

# RTIP NEWS

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February 10, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Derby-Winning Owner Mike Pegram a Hit at Hirsch Forum

Prominent Thoroughbred owner Mike Pegram spoke to students Feb. 9 as part of the Joe Hirsch Speaker Forum. Pegram, whose horses are trained by RTIP alum Bob Baffert, shared colorful stories about his experiences at the top of the racing world with 1998 Kentucky Derby winner Real Quiet, among others. He also gave students his "six life lessons learned from racing."

"You've got to have passion," he said. "If you don't have passion you're not going to have a chance (in the racing business)."

Students were thrilled by stories of his youth in Indiana and the trips to Ellis Park that made him a life-long racing fan.

Pegram also stressed the importance of finding the right people to work with. He said it took "going through ten lawyers to find one I could trust and work with well," yet, "I hitched my wagon to a star" with his first trainer, Baffert. He encouraged students to learn the skill of patience, and that the payoffs in racing sometimes take time to see.

Pegram commented on current hot topics in racing, including the fragmentation of the industry.

"People spend too much time being critical about what everybody else is doing. That is what they call a 'toxic environment'. Instead, get everybody in the same room and have a conversation," he said. "Doing what's right – sometimes I'm going to have to give up something personally for the greater good."

When discussing competition, Pegram talked about racing competing with many entertainment options. "People have 2 hours and \$20, how are they going to spend it? We have to make racing an attractive option." He added that horsemen should take advantage of their buying power, and he would facilitate that if the ownership deal he is working on is a success.

On the difficulty in attracting new owners, Pegram said, "people are always going to chase the dream of owning the 'big horse.'"

The University of Arizona's Race Track Industry Program offers both a Bachelors and Masters degree program with an emphasis on the pari-mutuel racing industry and hosts the annual Symposium on Racing & Gaming held every December in Tucson, Arizona.

For more information, visit the RTIP Web site at [www.ua-rtip.org](http://www.ua-rtip.org)