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The Voice of the **Taino People**®

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Census Data Continues to Shed Light on Boricua Identity

Borikén/Puerto Rico (UCTP Taino News) - Puerto Rico's Institute of Culture, a governmental agency, has historically promoted the island's demographic heritage as a blending of three cultures – *American Indian, Spanish, and African* – forming one a national identity.

Many Puerto Rican scholars continue to highlight 'cultural' blending as officially they have erroneously claimed the local indigenous population was exterminated in the first 50 years of colonization. Data released from the 2010 U.S. Census documents a different perspective as more "Puerto Ricans" are defining themselves as *American Indians*.

In a recent release of 2010 demographic data for Puerto Rico, the **U.S. Census Bureau** recorded **35,753** individuals identified themselves as '**American Indian and Alaska Native**' alone or in combination with another "race". While **350** identified themselves with specific North Native American or Alaska Native Tribes, others either did not specify a particular tribe or were lumped into several ambiguous categories such as "South American Indian" or "Spanish American Indian".

"The issue here for Indigenous Peoples of **Borikén** (Puerto Rico) is that the U.S. Census has been historically discriminatory with regard to our self-determination" stated **Roger 'Guayacan' Hernandez**, a representative of the **United Confederation of Taino People**.

Hernandez continued noting "Small tribes of no more than a few hundred in the U.S. mainland can retrieve their specific data with no difficulty but Taino people are placed in ambiguous categories that seek to dismiss the affirmation of our ancestral heritage".

The Confederation was an official U.S. Census Partner for the 2000 and 2010 campaigns urging indigenous Taino descendants to not only identify themselves as *American Indians* but as **Taino** specifically. The 2010 census survey forms included a space where individuals could write in their tribal affiliation.

In a communication to the United Confederation of Taino People, the U.S. Census Bureau confirmed that in 2000 those identifying as Taino

were placed in the "South American Indian" category.

"Our campaign in 2000 impressed the U.S. Census Bureau enough for its representatives to state that the 2010 census would allow for us to see exactly how many peoples are identifying as Taino on and off the island." said Hernandez. "This is why we felt that it was important to once again partner officially with the U.S. Census Bureau".

The Confederation is still awaiting the data specific information on Taino from the U.S. Census Bureau even as demographic data is already released for other hundreds of other ancestries, ethnicities, nationalities, tribes, etc. in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. mainland. ●



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Taíno Summer Solstice Celebrated in Ohio

Youngstown, Ohio (UCTP Taíno News) - The United Confederation of Taíno People's Ohio Liaison Office in collaboration with the Caney Indigenous Spiritual Circle and the Red Hawk Native American Society commemorated the recent summer solstice, June 25, 2011.

This second annual "areito" event was held in and was organized by Rose **Rose Xochitl Anao Quiñones**, a UCTP Liaison Officer and member of the Caney Circle as well as other volunteers.



Rose Quiñones, UCTP Liaison Officer

The program featured a solstice ceremony led by **Behike Miguel Sague**, a "mini Taíno museum exhibit" courtesy of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP), and the screening of "Full Circle" a film by the Crystal Parrot Players. Full Circle is "part-poem", part-documentary", and "part-dramatic-representation" of Lukáio Taíno life in the Bahamas prior to the arrival of Columbus.

The commemoration also featured the presentation of ceremonial staffs that are carried during ceremonial runs called the Peace and Dignity Journeys. The presentation was given by **Vanessa Inarunikia Pastrana**, the Caribbean Coordinator for the Peace

and Dignity Journeys. These ceremonial runs seek to connect indigenous communities and raise awareness about important issues facing Indigenous Peoples today. The staffs were run around the park ground by participants of all Nations.

The events were filmed and posted on Youtube courtesy of **Alex Zacarias**, an Emmy-award winning filmmaker currently working on a made for TV documentary on Taíno people. ●

Smithsonian takes a serious look at Taíno People

Washington, DC (UCTP Taíno News) - At the invitation of the Smithsonian Institution, a group of expert scholars and culture-bearers gathered to discuss indigenous Taíno culture at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, DC from 23-26 August 2011. The conference was convened to begin a dialog toward a proposed exhibition entitled "'Consciousness of Taíno'" at NMAI in 2013.



The conference participants included archaeologists Osvaldo García Goyco and Clenis Tavarez Maria, historians Alejandro Hartmann Matos and Juan Manuel Delgado, biologist Juan Carlos Martínez Cruzado, Nuria Sanz of UNESCO, and Roberto "Múkaro" Borrero, president of the United Confederation of Taíno People as well as Jorge Estevez (NMAI), Randal Woodaman, and José Barreiro, director of the Office of Latin America at the National

Museum of the American Indian. The program was organized by the National Museum of the American Indian and the Smithsonian Latino Center.

The gathering explored the indigenous legacy of the Caribbean and assessed indigenous cultural impacts as well as "indigeneity" in the contemporary Caribbean. The participants discussed archeological patrimony found in stone, conch, wood; oral tradition and assertion of identity by rural and urban communities; surviving remnants of indigenous language, agricultural, medicinal, and spiritual practices as well as the implications of genetic continuity.

"It was an honor to be a part of this truly significant effort by the Smithsonian Institution to develop what I feel will be a precedent-setting exhibition on the Taíno legacy in the Caribbean and beyond" stated Roberto "Múkaro" Borrero, a representative of the United Confederation of Taíno People. Borrero was asked to present an overview of the Confederation's work to the scholars and Smithsonian representatives in attendance.



R. Múkaro Borrero (UCTP) and Jorge Estevez (NMAI) survey artifacts

The conference closed with a free public panel discussion entitled "Beyond Extinction" on August 26. Several of the participants were also invited to be interviewed on the Nightwolf Radio Show that same evening. ●

Taíno Featured at Indians Springs Pow Wow in Georgia

Butts County, Georgia (UCTP *Taíno News*) - **Monika Mamona Ponton Arrington**, a UCTP Southern Regional Liaison Officer was honored to be “headlady” dance at the Indian Springs Native American Festival in Butts County, Georgia September 10-11, 2011. Ponton-Arrington presented aspects of Taíno culture to the enthusiastic crowd as well as honored her husband Fulton Arrington’s people, the Cherokee, in the Pow Wow dance circle.

The festival was sponsored by the Butts County Historical Society at the historic Indian Springs grounds.



UCTP representatives Monika “Mamona” Ponton Arrington and elder Mukara Torres Speeg in Georgia. Mamona wore a Cherokee style regalia for the Pow Wow dance circle in honor of her husband’s Tribal Nation.

Ponton-Arrington was joined at the Pow Wow by community elder **Mildred Mukara Torres-Speeg**, another Confederation representative. They provide an information table on Taíno culture throughout the weekend that displayed posters with Taíno language, UCTP treaties with other indigenous nations, and photos of depicting various representations of Taíno culture. A list of relevant books were shared as well as information on the United Confederation of Taíno People. ●

Enrolled Community Member Attains Bachelors in Criminal Justice



Community member Luis Campos and Dr. Enid “Tati” Conley (Taíno Arawak), his professor and a UCTP Liaison Officer in Florida.

Miami, Florida (UCTP Taíno News) - **Luis Campos** graduated from Johnson & Wales University, North Miami Campus, with his Bachelors in Science, Criminal Justice this past May.

An enrolled member of the United Confederation of Taíno People’s Taíno Population Census and Inter-Tribal Registry, Campos graduated with a class of over 300.

His core professor **Dr. Enid Conley**, Ph.D., Ed.S., noted that Campos kept high grades, worked full-time, and gave many hours to community service including Native American functions. Campos started his Master’s at Florida International University in International Business in August.

Dr. Conley stated “I am very proud of Luis’ achievement for everything he has done. His academic passion, work ethics, and concern for his community are far beyond most people. He makes us all proud and is a shining star for us as Native People.” ●

Are YOU proud to be Taíno? You can display your pride with a high quality Taíno tee-shirt or other merchandise from the UCTP. A portion of the sales benefit the work of the Confederation.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

- **Taino Inter-Generational Conference**

Place: Yippie Museum and Café, 9 Bleecker St., NY, NY • **DATE:** Oct. 22-23, 2011 • **Time:** 10am-5PM. 3-5PM
Contemporary and past history of the Taino People -- Speakers, Music, art For information contact: inaru2003@yahoo.com

- **AIA Native American Pow Wow**

Date: Nov. 4-6, 2011 • **Place:** Central Florida Fairgrounds & Expositions Park, Orlando, Florida

Native Dancers, craft vendors, and food. Information booth on Taino People and the United Confederation of Taino People with Monika Mamona Ponton Arrington. For details visit <http://www.aiaofflorida.org/> or contact mamona@uctp.org

- **Eastern and Indigenous Perspectives on Sustainability and Conflict Resolution**

Place: Patel Center for Global Solutions (CGS Building), USF Tampa, Florida • **DATE:** Nov. 14-15, 2011

The purpose of this conference is to examine sustainable philosophies and practices from perspectives that are eastern and Indigenous (such as Native American, Traditional African Culture, Aborigines and other indigenous traditions and cultures). ROBERTO MUKARO BORRERO of the United Confederation of Taino People will be a featured speaker. For more information contact: oirrc@uctp.org

- **Peace and Dignity Run: Kiskeia (Dominican Republic)**

A ceremonial run to honor the Taino Ancestors. Donations needed. Contact Roman Perez at kiskeyarun2011@yahoo.com or 917-482-6685

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) Taíno! Are you registered with your community?
Get more information on Tribal Registration at www.uctp.org**

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