



## **Smart Start Our History - 2017**

In 1992, Bettye and Jay D. Rodgers, successful entrepreneurs in real estate, healthcare staffing, banking, and other industries, founded Smart Start, Inc. after a ranch hand who worked on their property suffered from alcoholism. This ranch hand had been convicted of Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) and had to use an Ignition Interlock Device (IID). The IID caused several issues, and prevented their ranch hand from properly conducting his job due to the device's unreliable technology.

Inspired to create a better device based on their ranch hand's experiences with one that negatively impacted his job performance, the Rodgers decided to create their own Ignition Interlock company, Smart Start Inc. The company was incorporated on September 10, 1992, and started doing business in December 1992.

Jim Ballard joined Smart Start as Chief Operating Officer (COO) in 1994. He was promoted to President in 2000. During Ballard's tenure as President, Smart Start introduced proprietary software, SmarTrac, to effectively manage test data, monitoring, and confidentiality. SmarTrac made significant technological strides in device production and manufacturing.

Smart Start expanded in 2000, offering its first franchise model in Texas. In 2001, B. Lamar Ball Jr. joined Smart Start as a majority shareholder, and then became Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under Ball's guidance, the company expanded operations throughout the U.S. Smart Start officially entered the international market in 2009. Ball helped centralize operations, manage investments, and provide for future advancement in technology and products.

In 2013, Ballard was promoted to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Smart Start operates through a combined company-owned and franchised platform. In December 2014, Smart Start repurchased three franchise states—Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska—and named franchisee, Matt Strausz, as CEO of Smart Start. Matt relocated to Smart Start's corporate headquarters in Grapevine, TX to accept his new position. On August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015, Smart Start was acquired by ABRY Partners, becoming 1A Smart Start, LLC.

More than 25 years later, Smart Start is one of the largest providers of Ignition Interlock Devices in the United States and worldwide. Smart Start was the first Ignition Interlock provider to offer continuing education programs and courses for attorneys, prosecutors, and monitoring authorities. In addition, Smart Start is Setting the Standard in Alcohol Monitoring Technology® with initiatives such as being the first to patent camera technology in the industry, and continually improving their products and services.