

Biography of Robert Harris



Robert Harris, the Executive Vice President of Business Development at JH Kelly, is pivotal in guiding one of the top MEP and specialty industrial contractors in the Pacific Northwest. Headquartered in Longview, Washington, JH Kelly is a formidable presence in the industry, with over 1,200 employees and annual revenues consistently exceeding \$500 million. With more than 35 years of seasoned experience in the construction sector, he leads the company's initiatives in sales, marketing, and business development, overseeing a team of twelve experts across the company's divisions.

The Journey from Canada to the Pacific Northwest

Born in 1966 in Toronto, Canada, he relocated to the United States in 1975 when his father secured a position with Wright Schuchart Engineering in Seattle, Washington. This move was instrumental in kindling his interest in engineering and construction, which was deeply influenced by his father's career.



Robert Harris JH Kelly

Started at JH Kelly as a Field Engineer in Oregon.

On the Ice from an Early Age

Hockey was a significant part of his early life, as he played in the United States Hockey League and Junior A levels and even spent some time playing for Iowa State University. While his academic path at Iowa State was brief, his involvement in sports instilled a lifelong passion for competition and teamwork. He completed his undergraduate education at Seattle University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Finance and Humanities.

From University to His First Job

Initially, he embarked on his career as an auditor for a pension fund, a job through which he met his wife, Marnie. Although not directly related to his passion, this position was a crucial stepping stone, eventually leading him back to the construction industry. He transitioned to a project engineer role at Sverdrup Engineering, where he managed the extensive expansion of Concourse D at SeaTac airport.

His Career Path with JH Kelly

His professional journey at JH Kelly began as a Field Engineer in Klamath Falls, Oregon, where he was directly involved in several significant projects, such as constructing a sulfur recovery

unit. His exemplary performance in these roles led to promotions, first to Business Development Manager and later to Director of Marketing and Business Development.

In 1999, he took a significant step in his career by leading a service contractor team in San Diego, where he refined his leadership and sales management skills. After four years, he returned to JH Kelly as Vice President, bringing a renewed perspective and enhanced expertise to drive the company further.



Robert Harris Selected to Head Newly Acquired Company for JH Kelly

In 2018, after JH Kelly had acquired Portland Mechanical Contractors, he was chosen to oversee the integration of the new acquisition, ensuring it aligned with JH Kelly's culture and strategic goals.

The Personal Side of Robert Harris

On a personal note, he is dedicated to his family, having been married for 33 years and being a father to three children. He cherishes traveling with his wife and exploring new cultures and experiences around the globe. These journeys deepen their familial bonds and enrich their appreciation for diverse global perspectives. An ardent sports enthusiast, he continues to play hockey in a senior league and enjoys sharing his love for music and sports with his family.

Additionally, he is committed to his community, serving on the Cowlitz Economic Development Council board and maintaining active roles in several other regional boards. His professional and community service dedication highlights his commitment to fostering growth and development in his industry and community.

Bob Harris's life and career are marked by a profound dedication to professional excellence, family values, and community involvement, making him a respected and influential figure both in his professional sphere and the broader community.