

SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

## UK freshman Dion Compton awarded inaugural Legacy Equine Foundation Scholarship

BY HOLLY WIEMERS

LEXINGTON, KY. Dion Compton, a [University of Kentucky](#) freshman and Lexington native majoring in equine science and management and minoring in business, was recently awarded an inaugural scholarship through the Legacy Equine Foundation.

The Legacy Equine Foundation is a Lexington-based, nonprofit organization that

encompasses the Legacy Equine Academy and the Legacy Ball. The academy identifies promising African-American youth and other students of color in an effort to educate them regarding opportunities in the horse industry. Proceeds from the Legacy Ball help fund scholarships and community-based alliances that foster diversity, inclusion and growth in the industry.

Compton was formally awarded the scholarship by representatives of the Legacy Equine Foundation at a ceremony hosted by [UK's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment](#). The value of the scholarship is \$1,000 per year, and is renewable for each of his four years in school.

"Dion epitomizes the Legacy Equine Foundation program as a true 'Legacy Leader,'" said Ronald W. Mack, executive director of the foundation. "I've admired his passion for equine studies, as well as his determination to make that passion into his life's work. He also represents his family, his school and his community with the excellent qualities we look for in our next generation of equine professionals. We are so proud and excited to present Dion Compton with our inaugural Legacy Equine Foundation Scholarship."

Compton attended Tates Creek High School and Locust Trace AgriScience Center, where he was vice president of their FFA chapter from 2016-2017. Compton was also awarded the Junior Achievement "business competition" award in 2017, served on the Principal's Advisory Council at Tates Creek and Locust Trace and was awarded the William C. Parker Scholarship in 2017.

On being selected for the inaugural scholarship, Compton said, "It's definitely an honor. It makes me feel special, but at the same time gives me motivation to go down the road in life and ultimately help other kids get to the same spot."

Compton said he originally wanted to be a farrier and planned to attend farrier school. At Locust Trace, he learned about the Legacy Equine Foundation and met



Ronald Mack, left, executive director, Legacy Equine Foundation, presents Dion Compton with the foundation's scholarship.

PHOTO: Matt Barton, UK Agricultural Communications

Mack, who encouraged him to pursue an equine degree at UK and make his mark on the equine industry when he graduates.

Compton said he is excited about that prospect and would ultimately like to become a horse farm manager or work in a similar role where he has an effect on the business of a horse farm.

In the meantime, he now teams up with Mack to speak in classes to other youth interested in becoming part of the equine industry.

“We are thrilled for UK Ag Equine Programs to be involved in the first Legacy Equine Scholarship with a great new freshman student. Thanks to the Legacy Equine Foundation for the confidence they are placing in our program, and thanks to Dion for signing on for a great education,” said Nancy Cox, dean of UK’s College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Created in 2016 by Mack, the Legacy Equine Foundation partners with Fayette County Public Schools to sponsor the Legacy Equine Academy.

“Students with an interest in equine-related studies are intentionally recruited and tagged as legacy leaders starting in middle school,” Mack said. “With this scholarship ceremony, we are accomplishing our goal of bridging the historical contributions of African-American trailblazers in horse racing history to the modern traditions and future opportunities in the equine industry.”

The Legacy Ball was held for the first time in 2017 and will be an annual event. According to Mack, the Legacy Ball benefits Lexington and the surrounding community through an equine scholarship outreach program targeting African-American rising high school seniors interested in pursuing the equine industry as a career. The program was developed to promote and improve self-esteem by empowering local youth with knowledge of their heritage, which is key in developing leadership in the community.

“Dion is a wonderful representative of what we hope for in our students in the Ag Equine Programs; his enthusiasm and his passion will take him far, both at UK and as a part of the equine industry. He is a perfect fit for the first year of the Legacy Equine Scholarship, which reflects the rich history of horse racing,” said Mick Peterson, director of UK Ag Equine Programs.

• **Contact:**

Pamela Gray, 859-257-1207; Ronald Mack, 859-230-1784

---

[<< Previous Article](#)

[Next Article>>](#)

**UK Textile Testing Lab celebrates 30 years of service to textile care industry**

**HES Hall of Fame adds three members**