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The Voice of the **Taino People**®

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U.S. Census Shows Increase in Borikén’s Indigenous Population

Borikén/Puerto Rico (UCTP Taino News)
- The 2010 **U.S. Census** count for **Borikén** (Puerto Rico) had some significant surprises.

The census reveals a *48.8 percent* gain over the last **2000 census** in the American Indian category, which is a verifiable resurgence of indigenous affirmation among families on the island.

With DNA research documenting the continuation of the pre-Colombian indigenous **Taino** gene-pool and the increasing visibility of active Taino community organizations and cultural manifestations – the myth of extinction is finally being dispelled.

The *Director of the United Confederation of Taino People’s Borikén Liaison Office*, **Roger Guayakan Hernandez** attributes the increase in the census count to expansion of information and communications technologies available today.

"We have always been here but recently there has been an explosion of pertinent information regarding Borikén's indigenous heritage. The difference is that now there are more ways to get the information to the people" stated Hernandez.

Hernandez noted that the Confederation, an official Census partner, used the increased focus on Taino heritage as well as new technologies like social networks in its campaign to raise awareness about the census process.

With the 2010 U.S. Census counting 19,839 individuals living in Puerto Rico officially claiming American Indian heritage, the Taino community is indeed becoming visible after two centuries of near invisibility.

Hernandez continued stating that "the whole chapter on the Caribbean's Amerindian history is being reexamined and supports the affirmation of indigenous descendant families on and even off the island".

A 1790 Puerto Rican Census count in an area called "**Las Indieras**" documented fewer than 3,000 'Indios (Indians)' on the western side of the island. Since then, with official census terminology changing to discount the indigenous population, a reversal has taken place revealing how Taino families see themselves in the 21st Century.

"Colonial history may have counted us out in Puerto Rico, but today the Taino People have clearly counted

ourselves back in" declared Hernandez. ●

Latin American Arts Festival Features Taino Artists

New York, NY (UCTP Taino News) – On March 16, the *American Museum of Natural History's Latin American Arts Festival* highlighted the richness and diversity of creative art forms practiced in various Latin American cultures.

Over 4,000 visitors experienced **Aztec** dance as well as **mariachi, Andean,** and **Puerto Rican** music performances. The day also included poetry, an instrument-making workshop, and the chance to meet a number of talented contemporary artists in the Museum's cultural halls.

Taino community members featured in the event included **Amy Ponce** (photographer), **Reina Sipainaru Miranda** (painter), **Caridad de La Luz** (poet), **Taina Padro** (poet), and **Margarita Nogueras-Vidal** who presented songs from the mountains of Borikén (Puerto Rico). Nogueras-Vidal also displayed a variety of art from CATTÁ-COOP, an artisan collective from Jayuya, Puerto Rico.

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AMNH: Latin American Festival
(cont. from pg. 1)



Margarita "Kukuya" Nogueras-Vidal made the trip from Borikén (Puerto Rico) to be a part of the Festival. (Photo credit: Nona Aquan).

This program was curated by **Roberto "Mukaro" Borrero** and co-presented with Cultura Mexicana Sin Fronteras; PR Dream/Media Noche; the **United Confederation of Taíno People**; Latinos NYC; La Diva Latina Magazine; La Casa de la Herencia Cultural Puertorriqueña, Inc.; Kichwa Nation; and Abya Yala Arte y Cultura. •

Santa Rosa Carib Queen Medina Dies



Arima, Trinidad (UCTP Taíno News) – Elder **Valentina Medina**, the Carib Queen of the **Santa Rosa Carib Community** of Trinidad passed away

on April 23, 2011. Queen Medina succumbed to complications arising from breast cancer. She was 78 years old.

Medina was the fifth Carib Queen since the introduction of the title in 1875. She served the community in this capacity for 11 years.

Chief of the Santa Rosa Carib Community **Ricardo Hernandez-Bharath**, who visited Medina just before her passing, stated "she had served her community well."

Commenting to local news sources Hernandez-Bharath noted that "there will definitely be an indigenous service on the day of the funeral."

The *Santa Rosa Carib Council* will meet to discuss the appointment of a new Queen in one month. •

New York Peace and Dignity Run



Some of the participants at the Peace and Dignity Run in Flushing Meadow Park. From left to right: Vanessa Pastrana; Roman Guaragarix Perez, Melinda Guarukuio Vargas; Evelyn Koaiuku Cruz; and Raphael Landron. (Photo credit: Nona Aquan).

Flushing, Queens (UCTP Taíno News) - On **Sunday, April 24th** a spiritual run took place in **Flushing Meadow Park** on. An Indigenous Peoples initiative, the **New York Peace and Dignity Run** was held in honor of Mother Earth and in preparation for the upcoming continental **Peace and**

Dignity Journey beginning in May of 2012.

Organized by **Raphael Landron** and **Vanessa Inarunikia Pastrana**, the day began with a sunrise ceremony at the *Unisphere* (large globe) at 6am - 7:30am. **Miguel Sague**, a **Siboney Taíno** from Kuba led the opening ceremony and blessing of the sacred staffs the runners will carrying. Native Elders and various community leaders were invited to share words and blessings during the opening ceremony.

Following the sunrise ceremony, a community walk led by elders and community leaders began to Flushing Meadow Lake. At about 9am, designated runners began running a number of sacred community prayer staffs the approximately 6 miles around the lake.



Mexica and Taíno in solidarity at the event in Flushing. (Photo credit: Nona Aquan).

Mexica (Aztec) dance, native drumming, a prayer circle, and communal feast closed the alcohol free event. •



Annual Indigenous Peoples Forum continues at UN



Todadaho of the Onondaga Nation, giving the *Opening Thanksgiving Address* at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in the General Assembly Hall on May 16, 2011. The UN General Secretary, Ban Ki-moon, sits behind him on the podium. (Photo credit: Kenneth Deer)

United Nations (UCTP Taino News) - The 10th Annual **United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues** opened May 16 at UN Headquarters in New York. More than 1300 delegates attended the forum over its two-week session. The Permanent Forum (UNPFII) was established to advance the rights of the estimated 370 million Indigenous Peoples around the world.

This year the UNPFII focused on reviewing progress made on issues ranging from economic and social development to the environment and ‘free, prior and informed consent’.

In his opening statement to the UNPFII, **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon** noted that UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – adopted by the General Assembly in September 2007 – finally had the consensus support that it deserved.

“Now we need to make the declaration’s principles a reality,” he said. Mr. Ban also urged participants to raise their “voices” during the forum so that the world can hear about the threats and risks that

indigenous communities continue to face.

Vanessa Inarunikia Pastrana, a **Borikén Taíno** attending the UNPFII agreed stating “This is a historic process and our people need to be here so our future generations will know that we did not remain silent on issues important to our survival.”

The **United Confederation of Taíno People** continued to bring Caribbean Indigenous Issues to the forefront of the meeting. The Confederation submitted a statement to the Forum at its special session on Latin American and the Caribbean.

As in previous years the UCTP also contributed art work and educational text that was accepted into the Forum’s related art-exhibition. •

US Senate Committee Discusses Stereotypes



Apache Warrior Geronimo was discussed at a hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Washington, D.C. (UCTP Taino News) – The **U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs** held an Oversight Hearing entitled ‘*Stolen Identities: The Impact of Racist Stereotypes on Indigenous People?*’ on Thursday, May 5th. Several Native American leaders and advocates were invited to testify.

The hearing also focused on the U.S. military’s use of the code name **Geronimo** during the mission that led to the death of Osama bin Laden.

American Indians from around the Nation called for an official apology.

In an official statement submitted to the Senate Committee, the **United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP)** not only called for an apology but a ban on the use of American Indian names, iconography, and icons in the U.S. military. The UCTP noted as that many Native Americans – including the Taíno People – continue to serve honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces this practice is not only ‘offensive’ but promotes ‘racial stereotypes.’ •

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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

• Indigenous Committee Volunteer Day

Place: Brook Park, 141st. and Brook Ave., Bronx, NY • **DATE:** June 4th Saturday, **Time:** Work and skills sharing from 11-3PM. 3-5PM food and music that we all bring together. So bring something!

The Indigenous Culture Committee of Friends of Brook Park and our allied organizations United Confederation of Taino People, Kalpulli Huebuetlabtollí and including Teotl Kalli Quetzalcoatl and Maisiti Yukayeke Taino invites you participate in a day of energetic fun when we share together to attend to all the things we need to do to be able to host the activities and events we know and love! For information contact: oirrc@uctp.org

• UCTP Areito in Ohio

Date: June 25, 2011 • **Place:** Youngstown, Ohio

A family event with teaching circles, Taino craft exhibits, food, and films hosted by the UCTP Ohio Liaison Office in collaboration with the Caney Spiritual Circle. For details contact: rquino5614@aol.com

• 7ma JORNADA INDÍGENA-TAÍNO (7th TAÍNO-INDIGENOUS GATHERING)

Place: Jayuya, Puerto Rico **DATE:** Saturday, August 13-14th

The Artisan Cooperative of the High Land (CATTÁ-COOP, INC.) and the Autonomous Municipality of Jayuya invite you to the celebration of the 7th TAÍNO-INDIGENOUS GATHERING. This year we expect a visit from Taino Sisters and Brothers of the Diaspora, at a good time. For more information contact: cattacoop@prw.net

• UCTP Online Store

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

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 tainonews@uctp.org. For more events and news visit <http://www.uctp.org>

Public Notice: Okama (Attention) Taino! Are you registered with your community? Get more information on Tribal Registration at www.uctp.org

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