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The Voice of the Taíno People®

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Earthquakes Devastates Haiti



Port-au-Prince, Haiti (UCTP Taíno News)
– An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.0 struck outside of Haiti’s capital on January 12, 2010 causing mass devastation, injury and death. Aftershocks continued today while a tsunami warning issued for countries with Caribbean coast has been canceled.

Government officials from Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, and the United States have already pledged assistance. Celebrities such as musician **Wyclef Jean** are urging fans to donate to earthquake relief efforts. “We must think ahead for the aftershock, the people will need food, medicine, shelter, etc.” said Jean.

International and Regional aid organizations as well as grassroots efforts from Haiti’s Caribbean neighbors have begun to mobilize. The American Red Cross has already

released \$200,000 in aid and is working directly with the Haitian Red Cross in response.

Commenting on the disaster **Roger Hernandez**, a representative of the **United Confederation of Taíno People** in **Boriken** stated “We have heard reports that hospitals are full and thousands have lost their homes.” He continued stating that “Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Haiti.”

The UCTP has posted links on its website to several international aid organizations seeking donations in response to the crises.

The earthquake, reported to be its worst in 200 years, affects a country that is one of most impoverished in the hemisphere. Eighty percent of Haiti’s population lives under the poverty line, according to the CIA World Factbook. ●

Jamaicans Remember their Ancestors

Irish Town, Jamaica (UCTP Taíno News)
- In May 2007 the first official “**Taino Day**” was observed in **Jamaica**, however some Jamaicans would like

to see more than a cursory nod given to the nation’s indigenous ancestors. **Carol Miller** a resident of Irish Town, St. Andrew hopes to facilitate the beginning of such a dialog this Saturday with a series of talks she is organizing on culture issues. The dialog series is entitled “**Saturday Soup**” and the first topic addressed Jamaica’s “near forgotten ancestors” the Taíno People.

Miller states that “in any given year our ancestral celebrations begin with the **Accompong Maroons** on January 6th, a day that celebrates the signing of the peace treaty with the British by Maroon leader **Cudjoe**. The celebration goes all day with never a mention of those who paved the way for the African maroons to take to the hills - the Tainos.”

She continues noting that “There is never discourse on the meeting of the two and the resulting integration of food, families and language.”

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Jamaicans Remember Their Ancestors (Cont. from pg.1)

The Saturday Soup talks are open and will feature special topics and guests. Interested persons can contact the organizers at afuafofie@hotmail.com.

The **United Confederation of Taino People's Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination (UCTP-OIRRC)** has commended the initiative. "We need to support our relatives in Jamaica - this is one of our traditional homelands" stated UCTP representative **Roberto Borrero**. "We will do what we can to assist the organizers in the spirit of our ancestors."

Miller hopes that these discussions will help people make "historic, cultural, and spiritual connections" and that future national celebrations will do more to highlight the first Jamaicans. ●

Rush to get Puerto Rico Birth Certificate

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico -- Puerto Rican-born citizens living in the United States will now have to request a new copy of their birth certificates.

The country's Gov. Luis Fortuño signed a law making all old birth certificates processed prior to December 2009 not valid in any federal agency.

A transition period will be in effect until July 1. The new law is an effort to reduce all fraud cases reported by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the past year.

According to the governmental agency, a Puerto Rican birth

certificate runs for about \$5,000 to \$10,000 on the black market.

Puerto Ricans born on the island receive an American Social Security number and are eligible for a United States passport from birth.

For more information, call **(787) 767-9120 ext. 2402** or visit their Web site. ●

Taino Announce 2010 Partnership



UCTP Taino News - The **United Confederation of Taino People** this month affirmed its commitment to partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau during the 2010 Census. The announcement was issued via a proclamation by the Confederation's Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination. For indigenous Taino and other American Indian and Alaska Native communities census data can provide tribal leaders with important information to help address community needs.

"Our 2010 commitment follows the precedent set in 2000 when the Confederation participated as an official U.S. Census partner along with other American Indian and Alaska Native community leaders" stated UCTP representative **Roberto Borrero**. "By clearly identifying ourselves as Taino the census provides a way for community members to express our basic human right of self-determination."

Who gets counted as an American Indian in the Census is determined by his or her response to the question on the Census form about the person's race. To the Census Bureau, a person is whatever race or races he or she says they are. It is a matter of self-identification.

"From our understanding the race question is number 9 on the Census form for the first person in the household" said **Roger Guayacan Hernandez**, a Confederation Liaison Officer in Borikén (Puerto Rico). He continued noting that "If the box labeled 'American Indian or Alaska Native' is checked, that's how the person is recorded."

Individuals can insure that they are counted as belonging to the appropriate Tribal Nation by writing in the "principle tribe" in which they are enrolled. The Confederation is urging community members to write "Taino" in this space also provided as part of **Question 9** on the Census form.

The Confederation will host several census information related events in the United States and in **Boriken** during the month of March to encourage community members to "be counted."

Required once every 10 years by the U.S. Constitution, the census seeks to count everyone in the United States and Puerto Rico, including people of all ages, races and ethnic groups. Census data determine representation at all levels of the government as well as the need for new health care facilities, schools, community centers, roads and more. ●



Grandfather Cyril Taylor Educational Scholarship Award

Elijay, GA (UCTP Taino News) - The 2009/2010 Grandfather Cyril Taylor Yabisi Caona Scholarship has been awarded to community member **Monika Mamona Ponton-Arrington**.

A Boriken Taino who resides in Georgia, Arrington is a returning nursing student attending Chattahoochee Technical College. The educational stipend named in honor of elder **Cyril Oscar Taylor** (Carib) is focused toward giving Caribbean indigenous students' modest financial assistance toward the purchase of school text books or supplies.

Fund applicants range from youth to adults continuing their education. They must be registered members of Caribbean indigenous communities or organizations. Potential recipients are required to submit an essay describing their community service and how they envision their education contributing to service in the future.

The Grandfather Cyril Taylor Yabisi Kaona Scholarship is sponsored by the **United Confederation of Taino People**, the **Bohio Atabei Caribbean Indigenous Women's Circle**, and **Mrs. Marie Taylor** (Meherrin). For community members interested in applying for the 2010/2011 funding cycle are encouraged to check the UCTP web portal at www.uctp.org for updates. ●

France Seizes Biggest Contraband of Taino Artifacts

Santo Domingo.- The French authorities confiscated a piece of the Taino culture valued as high as one million euros, seized last year

together with other archaeological items sent to Paris to be sold by an antiques dealer as modern handicraft.



A Taino cemi or zemi.

The Taino artifacts are the highest valued confiscation of items from Dominican Republic, pertaining to the pre-Columbian Caribbean people in recent history.

The piece was dispatched from Dominican Republic on April 3 last year by the exporter Hicotea Club S.A., of Las Galeras, Samaná (northeast), to Simurg Antiquités, in Paris, France, and seized by French Customs in one of four boxes containing 200 objects weighing 50 kilos.

The information is contained in document of the Dominican Foreign Relations Ministry, which explains the procedures followed by the French authorities, from the piece's confiscation, the evaluation of its authenticity and the report to the Dominican representation before the organization UNESCO, based in Paris.

The report doesn't specify what object is appraised, but does note that among them are four trigonolites (stone of triangular form with three faces), which can cost as much as 80,000 Euros, a cemi (carved idol, generally stone)

as high as 250,000 euros, axes and several Taino sculptures, and a dúho of wood (a ceremonial seat), as high as half a million euros, everything following its state of conservation, among other items. ●

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Are you a registered and enrolled member of the Taino Tribal Nation? Get more information on the UCTP Taino Population Census and Inter-Tribal Registry at the UCTP Web Portal www.uctp.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

- **2nd Annual Taino Awards**

Date: April 24, 2010 • Place: Nuyorican Poets Café, New York

Sponsored by the Kukarey Spiritual Circle and the Yamokuno Tanama Taino Yukayeke the awards are presented to recognize and support special individuals making a difference in the Taino community. For more information visit www.kukarey.com

- **9th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

Date: 19-30 April • Place: United Nations Headquarters, NY

The special theme for 2010 is Indigenous peoples: development with culture and identity; articles 3 and 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For registration and other information about the PFII, please visit www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/en/session_ninth.html

- **Peace and Dignity Run Boriken 2010 on the Road to 2012**

Date: 17-25 July 2010 • Place: Boriken (Puerto Rico)

Boriken 2010 is an action of love and respect; it is a spiritual journey that will bring our Caribbean Indigenous nations into the fold of the Indigenous Nations of Abya Yala already part of the Peace and Dignity Journey. For more information see <http://www.peaceanddignityjourneys.com/>

- **UCTP Online Store**

Available at <http://www.cafepress.com/taishop>

This is the official UCTP online merchandise store where you can purchase a number of high-quality products with unique United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP) graphics on them. You can now show your support of a Unified Taino Nation as well as contribute to the precedent-setting work of the UCTP. Proceeds from sales go directly to the Confederation and help to increase the visibility of our great Nation throughout the Caribbean and the Diaspora.

Editor's Note: *The staff at 'the Voice' looks forward to hearing from all of you, and we thank you for your comments, suggestions, and inquires. To submit items to the **Community Bulletin Board**, please email your request to mukaro@uctp.org*

Public Notice: The Voice of the Taíno People reserves the right to reprint in full or in part, any and all correspondence sent to the editors, the United Confederation of Taino People, Inc., and or its officers.

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