

Continued from previous page

as promote activities that contribute awareness among students about the many employment opportunities in local industry.

ADDITIONAL PRPA INITIATIVES

- Optimize local industry by expanding the products offered, updating processes and educating its human capital.
- Develop an entrepreneurial culture on the island
- Attract local capital invested offshore to develop nontraditional financing mechanisms, along with the Government Development Bank, to provide funds for local start-ups
- Stimulate job creation by giving a one-time 25% income-tax credit for each permanent job created
- Establish an institutional global promotional campaign that creates awareness about everything Puerto Rico does, and can do, including products and services, local professionals' understanding of U.S. commercial culture, and federal laws and regulations, as well as the benefits and convenience of federal agencies on the island
- Research & development (R&D) must be fostered through increased cooperation between academia and the private sector to create new technologies that help grow our industry base. Once these new technologies are commercialized, the revenue can subsidize new R&D by academia, making this a self-sustainable and profitable activity.
- Seek partial exemption from provisions of the Jones Act for imported raw materials
- Promote creation of temporary laws that protect emerging

industries and new products from foreign competition, which allows local companies time to consolidate their positions

this area is just 5%. The PRPA proposes government should increase its purchases of local products and services to at least

will shine if we all join hands and work together. In the past, Puerto Ricans proved we are capable of doing great things when united in a common cause," Cidre said. "Decades ago, the island was known as the 'Poorhouse of the Caribbean.' Through hard work and innovation, but most importantly by working together, Puerto Rico created one of the strongest economies in Latin America in a very short period.

"If we can put aside issues that divide us as a people while rallying for local athletes, sports teams or beauty-pageant queens, why can't we join efforts in a common cause to help improve Puerto Rico's delicate socioeconomic situation?"

"An old African proverb says that we didn't inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrowed it from our children. It is our responsibility to leave them a prosperous and thriving country," Cidre insisted. ■

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—Manuel Cidre

- Make unused Puerto Rico Industrial Development Co. (Pridco) buildings available, at preferential rates, for new and existing small and midsize businesses to stimulate economic activity: Specific industries, such as call-center services and hydroponic agriculture, should be targeted for promotion.
- The PRPA supports development of agroponic agricultural centers in the central and southern parts of the island, which were proposed by agronomist Juan Bauzá. This sector has the potential to create 45,000 direct and indirect jobs over a three-year period. Unused Pridco buildings could be used for this purpose.
- Create nontraditional financing vehicles to facilitate management buyouts of any pharmaceutical manufacturing operation leaving Puerto Rico as an important step to keep that economic activity on the island. Government incentives for job creation should also apply.
- The Puerto Rico government's annual purchase of goods and services is worth about \$5 billion. Local industry's participation in

25%. This very realistic goal can create more than 10,000 new direct and indirect jobs, and fuel economic development. "We are all responsible for the welfare of our country. Our future



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