

Josh Kassing is Managing Principal of Mary Cook Associates (MCA), a national interior design firm that has shaped multifamily and student housing communities for more than 40 years. He has played a central role in moving MCA to the forefront of student housing development, and he brings a delivery-minded perspective to design: how interiors are planned, specified, procured, and installed to keep projects on schedule, on budget, and ready to lease.

Working alongside Founder and CEO Mary Cook and MCA's senior leadership team, Josh leads the firm's day-to-day operations and strategy across its fully integrated services: interior architecture, interior design, strategic positioning, branding, procurement, and installation. For developers, that integration means fewer handoffs and one accountable team carrying a community from brand story and amenity strategy through furnishing, installation, and move-in day.

Before being named Managing Principal, Josh served as Senior Vice President, where he expanded client relationships and launched new business divisions, services, and geographic markets. He joined MCA in 2017 as Creative Director and was promoted to VP of Design Development two years later, leading design teams to create engaging, human-centered environments. He has grown MCA's network of collaborators, including developers, architects, branding firms, and marketing and leasing consultants, and led the launch of Built to Spec, Partner in Yes, and MCA's comprehensive visualization services, which help development teams align on design decisions earlier in the process.

Earlier in his career, Josh worked at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) on all phases of design for domestic and international commercial, residential, and hospitality projects, and designed luxury hospitality projects for The Gettys Group.

Josh is a regular presenter, moderator, and panelist at InterFace Student Housing, the NMHC Student Housing Conference, and the NMHC Annual Meeting. His articles have appeared in Multi-Housing News, Multifamily Executive, RE Journal, Builder and Developer, Mansion Global, Green Home Builder, and IIDA Perspectives, and he appears frequently on industry podcasts.

He is a full member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and was accepted to ULI's Chicago Product Council (CPC) Blue Flight. He was named to Pro Builder's "40 Under 40" list in 2024, recognized as a CRE Rising Star, and received the Outstanding Young Professional Award from Iowa State University's College of Design in 2025. Josh holds a Bachelor of Architecture and an MFA in Interior Design from Iowa State, where he also served as a studio instructor.

On this panel, Josh will share how earlier design collaboration, digital visualization, and integrated procurement and installation are reshaping the way student housing gets delivered.