

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Former Sugar Bay Employee Awarded \$2.7 Million In Wrongful Discharge And Defamation Suit

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A Virgin Islands jury on Feb. 20 awarded Carolyn Espersen in excess of \$2.7 million against Sugar Bay Spa and Resort, Aimbridge Hospitality and Atlantic Human Resources in various amounts for wrongful discharge, defamation and punitive damages, according to a release issued by the Lee J. Rohn and Associates.

Ms. Espersen was represented by attorney Lee Rohn. Sugar Bay Resort and Atlantic Human Resource were represented by attorneys Kevin Rames, Semaj Johnson and Kye Walker. Aimbridge Hospitality was represented by Charlotte Perrell and Lisa Komives.

According to the release, in September 2013, Ms. Espersen was wrongfully discharged for accepting a cash tip that the defendants falsely claimed was to pay for two drinks. She was terminated and the fact that she was accused of theft was widely publicized, causing Ms. Espersen loss of income, mental anguish, suffering, loss of enjoyment of life, humiliation and loss of reputation.

The trial lasted six days, the release said. Ms. Espersen was said to be relieved that she has been finally vindicated and hopes that the size of the verdict makes it clear that she did not act improperly, while returning her prior reputation for honesty and trust worthiness.

“The reason for the size of the punitive damages award was so the six (6) woman jury in the case could send a message to companies in our community that false accusations and callous terminations will not be tolerated,” Ms. Rohn said.