



“Life is an exciting business, and most exciting when it is lived for others.”

—Helen Keller



Todd Warner

Owner, Dynamic Physical Therapy & Hand Center, LLC

What is your favorite?

CARTOON CHARACTER

Dora the Explorer with my daughter Madison

ANIMAL

White-tailed deer

MIDNIGHT SNACK

Goldfish mixed with Cheez-Its

CAR

Mercedes Benz, but you will never catch me without a truck

PET

Our beautiful Great Dane, Hayley

PLACE

Anywhere outdoors in the fall

BY JENNIFER JETT

FOR TODD WARNER, a strong work ethic was established during adolescent summers spent working on his best friend’s family’s hayfield. “Cold Coca-Cola never tasted better than after a long day in the hayfields,” Warner remembers from long hours spent in the summer sun. Something else he remembers from those days is a lesson that has followed him throughout life—one that directly affects where he is today. Warner, who spent a lot of time with his best friend’s family, especially on the hayfields, says, “Those experiences really shaped my belief system in that people can be really happy regardless of their bank account. It made me realize you cannot buy lasting happiness.”

Today, the physical therapist and owner of Dynamic Physical Therapy and Hand Center, LLC looks back on when he made his career decision and remembers struggling with making the right choice. He knew from an early age that he wanted to pursue a career in health care but deciding on a specialty proved to be a challenge. “My senior year in college was a confusing time for me,” he says. “I had initially planned to go to medical school, but when I sought advice from several doctors I knew, I didn’t get as many positive answers as I had expected.”

Warner had a close friend who introduced him to the option of physical therapy, and given Warner’s love for sports, he decided to explore it further. “I struggled with my decision,” he recalls, “because I knew I would make less money, but I felt a stronger interest towards therapy.” After discussing with his parents the pursuit of physical therapy in combination with orthopedics and sports, and taking into consideration the lessons he had learned about money in relation to happiness on that hayfield as an adolescent, he decided to make the jump.

A graduate of West Virginia University, Warner opened his own practice in 2003 which today provides on-site athletic training to the University of Charleston, Charleston Catholic High School and Nitro High

School. Since opening the practice, either Warner or his company have been voted “Best Physical Therapist” in the Kanawha Valley by readers of the Charleston Newspapers seven consecutive years. Through his practice, he gives back to his community by providing three free visits to student athletes, as well as maintaining a charity program for select orthopedic patients that don’t have insurance. One of only 18 Certified Hand Therapists in the state, he has watched his staff grow from two to 15 and his center triple in size. His business now averages more than 100 new patients a month and the center will be expanding into a new facility in December.

In addition to his professional growth, he has also experienced significant personal growth. Six years ago, Warner became a Christian. “Without comparison, I feel this is the greatest success in my life,” he says. As he makes plans for the future, he is confident that his career will include more mission work. Warner shares his life change with others by volunteering for his church and donating to Grace Meeks Medical Foundation and Beyond the Backyard.

Doing what you enjoy instead of doing what makes the most money is a lesson Warner continues to see the benefits of today. “Helping others is a huge motivator,” he says. “I love the quote ‘Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes time. Vision with action can change the world.’ I’d much rather try and fail than not try.”

Something that many people probably don’t know about Warner is that he spent 11 days alone in Israel on a Christian program tour in the summer of 2009 and 10 days as a medical missionary in Africa with his church recently. “Nothing gives me more gladness than to realize that I’ve made a difference in an individual’s life. My motivation is rooted in doing what I love and always thinking about growing and expanding in order to affect more people in a positive way.” ■

Photography by Tracy Toler