

Photo by David Gibb | dgibbphoto.com



ASHLAND, OR — Since Dean Cropper moved his family and his business, Cropper Medical, to the Rogue Valley in 1986, the family and firm have been working in tandem to perfect the science of sports performance through its flagship Bio Skin products.

A unique compression fabric that is both lightweight and breathable, Bio Skin provides radial compression and gripping power on sweaty skin. In addition to braces for injuries, the company produces Bio Skin sports apparel, which is designed to prevent injuries during active use while promoting athletic performance.

“Compression scientifically has been shown to help increase what’s called proprioception, or your ability for your brain to know where your body is in space,” says Scott Shumway, company president. “The ability to throw a ball up and catch it without looking at it ... those guys that do the hook shots while they wear those sleeves .. that’s all proprioception.”

Marketing director Taylor Cropper joined the firm in 2007. He has lived in Ashland since age 5 when his family made the move from Arizona to Oregon in search of a better quality of life.

“There’s so much to enjoy in the geography here, which ties in nicely with our products too,” Taylor said. “We’re all about helping people stay active and use their bodies.”

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*- Taylor Cropper  
Marketing Director  
Cropper Medical*

## The Science of Human Performance.

ASHLAND, OR — Thin, lightweight and breathable. Bio Skin from Cropper Medical is the ideal compression material for sports medicine applications. Recently, the Ashland-based company has added Bio Skin sports apparel to its roster, providing athletes with preventive support and improved performance.

"It's helping people either prevent injuries or to help themselves to be rehabilitated from injuries," said Taylor Cropper, son of the company's founder, Dean Cropper, and Bio Skin marketing director. "A lot of our products are used in athletic settings."

"We create a high quality product. We call it 'the science of human performance'," said Scott Shumway, company president. "It was designed to help create the right kind of compression for proprioception, for injury, for performance enhancement."

Bio Skin is a patented material that stretches in all directions to provide radial compression to injured joints. It features an anti-slip technology that grips the brace firmly in place when the wearer starts to sweat, and because it is breathable, Bio Skin allows the perspiration to evaporate.

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After more than 10 years of manufacturing other orthopedic devices, Dean Cropper launched Bio Skin in 1994, and in just a couple of years, Cropper Medical was focusing exclusively on Bio Skin product development.

Dean moved his family and his company from Arizona to Ashland in 1986, following other relatives in search of a better quality of life.

"The family was not satisfied with the Phoenix area. It was too hot, too big, crime, drugs, all that kind of stuff," said Taylor. "My grandfather was on an airplane and he was describing to the gentleman sitting next to him what kind of place they were looking for. He said 'we want kind of a smallish town with culture. Maybe a small university and a high education level'."

The man in the next seat turned to him, "You just described Ashland, Oregon," he said.

"Even outside of the appeal for a family, it's great. We're so close to great trails and rivers and rafting and boating on the lakes. There's so much to enjoy in the geography here, which ties in nicely with our products, too," said Taylor. "We're all about helping people stay active and use their bodies."

Taylor joined the firm in 2007 after graduating from college. Two of his three brothers work there as well. The company employs 48 people locally and 40 independent sales representatives throughout the U.S.

Although it can be challenging to find skilled workers for our manufacturing jobs in the small community of Ashland, Cropper Medical/Bio Skin employs a dedicated core of loyal employees.

"When we bring people on here, we train them and build their skills. It takes awhile and is a big investment, but then we see tremendous loyalty. We really have hardly any turnover in production," said Taylor.

Taylor and Scott hope to see more manufacturing and service firms establish themselves in the Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon. "There are so many benefits that employers can take advantage of here." Scott said.

"Our area has really got a lot to offer," added Taylor. "Because of the Shakespeare Festival being here and the hospitality and tourism industry that surrounds it, it's a really nice place to bring people. When we bring people here for business, they fall in love with our little town and we're really proud of our community."



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Compression material for sports medicine applications are manufactured locally



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