



From Family
Dream to
2X Growth
Reality





The vision behind Oklahoma City-based Bodyworx Physical Therapy began ten years before it opened. Despite her passion for physical therapy and helping others, Doctor of Physical Therapy Phillicia Hawkins realized she was working for a clinic that didn't provide the high level of care she could fully believe in.

"I love being a physical therapist, but I just hated the situation," Dr. Hawkins reflects. "So, I started praying, and ten years later I decided to step out and open my own clinic. I wanted to love my job, be around people that love their job, and love what we do for people."

Her vision materialized into Bodyworx Physical Therapy which she opened with the unwavering support of her family. After establishing the clinic, it was clear that the love she and her family had poured in was translating into success.

"As a business, we started to experience some growth, so we thought, 'Hey, it's time to expand out.' But we really didn't have the avenue to get where we wanted to be," says Dr. Hawkins' brother and Vice President of Bodyworx Physical Therapy, Corey Smith.

Soon after, Dr. Hawkins, Corey Smith, and their father (who was given the affectionate title of Bodyworx Legend) Calvin Smith were introduced to Ashton Gray CEO Denver Green.

"When we met you there was just a connection. It was authentic. It was real. Our business partner told us, Denver can make a vision come alive," recalls Corey Smith.

As a family business, Bodyworx Therapy moves as a unit. The decision of whether to work with Ashton Gray was agreed upon by Dr. Hawkins, Corey Smith, and Calvin Smith— they wanted to see where Ashton Gray and their business model could take them.

"I can say from that first building to now. Ashton Gray never treated us like small fish in a big pond," Corey Smith recounts.

"You treated us like, 'You guys have a vision. I have the pathway. Let's see how it works.'"





The First Bodyworx Location

The Bodyworx family were already experts in the physical therapy business, but the world of real estate was uncharted territory.

"We wanted another location, but we never thought about real estate," says Dr. Hawkins. "[Ashton Gray] just made us think on a whole other level."

"Being a small business in healthcare, we're unique. We can't just raise our prices to make up a deficit, we have to rely on reimbursement rates of the insurance companies— which creates limitations. So, adding the real estate ownership dynamic gives you another leg to build wealth, legacy, and a stake in the community."

As a business partner and real estate developer, Ashton Gray focuses on finding strategic growth routes so practice owners like Dr. Hawkins can focus on providing the highest level of healthcare. When Ashton Gray proposed the idea of selling the first Bodyworx location and laid out how the sale could launch Bodyworx toward something greater, it required a leap of faith from Bodyworx.

"The level of transparency, every conversation was authentic," says Corey Smith, reflecting on the sale of their first location. "Believe me, being African-American and doing something that hasn't been done in our family, there were a lot of questions. It was walking on faith and [Ashton Gray] has been true to what they stated."

FORESIGHT SELECTION

Calvin Smith, who gave himself the unofficial Bodyworx title of Executive Owner of the Executive President Who Supersedes All Owners and Runs Everything While Doing Nothing, selected the site for the new Bodyworx location, years before his children Corey Smith and Dr. Hawkins had even thought about opening their own physical therapy practice.



Calvin Smith, along with his wife, drove on the undeveloped land, where he told her that one day they'd have a business on it. He even met with the owner of the land regularly to negotiate the price but never purchased.

"Our parents actually drove— I should say our dad drove and my mom sat in the passenger side screaming, on this lot when it was nothing but trees, sticks, and wood. Not knowing 20 years later that we would actually build on the very lot," says Corey Smith.

FROM SCRUBS TO CONSTRUCTION HATS

Ashton Gray's construction team worked closely with Bodyworx Therapy to build a facility where the Bodyworx team could continue providing quality physical therapy and accommodate their growing business.

"I didn't know what a change order was, but I very quickly learned," laughs Corey Smith. "The Ashton Gray team was phenomenal. Especially for our lack of knowledge, not knowing what we don't know. There were breakdowns in communication, but from my perspective, there was a huge learning curve but it prepared me for the next journey and building."

Providing a high level of transparency ensures that Ashton Gray delivers a completed facility that lives up to client expectations.

"It was overwhelming for me initially, because I didn't realize how many decisions I would have to make," says Dr. Hawkins. "Your team came into our space, looked at the equipment that we were trying to use, and made sure we had the right spacing for our rooms. They were very hands-on in helping us with the process."





Vision Becomes Reality

“Watching the building go up and walking over here with Dad, it had another level of pride to it,” says Corey Smith. “When we came together and prayed on this very land when it was nothing but dirt— that created a legacy.”

Construction was a learning process for Dr. Hawkins and her family, but the finished facility is something they’ve always dreamed of.

“[Ashton Gray] has blown my vision out of the water. It is beyond my imagination,” says Dr. Hawkins. “To have the opportunity to have the building exactly how I want it and imagine it, it was unreal.”

Inside the striking Oklahoma City Bodyworx location, Dr. Hawkins’ plan and partnership with Ashton Gray have translated into an incredible increase in financial performance.

“We’ve had a lot of people come in and want to take a tour. I think we’ve given more tours here than most museums across the United States,” laughs Corey Smith. “We have more walk-ins now than we’ve ever had, I think that’s a direct relationship to the building. Also, that intrinsic value of people driving by saying, ‘I watched you build the building.’ The referral business has always been there, but word-of-mouth about the facility has increased walk-in business and income tremendously.”

In the three years since it opened, Bodyworx Therapy’s new location has spurred so much business that Bodyworx Therapy may soon outgrow its second location.

“When we came to this building, we were enlarging our space,” says Dr. Hawkins. “Within six months we were at our limit. It’s a good problem to have, but going forward we want to be flexible for growth because it will come.”

“This has really exceeded our expectations. Numbers have doubled,” explains Corey Smith. “I think it’s a direct contribution to the appearance of this building. You walk inside, in my opinion, it matches Phillicia’s work ethic and her academia. It matches everything she strived for.”



Family Business with a Culture of Family Values

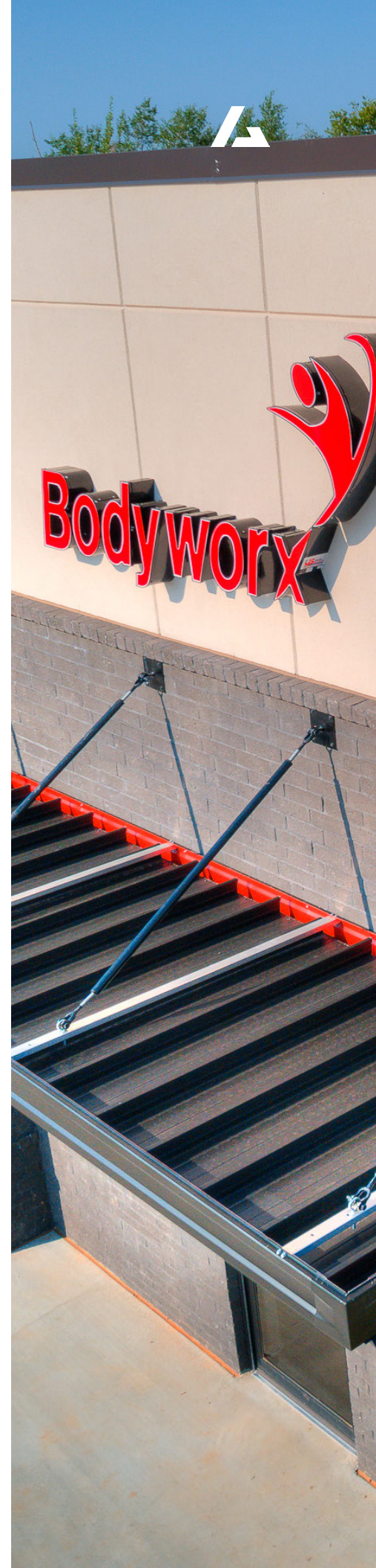
With 22 team members, a business that's continuously growing, and a reputation as one of the best physical therapy clinics in Oklahoma, Dr. Hawkins and Corey Smith have built a business that's the antithesis of the clinic where Dr. Hawkins felt stuck over 10 years ago.

"We wanted to have a space that people felt cared for and you weren't just a number or a dollar sign coming through the door—we really wanted to help you," explains Dr. Hawkins. "So, we do that for our patients and we do that for our employees. We always try to give back and develop employees personally, and professionally. We're family-owned and we try to have that family dynamic with our employees as well. We treat them as we would our immediate family, it's infectious."

Bodyworx's family culture was established by Dr. Hawkins and Corey Smith, but inherited from their dad; who always told his family to think long-term and place God, family, and others before themselves.

"When we're having those hard times, my Dad always says, 'It's not for you. It's for your kids, your grandkids, it's the legacy we're leaving behind. Don't think about what you're dealing with right now, think bigger,' Dr. Hawkins repeats. "He's always instilled that in us to think bigger than just us."

At its core, Ashton Gray is built on helping businesses like Bodyworx Therapy think bigger— even if it means taking a risk on a comfortable life.



"As a clinician, you need a partner to help with the business side. I tried to do it initially but got overwhelmed. So, as your business grows you need someone to help take that on."

Dr. Hawkins



"It is scary, I will admit. When [doctors] do what we do, we do it because we're passionate about it. We're not trying to represent somebody else. If you want to help out a community, you can do that. You don't have to get your board's permission," says Dr. Hawkins, offering advice on what she'd tell medical professionals thinking of opening their own business.

Instead of dreading going to work, Dr. Hawkins and Corey Smith now own a business where employees feel excited about their future.

"It warms my heart to know that we created something that employees even love to talk about. For me, I know I want to have an impact on what a PT clinic should look like and represent in our community. "

Today, Corey Smith's grandkids are spreading the word about the business throughout the community—continuing the legacy of giving back that their great-grandfather always preached.

"My granddaughter's teacher at her elementary school hurt her back," Corey Smith recalls. "She told the teacher that she needed to come to Bodyworx Physical Therapy. We went to that elementary school and did massage therapy for all of the teachers. That legacy, that's what we're trying to build. To leave something for the next generation."

IT'S TIME TO THINK BIG. LET'S TALK.

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