

GRADY-WHITE BOATS

Eddie Smith, owner



Greenville's Grady-White Boats is celebrating its 60th year in business and its 51st year with Eddie Smith, as owner. At 26, Smith purchased the company from Glenn Grady and Don White, the founding partners. Originally crafting wooden boats to withstand coastal waves and weather, Smith transitioned the boats into fiberglass, eventually becoming the leader in premium offshore sportfishing boats.

"Eddie's strong values and principles guide the business every day," says President Kris Carroll, 43-year-team-member. "Most important of which is exceptional care of the customer, which he learned from his father. Being privately owned has allowed the team to stay focused on his passion for customer satisfaction. One example of this focus is we call every customer to ask how they are doing, and what we can do better. When you listen to your customers, you create exceptional products they love and incredible long-lasting relationships."

The company has grown to building 28 boat models ranging from 18 to 45 feet. Grady-White Boats has received every Customer Satisfaction Award ever given in the Marine Industry.

Instilling these beliefs to every team member happens every Friday when all work stops for the Friday Focus meeting, where the vision and values of Grady-White are reinforced, customer reviews are read, quality information is shared and there's personal development coaching, too.

"It's that passionate commitment," Carroll says. "Paying exceptional attention to details in our designs, craftsmanship, our team and customer relationships, that is special. It's always been personal for Eddie Smith that our boats be the best and our customers be completely satisfied. This is Grady-White's core and shows in our long-term success."

That success has led to more growth, including an August 2018 addition of 70,000 square feet on their facility, enabling them to produce more and larger boats, including their largest boat ever, the 45-foot Canyon 456.

"Eddie always says, 'I never wanted to be the biggest in the industry, I just wanted to be the best...'" Carroll says. "We want our customers to have the ultimate boating experience and our team to enjoy coming to work every day!"



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Exceptional attention to detail.

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