

## Member Profile - Pacific Shoring

Any profile of NAXSA member Pacific Shoring would be incomplete without first learning the story of the company's owner, industry pioneer and NAXSA founding member, Bob Pitts.

"My first experience with shoring was more than 50 years ago when I was working as pipe layer for a national utility contractor," Pitts explains. "I was tasked with using some of the first shoring systems that were then just coming on the market."

Pitts traveled the country working high profile, sophisticated jobs where shoring equipment was typically required. "Some of these jobs included places like the Mercury Nevada weapons test site, the George Marshall Space Flight Center in Cape Canaveral, and the Dakota nuclear missile silos," says Pitts.

Pitts stayed active in the underground business and eventually starting his own utility construction enterprise primarily focused on municipal, state, and federal projects in Northern California. It was around this time that he first partnered with a large California steel company on a "side venture" within the underground construction industry.

"I was working frequently with San Jose Steel on projects, and we saw an opportunity to take scrap steel from some of the larger projects and rent the steel to contractors as trench crossing plates," Pitts says. As the market accepted this new rental industry, Pitts decided to begin to rent steel plates and shoring equipment as an independent business entity. Pacific Trench Safety was born.

Pacific expanded over the 1990s to include four locations in and around the Bay Area, including: Santa Rosa, San Jose, Lodi, and Sacramento. During this time, United Rentals was consolidating their Trench Safety Division, and the early entrants into the shoring industry were presented with the extraordinary opportunity to capitalize on the value of their independent businesses by selling to United Rentals Trench Safety.

Fast forward five years to the end of his non-compete contract with United. It was then that Pitts' love for the manufacturing business led to his second foray into the shoring industry.

Today, Pacific Shoring is a specialized manufacturer of mostly aluminum shoring products. Headquartered in Santa Rosa, California, Pacific Shoring carries a complete line of aluminum products including:

- Vertical Hydraulic Shores
- Four-way Hydraulic bracing systems
- Aluminum Panel shields
- End Shores
- High Clearance Shores
- Modular Aluminum Buildable Box systems
- And custom design systems and application

"The business is not run with an emphasis on 'lean and mean manufacturing,'" asserts Pitts. "Rather, we try to emphasize product availability, quick and efficient changes to the manufacturing schedule, and adding manufacturing capacity as the market requires," He says. "We now have more than a dozen CNC machines running strong in the plant."

One of the secrets of Pacific's success is the fact that many employees are long tenured and have grown-up with the business, allowing continuous independent and autonomous operation of the business. Key personnel include General Manager **Maria Novoa**, who has worked with Pitts for over 25 years. Novoa now has the responsibility of overseeing the entire manufacturing operation, and is the "day-to-day face" of the business. **Kevin Mabry**, who handles all Production at the plant, rose through Pacific's ranks as a young machinist. Recent hires, such as Mechanical Engineer **Jose Garcia**, help Pacific design and develop innovative shoring solutions.

Pitts had the insight to realize that many construction jobs in America were going to utilize smaller machinery like small trackhoes, rubber-tired backhoes, and mini-excavators. The aluminum line of shoring products Pacific manufactures perfectly match these smaller sized excavators.

"While heavy and bulky steel trench boxes will always be commonplace in the industry, lightweight trench shields and aluminum modular systems has led to a lot of growth in many rental fleets, and overall growth in our industry," Pitts adds.

Bob Pitts is an industry pioneer, always willing to be transparent and help out both customers and competitors. He has succeeded by not being afraid to take his business in a different direction than the rest of the industry.