The Virgin Islands Consortium

Three Agree To Provide Information To Feds In Campbell Development Identity Theft And Wire Fraud Case, Spelling Trouble For Juli Campbell

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Three individuals identified as Leovigildo Gomez-Geo, Luz Soraya Rodriquez and Wilfredo Valentin-Perez, have taken plea deals and have agreed to work with federal prosecutors in the Campbell Development identity theft and wire fraud case, according to federal court documents, seen here.

The three individuals recently pleaded guilty to embezzlement of federal contract funds while doing business through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Home Repair Program, also called the STEP -- Sheltering and Temporary Essential

Power -- program.

As part of the agreement, the three defendants will not face prosecution, according to court documents. However, their agreement with federal prosecutors to provide information on the Campbell Development case could spell trouble for Juli Campbell, owner of Campbell Development, LLC, who has pleaded not guilty after being charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, five counts of aggravated identify theft, eight counts of major disaster fraud, and two counts of wire fraud, according to court documents.

The court documents revealed that Mr. Gomez-Geo worked for Campbell Development, while the other named defendants worked for Puerto Rico firm Lopez Investments, LLC.

Mrs. Campbell's hearing is set to begin on April 29.

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The federal government's case against Mrs. Campbell follow's The Consortium's relentless reporting of Campbell Development's treatment of contract workers brought to the territory. Our stories also resulted in the raiding of Campbell Development's office in Peter's Rest by multiple federal law enforcement arms. The raid occurred on November 2, with the agents seemingly packing all documents and other items that could serve as evidence in a case. At the time, an agent told The Consortium that because the case was still unfolding, details relative to the matter could not be divulged. Even so, the men packed boxes of documents and other items and placed them in a truck.

The STEP Program provides federal funds for essential repairs to homes damaged by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. According to the indictment returned by the grand jury in the case, Mrs. Campbell operated Campbell Development, which was a subcontractor working under Patriot Response Group, which was subcontracted by AECOM. Campbell Development was on St. Croix performing STEP- funded work. Ms. Campbell and her co-defendants are alleged to have executed a scheme whereby they submitted fraudulent invoices related to a STEP-funded subcontract, even including on such invoices the names of workers who were not actually on the island.

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"The Department of Justice is committed to ensuring that federal dollars are used for their intended purposes," said U.S. Attorney Shappert. "The United States Attorney's Office for the Virgin Islands is especially committed to making certain that federal funds intended for the victims of natural disasters are accounted for and used consistent with FEMA's directives."

"The DHS OIG takes any and all allegations of fraudulent activity seriously and intends to hold accountable those who try to use natural disasters such as Hurricane Maria to take advantage of others," said Special Agent in Charge Jay H. Donly of the DHS OIG Miami Field Office. "The DHS OIG will continue to use its investigative resources to stop those who use these circumstances for personal and illegal gain."

The case is being investigated by the Department of Homeland Security – Office of the Inspector General as well as Homeland Security Investigations, with support from Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Nathan Brooks.

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Members of the public who suspect fraud involving disaster relief efforts, or believe they have been the victim of fraud from a person or organization soliciting relief funds on behalf of disaster victims, should contact the National Disaster Fraud Hotline toll free at (866) 720-5721. The telephone line is staffed by live operators 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also fax information to the Center at (225) 334-4707, or email it to disaster@leo.gov. Learn more about the National Center for Disaster Fraud at www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud and watch a public service announcement here. Tips for the public on how to avoid being victimized of fraud are at https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/tips-avoiding-fraudulent-charitable-contribution- schemes.