



Pen Bay Medical Center
MaineHealth

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Horch Roofing

Peter Horch had a vision when he started his business in 2003 with a beat-up pickup truck, a ladder and a young man's brawn. Horch wanted to professionalize what was then an unruly trade. He also wanted to grow his business in such a way that it produced management jobs for aging roofers as their bodies tired from carrying 150-pound squares of shingles up a ladder all day.

Now, having built Horch Roofing into one of the largest and most respected roofing companies in Maine – and creating a safety net for his employees along the way – Peter Horch has turned his attention to building a safety net for his community. Horch Roofing recently made a significant gift to the Pen Bay Waldo Healthcare Foundation in support of the 42,000-square-foot Health Center currently under construction on the campus of Pen Bay Medical Center in Rockport (PBMC). The building is scheduled to receive its first patient late in 2020.

The \$16 million Health Center will house PBMC's primary care practices, including internal and family medicine, pediatrics and pediatric physical and occupational therapy, audiology and speech pathology, and the ear, nose and throat practice. It also will provide space where specialists from the Barbara Bush Children's



Hospital at Maine Medical Center can meet with patients in Rockport, reducing the need for children with special health needs to travel to Portland.

"One of the many things that make Midcoast Maine such a special place to live is the excellent health care offered by our hospital," said Ann Bresnahan, a former trustee of PBMC and a current board member of the Pen Bay Waldo Healthcare Foundation. "Another is the large number of business owners who are committed to their employees and our community. Peter Horch is one them.

"Peter has built a business with the goal of creating opportunities for his employees," Bresnahan said. "Similarly, his gift will create better health care opportunities for everyone in our communities."

For his part, Horch attributes the decision to support the Health Center to the entire Horch Roofing team. Three years ago, he created an employee committee to oversee charitable giving. “Then we did a companywide survey asking employees to identify what we should be supporting,” he said. “They identified children’s issues, homelessness, hunger, recovery. As a committee, we discussed how all these issues ultimately funnel through our hospital. We concluded that supporting Pen Bay Medical Center is one of the best ways to improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.”

Horch’s ability to make such an important gift to PBMC is rooted in humble beginnings.

“I was working for another roofer in 2001, and I remember seeing the trucks of electricians and plumbers and builders,” Horch said. “Some of them had fleets of trucks and they all had their names on the side. I remember saying to myself, ‘Why aren’t there any roofing trucks with a company name on the side?’ I knew then that I would build a brand people could trust to do their roofing.”

Horch started by taking small jobs that he could do himself. “It was really hard to be a 25-year-old and walk up to a homeowner and say, ‘Trust me, I’m one man in a pickup truck and I’ll do your roof.’” Still, a few jobs came in, and after each he would ask the homeowners why they hired him. “I would get answers like, ‘You were the only one that called me back.’ I’m thinking, ‘You mean, all I have to do to get work is answer the phone and call people back?’ So I answered the phone every time it rang and I called everyone back.

“And pretty soon, more work started coming in and I needed help,” he said. Enter Horch’s first employee, Devin Deabler. Together they scraped off old shingles and carried the heavy bundles of new shingles up ladders all day. It was dirty, hard work that left them physically exhausted.

“I recognized early on that my body wouldn’t be able to lay shingles for 40 years,” Horch said. “When I hired Devin, I thought to myself, ‘If I can’t do it, then I can’t ask him to do it.’ I knew

then that I had to grow the company to give every employee a chance at a career where they could start in the trade doing the hard work and eventually grow into positions that weren’t so physically demanding.”

“Seventeen years ago, I couldn’t imagine being part of a company’s decision-making team. Now, to be part of a team that gives back to the community ... makes me so proud.”

—Devin Deabler,
a 17-year employee of Horch Roofing

The combination of taking care of his customers and his employees has proven to be a winning strategy. Horch Roofing has grown from a one-person, one truck outfit 17 years ago to more than 50 employees and 27 trucks today. True to Horch’s original vision, each truck is branded with the Horch Roofing logo.

As Horch expected, such growth has been good for his employees, including the one that has been with him from the beginning. “Peter taught me how to shingle, how to run a job and then how to manage people and how to sell a roof,” said Deabler, who now works as a production manager. “Seventeen years ago, I couldn’t imagine being part of a company’s decision-making team. Now, to be part of a team that gives back to the community — well, it just makes me so proud.”

Said Peter Horch: “Devin and the whole team put in a lot of time and thought in deciding to make a gift supporting the new Health Center. I would encourage everyone to do the same. With your help, we can have state-of-the-art healthcare right here on the coast of Maine.”