

By Sean Ryan – Reporter, Milwaukee Business Journal - May 29, 201

The Rock founder Zimmerman known for mentoring young workers

During a walk through Mike Zimmerman's office in Franklin for his health care companies, the young age of the workforce stood out even more than its modern decor.

That is no mistake, say Zimmerman's business associates, and reflects his eagerness to mentor others.

Zimmerman Ventures is the home base for health care companies that he founded before breaking into the broader spotlight through The Rock Sports Complex, Milwaukee Wave and Frontier League baseball. (See The May 30 edition of the Milwaukee Business Journal for a full profile of Zimmerman and his work.)

Zimmerman is 36, going on 37 next month, and on a Monday in May wore jeans, comfortable-looking loafers and a button-down shirt. The employees at Zimmerman Ventures seem to trend at his age or younger.

Chuck Lund, Zimmerman's uncle and mentor, said he hires younger workers out of college, teaches them and provides the chance to rise through the ranks.

"Mike also recognizes that he has been given opportunities that he otherwise would not have had if his father had not necessarily been so successful," Lund said.



David Zimmerman founded Zimmerman & Associates before selling the health care consulting company to Mike, his son.

Sue Black, who sold a majority stake in the Wave to Zimmerman and remains his business partner, said he offered to mentor the team's players in aspects of business.

"He's very, very loyal," she said. "He allows people to make mistakes and to mentor them."

Nick Fricano knew Zimmerman on and off since they were kids and founded Healthfuse with him.

"I feel I was really groomed in many ways by Mike and was given many opportunities I probably didn't deserve," said Fricano, president of Healthfuse. "He has a unique ability to motivate people but he also really recognizes talent."