firm. The strategic alliance is not to be confused with an official partnership. "We are separate but working together on a lot of projects. Maybe down the road we could become one," adds Sikes.

"The goal of this alliance is to grow, develop this synergy, and to bring new ideas to the forefront. What we find being in an architectural/design world is that we are stimulated by challenges. This is just a wonderful creative challenge for both of us. We are taking our expertise in certain fields and applying it to brand-new businesses," says Barone.

Sikes adds, "Dean's background is a lot different than mine, so this makes sense since there is no overlap here. That is what intrigued me: I can offer my clients more of a holistic service than I could before by now having Dean's capabilities behind mine, and vice versa."

Both companies are Houston-based. Sikes Group has been in business for more than 30 years, and Barone Design Group for more than 20 years.

The strategic alliance enables the firms to offer comprehensive interior and ground-up design services to leading corporate, commercial and institutional real estate organizations including healthcare providers, oil and gas, financial services and hospitality companies. As part of the alliance, the two firms are co-locating at One Northwest Center in Houston. –akj