



The 2014 IUPUI Motorsports Marketing team with 14-year-old CRA Sportsman and All-Star Series driver Chris Hacker. Back row (left to right) - Tiffany Beenken, C.J. Mantel, Jessica Spaulding, Wes Smith. Middle row - Emmy Gray, Marissa Farmer. Front - Chris Hacker.

IUPUI STUDENTS

Creating Buzz

Yvonne and Mike Hacker, parents of 14-year-old Champion Racing Association (CRA) JEGS All-Stars Series driver Chris Hacker, had not much experience with marketing.

But a partnership between CRA and a team of students and faculty from Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) changed everything. The IUPUI team provided the Hackers with promotional tactics, public relations strategies and marketing materials designed to build the Chris Hacker Motorsports brand.

Larry Jinkins, a graduate student, and Stephanie Bigelow, IUPUI sport manage-

by IUPUI Students

ment graduate and public relations specialist for NASCAR Truck Series driver Erik Jones, conceptualized the class based on Bigelow's success as both a racing professional and student in the program. Jinkins and David Pierce, PhD., assistant professor of Sports Management at IUPUI, taught a team of six undergraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines to produce the tools needed to gain awareness and ultimately attract sponsors.

The team applied a variety of class-

room concepts learned in IUPUI's School of Physical Education and Tourism Management and Kelley School of Business, and from real-life situations shared by industry partners Just Marketing International (JMI), Reichel Intellectual Property LLP and sports marketing consultant Bryan Kryder.

One student said, "I gained valuable practical experience in the motorsports field, because not everything was given to us and we had to think on our own. It was definitely more relevant to the real world than other more traditional classes. Plus, the industry contacts I made will be a big help after I graduate."

The IUPUI students were able to take the Hacker brand to the next level by providing a media kit and complete sponsorship kit.

Yvonne commented, "We completely understand that we are learning side by side with the students. Larry (Jenkins), Stephanie (Bigelow) and Dr. Pierce are providing our family with a better understanding of marketing strategies through the class. We look forward to growing with them."

The team also secured a television appearance on central Indiana news affiliate, Fox 59, to promote Hacker's "24 kids to camp" initiative supporting children suffering from brachial plexus injury (BPI) and United Brachial Plexus Network (UBPN). The television appearance was followed by additional appearances at Forum Credit Union, Lucas Oil Raceway and Anderson Speedway, further bolstering the Chris Hacker Motorsports brand.

Another student said, "Working with UBPN has added a layer of experience we weren't expecting, but we are glad we were able to help kids with BPI get the camp experience they deserve."

Glenn Lockett, CRA Managing Partner, says, "CRA is committed to



IUPUI students partner with CRA and Anderson Speedway to provide "up-and-coming" drivers with PR and marketing support. Pictured (left to right) - Tiffany Beenken (IUPUI), Marissa Farmer (IUPUI), Glenn Lockett (CRA), Rick Dawson (Anderson Speedway), C.J. Mantel (IUPUI), Emmy Gray (IUPUI).

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IUPUI students researched fan experience and knowledge of drivers in preparation of developing a marketing strategy. Emmy Gray (pictured) interviews fans at Anderson (Ind.) Speedway.

providing the drivers and teams in our series new opportunities. The partnership with IUPUI will hopefully prove to be beneficial for all drivers in the future, and Chris Hacker was just the first."

IUPUI hopes to involve more students in these types of experiences so gradu-

ates can be competitive when transitioning from the classroom into a tough employment market. It seems everyone wins with this program!

(Editor's note: This article was provided by the students involved in the motor-sports marketing program.)

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