

Local Briefs

RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT DIRECTOR: INCENTIVES LEAD TO 320 NEW JOBS

Right to Employment Administration Director María del Carmen Fuentes said Wednesday that 320 new jobs were created thanks to incentives granted by the agency to local companies.

According to Fuentes, more than 22 companies took advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit which generated 102 jobs, while the "Pan y Trabajo" program placed 218 people in the workforce.

The WOTC program grants a tax credit to employers when they hire qualified persons.

The "Pan y Trabajo" program offers incentives to companies who recruit employees from the Nutritional Assistance Program of the Family Department.

ISLAND SAID UNPREPARED FOR MAJOR TIDAL WAVES

If an earthquake like the one in 1918, which measured 7.3 on the Richter scale, were to hit the island today, the tidal wave created would destroy the coast of Aguadilla in only six minutes.

In another 20 minutes, the same tidal wave would destroy five schools located dangerously close to the Mayagüez coast, the director of the Puerto Rico Seismic Network said Wednesday.

However, local authorities have not designed a plan to alert citizens nor have they educated people on the risks of a tidal wave, Christa von Hillebrandt said. The network is part of the University of Puerto Rico's Mayagüez campus. Tidal waves are also known as tsunamis.

"Neither earthquakes nor tsunamis can be predicted, but you can alert the population that a tsunami is coming," von Hillebrandt said in an aside at the annual meeting of the American Seismology Society, held in Puerto Rico for the first time.

HEALTH, WHO LAUNCH STOP SMOKING CONTEST

The Health Department in conjunction with the World Health Organization

launched a contest to help get adults to stop smoking.

The "Déjalo y Gana" sweepstakes are aimed at every smoker over 18 years old. Participants in the sweepstakes may commit to quit starting Saturday.

On May 31, a winner will be chosen by a lottery drawing.

The winner will be submitted to a biochemical test and will be required to provide witnesses to determine whether he or she qualifies.

The winner will receive a trip for two people to Orlando, Fla., tickets for Disney World and "Cirque Du Soleil" donated by the Humana health insurance unit.

ARREST ORDERED FOR TREASURY EMPLOYEE

Judge Corallys Ramos of the San Juan Judicial Center ordered the arrest of a Treasury Department employee who appropriated a tax-refund check issued to a Toa Alta couple.

Justice Secretary Anabelle Rodríguez said that after hearing the evidence presented by prosecutor Carlos Peña Ramos, from the Public Integrity Division of the Justice Department, the judge found cause to charge Sandra Galán Molina with theft, falsification of documents, use of false documents and violation of Article 3.2 (section c) of the Government Ethics Law.

Rodríguez argued that the evidence presented at the hearing Wednesday showed that in August 2002, Galán Molina, an administrative officer at Treasury headquarters, stole a \$640 refund check belonging to Rubén Estrada and Mayra Díaz.

Peña Ramos and agent Gabriel García, from the Public Integrity Division argued that Galán Molina took the check from where it had been set to be mailed to the taxpayers, falsified their signatures and cashed it.

The 26-year employee was fired from her job.

Judge Ramos set bail at \$4,000, which was deferred by the Pre-Trial Services Office. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for May 19.

From The STAR Staff and wire reports

50	57.00	85.50
07	79.28	118.92
30	85.57	128.35
84	82.61	123.91
30	85.57	128.35

guerías o farmacias estén obligadas a vender zados. Precios más bajos que los establecidos pagados. Se concede a las farmacias hasta las e vigencia para realizar los cambios.

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Lcdo. Javier Echevarría Vargas
 Secretario

UBLICADO CON FONDOS PUBLICOS