

Helping Businesses Start, Grow and Succeed

Press Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kellie Snaith, Marketing Director, SBDC at UCF, 407.420.4850 or ksnaith@bus.ucf.edu

SBDC at UCF Client Named U.S. SBA's 2011 Small Business Person of the Year for North Florida

Orlando, FL. – Small Business Development Center at University of Central Florida (SBDC at UCF) client Fernando C. Pereira, president of Pegasus Transportation, was named the 2011 U.S. Small Business Administration North Florida District Small Business Person of the Year. The SBDC at UCF, who nominated Pereira for the award, will honor Pereira and his family during National Small Business Week, May 16-20, at the Center's annual small business awards luncheon, Tuesday, May 17, at the Citrus Club, downtown Orlando.

Since 1994, Pereira with his wife Claudia, have run Orlando-based Pegasus Transportation. Starting the transportation service company with a single 15-passenger van and one driver, Pegasus has overcome several struggles including the travel industry collapse following the 9/11 tragedy and, more recently, the nation's economic recession. To compensate for the recent domestic downturn, Pegasus focused on the international travel market, resulting in a 300% increase in net income. With strong financial stability, Pegasus was approved for two SBA 504 Loans, enabling the company to expand into a new 3,000 square-foot office space, as well as an expansive 3,600 square-foot shop on a 2.5 acre property.

Over the past decade, Pereira and his wife Claudia took advantage of many of the services offered by the SBDC at UCF including 10-years of in-depth business consulting, training and skill development, as well as referral resource support through the SBDC's Small Business Resource Network. Today, Pegasus, with offices in Orlando and Miami, operates 20 coach buses and offers itinerary planning, meet-and-greet services, luggage assistance, and on-site supervision. Pereira states, "The SBDC has been on our side since 2001 and we couldn't be more thankful for it."

For more information about the SBDC at UCF, contact Kellie Snaith at ksnaith@bus.ucf.edu or call 407.420.4850

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With its main office in the Disney Entrepreneur Center in Downtown Orlando, the SBDC at UCF is part of the UCF College of Business Administration and the Florida Small Business Development Center Network, providing business seminars and free one-on-one business consultation to small business owners. The SBDC at UCF serves an eight-county area that includes Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia counties and maintains five satellite service centers. In 2010, the SBDC at UCF helped entrepreneurs create or retain 1,241 jobs, win contract awards worth \$38.3 million, acquire \$20 million in capital formation, and increase sales by \$18.4 million. The SBDC at UCF is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

SBDC at UCF | 315 East Robinson Street, Suite 100 | Orlando, FL 32801 | p 407.420.4850 | f 407.420.4862
sbdc@bus.ucf.edu | www.sbdcorlando.com

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