



Commercial Real Estate

Inside Barstool Sports' new Chicago office

By Danny Ecker



Credit: Danny Ecker

Barstool Sports' workspace overlooks a basketball court in the office at 400 N. Noble St.

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Pro athletes, sports personalities and other celebrities are starting to show up more frequently these days at a nondescript former dairy facility just west of the Fulton Market District.

It's the new Chicago home of Barstool Sports, the media company that recently moved its top talent from New York City to Chicago, where it [signed a lease](#) earlier this year for around 40,000 square feet at 400 N. Noble St.

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Known for its sports and entertainment podcasts, Barstool converted most of the two-story former packaging and production building into a home for about 60 local employees and a venue for generating its content. A basketball court, golf simulator, commercial kitchen, three broadcast studios, nine podcast studios and a series of offices are among the features built out in what Barstool recently said was a \$20 million project.

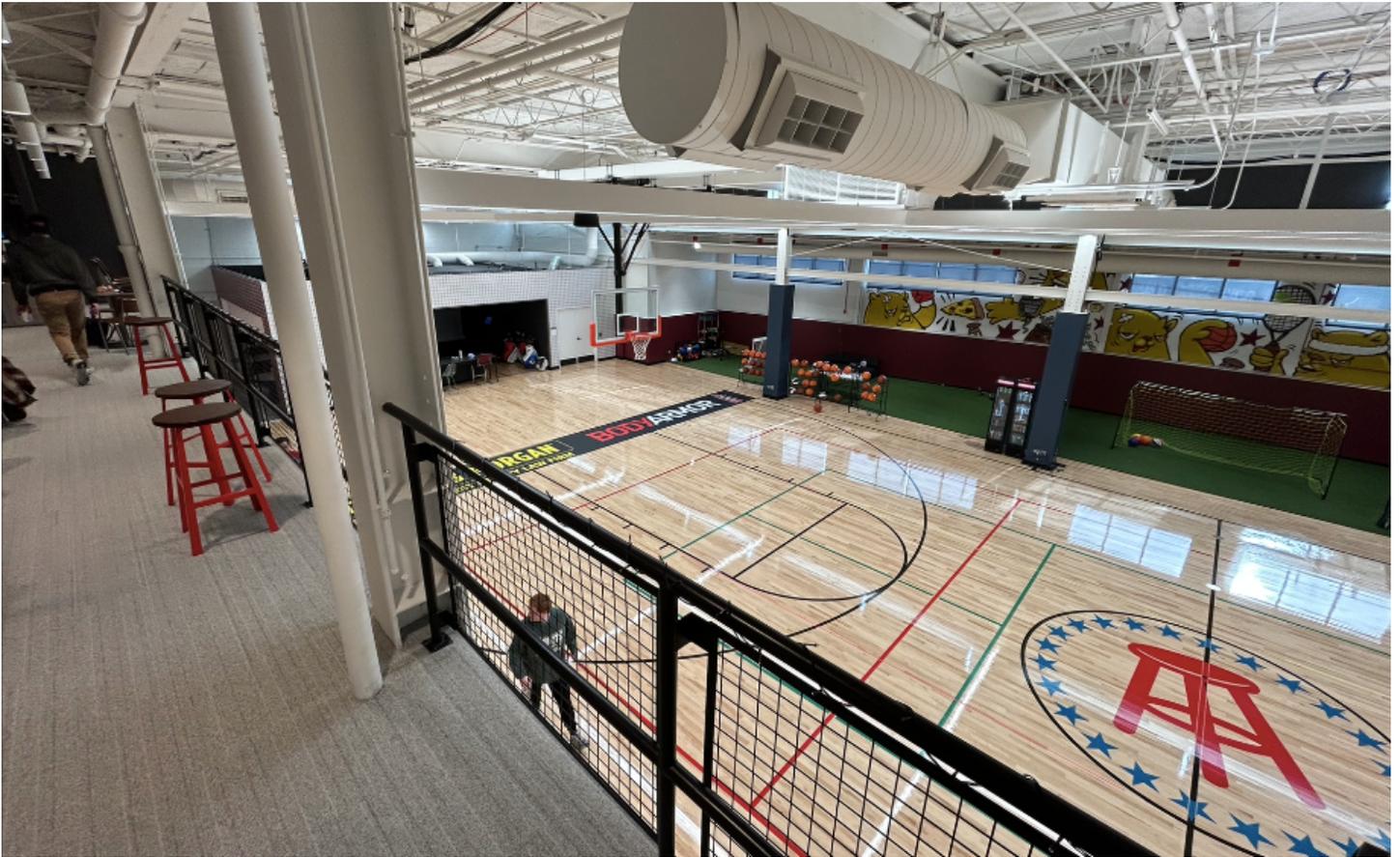
"They were looking at this as a 'fantasy factory' where content could be created, really anywhere throughout the entire office," said Jackie Wilcox, an associate partner at BKV Group, the lead designer on the facility.

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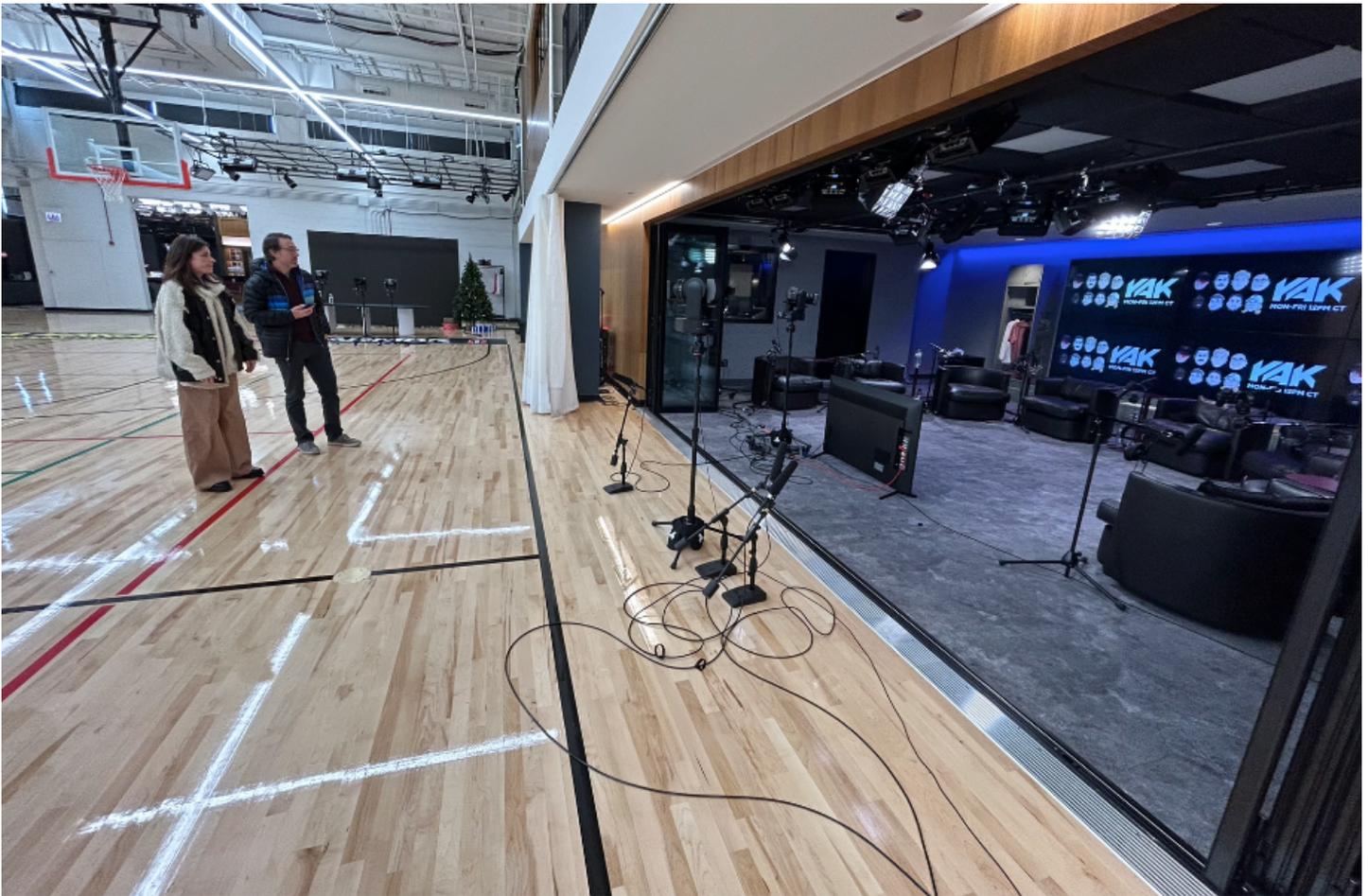
Credit: Danny Ecker

The studio for Barstool Sports' "Pardon My Take" podcast.



Credit: Danny Ecker

A basketball court at the Barstool Sports Chicago office.



Credit: Danny Ecker

A recording studio looks out onto the basketball court.

Wilcox said Barstool toured several sites for its Chicago office, landing on one somewhat near the trendy Fulton Market neighborhood but mostly hidden from traffic. That helps the firm bring in high-profile guests who often appear on its various shows. Recent visitors to the new office include former NFL Most Valuable Player Cam Newton, sportscaster Charissa Thompson and comedian Nate Bargatze.

The new office "is everything that we dreamed of and more," said Dan "Big Cat" Katz, co-host of Barstool's popular "Pardon My Take" podcast. Katz was previously based in Chicago before moving to New York as the company grew. Barstool moved its Chicago office to the new building from a small space it had in Lakeview at 855 W. Belmont Ave.

"When I explained the vision (for the new office), everyone was like, 'Oh, you just want to play basketball all day.' Well, I do like playing basketball, but more than anything it was about keeping an open space that can't be taken by desks," Katz said. "We've grown so rapidly that we've run out of space very quickly (in other locations)."

Barstool was founded in 2003 by Dave Portnoy as a free sports and gambling newspaper and grew into a digital platform with a wide variety of shows and a large following.

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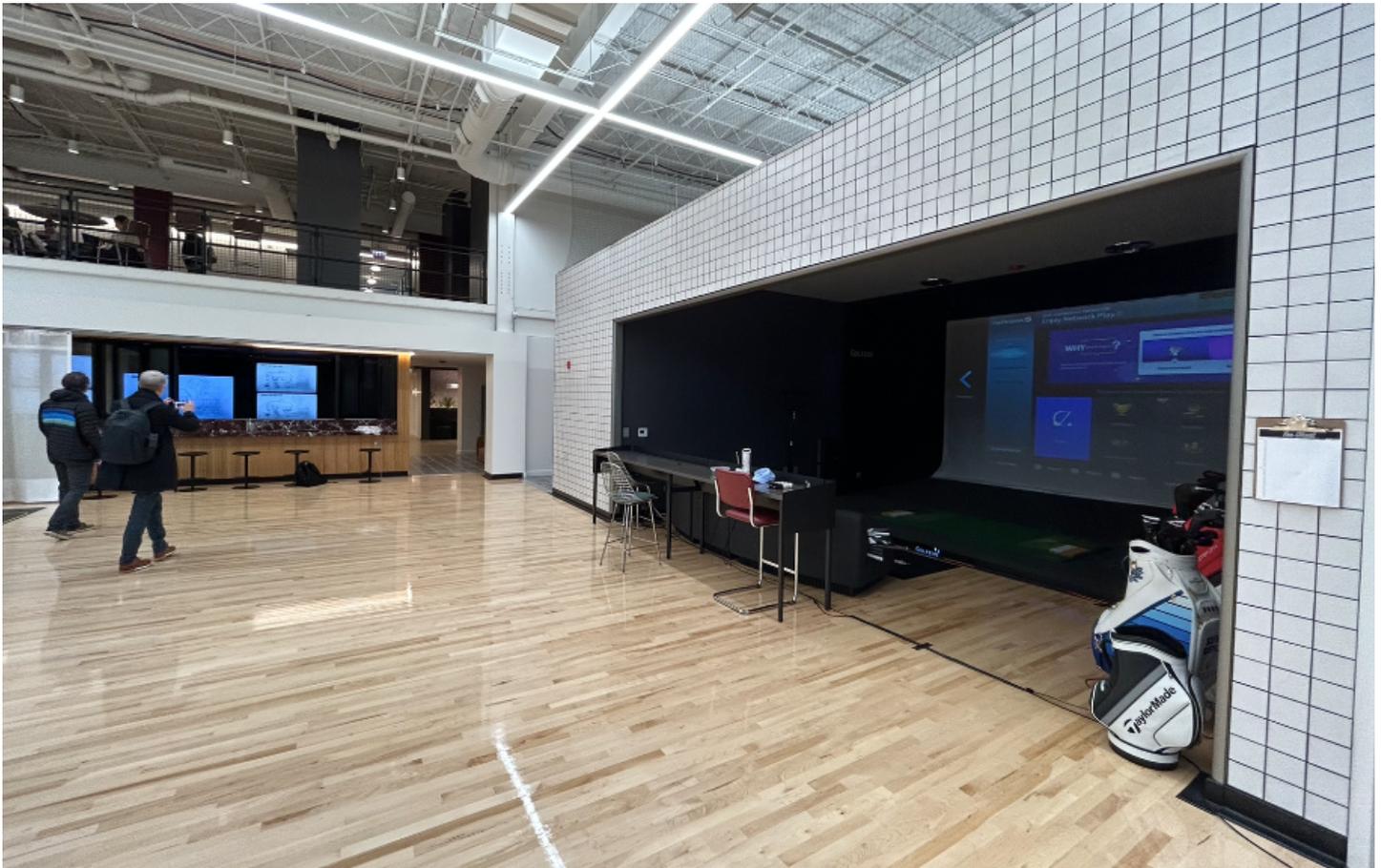
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In 2020, Wyomissing, Pa.-based casino operator Penn Entertainment acquired 36% of Barstool for \$163 million and announced earlier this year that it had acquired the remaining interest in the company for about \$388 million. But Penn divested the Barstool brand over the summer with the launch of a new ESPN-branded sportsbook, selling Barstool back to Portnoy.

Penn said in a statement in February that Barstool Sports podcasts had been downloaded 1.6 billion times since 2020.

Here are some more images from inside the Barstool Sports Chicago office:



Credit: Danny Ecker

A golf simulator at the Barstool Chicago office.



Credit: Danny Ecker

The Barstool Chicago office includes a commercial kitchen, where the company shoots a cooking show.



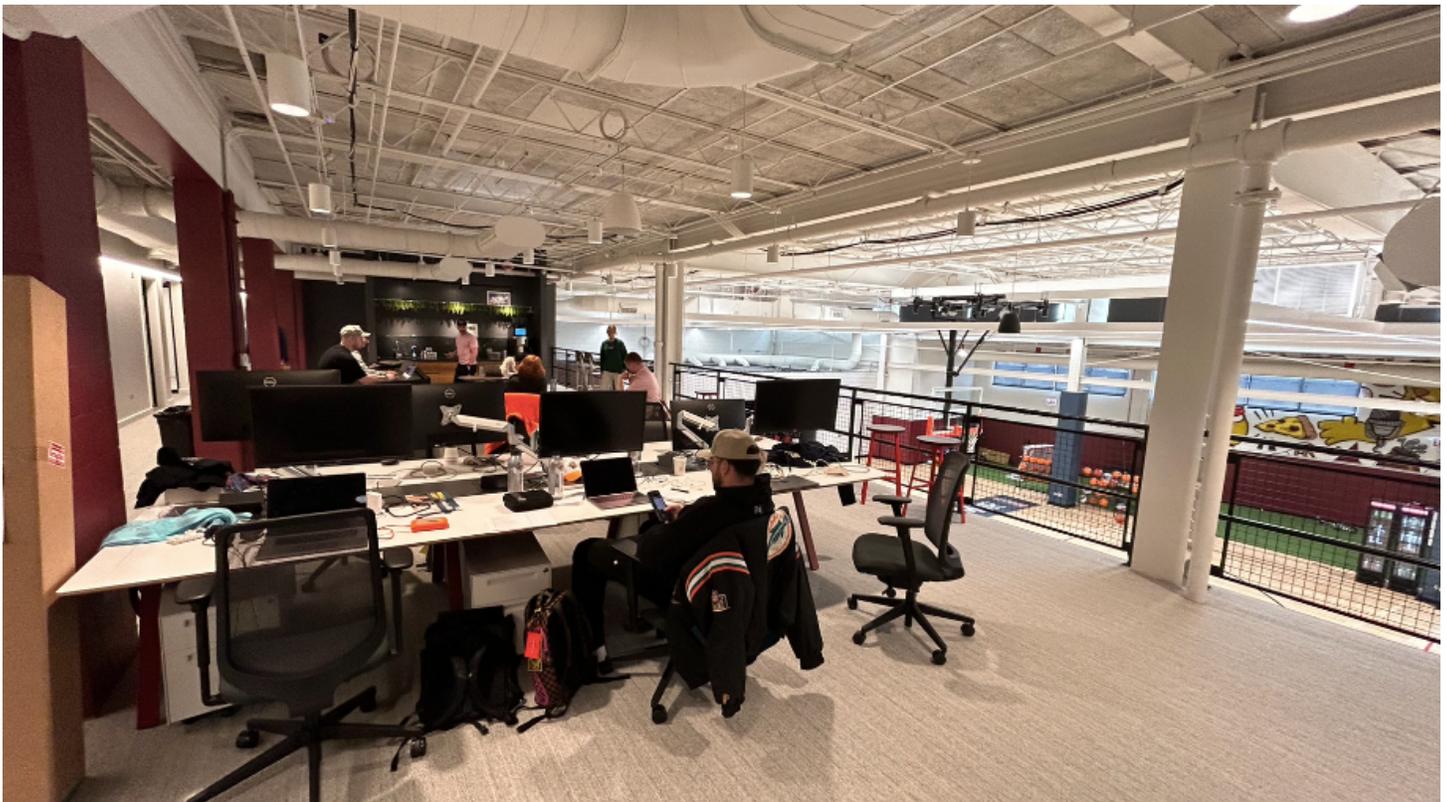
Credit: Danny Ecker

A broadcast studio at the Barstool Chicago office.



Credit: Danny Ecker

A podcasting studio at the Barstool Chicago office.



Barstool Sports has about 60 employees in Chicago, many of whom recently relocated from New York.



Credit: Danny Ecker

The Barstool Sports Chicago basketball court.



An image of the building interior before Barstool's buildout.



Credit: Andrew Brush

400 N. Noble St.



By Danny Ecker

Danny Ecker is a reporter covering commercial real estate for Crain's Chicago Business, with a focus on offices, hotels and megaprojects shaping the local