

## Highlights

- **Taino Delegation Participates at International Treaty Conference**
- **New UCTP Representative to Trinidad**
- **International Women's History Month Spotlight: Elder Mucara**

## Also Inside

- 1 **Taino Leaders Share Experiences at UCLA**
- 2 **Carib Village by the Sea**
- 3 **Community News ; Announcements and Calendar of Events**

# The Voice of the Taíno People®

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*“The UCTP pauses in its work to acknowledge the national and international celebration’s of Women’s History Month, March 2006”*

## Taíno Delegation Participates at Treaty Conference

FORT DRUM, FLORIDA - A delegation of Borikén Taíno representing the United Confederation of Taíno People participated in the 32nd annual International Indian Treaty Council Conference, held in Fort Drum Florida, February 9-12, 2006.

Hosted by the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) and the Independent Traditional Seminole Nation of Florida, the conference was held at the Red Bay Grounds, which is a traditional land area of the Seminole People. This land was purchased by the Seminole in order to protect and preserve this area of historic and spiritual significance to their people.

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) is an organization of Indigenous Peoples from North, Central, South America and the Pacific working for the Sovereignty and Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of Indigenous Rights, Traditional Cultures and Sacred Lands.

Along with four UCTP sponsored delegates from the island of Borikén, Indigenous delegates

came from throughout the western hemisphere and from as far as New Zealand to take part in this important dialogue, which focused local and international issues.

Some of the themes discussed at the conference included “Treaties, Land Rights and Sovereignty”, the “Health of our Children and Future Generations”, and Defending Cultural Rights, Traditional Knowledge and Sacred Ways” and others. Borikén Taíno Community leader Naniki Reyes Ocasio was invited by the organizers to present an update on the Caguana Ceremonial Center as well as the current situation of the Borikén Taíno People. The presentation will soon be available at the UCTP web portal located at [www.uctp.org](http://www.uctp.org).

The participation of the Taíno delegates at this conference offered a unique opportunity for Taíno issues to be highlighted together with other indigenous issues from throughout the hemisphere and the Pacific.

The hospitality shown by the Independent Traditional Seminole Nation and the on-going support of Caribbean Indigenous Peoples

issues pledged by IITC was welcomed by the UCTP leadership who look forward to a more official affiliation between the entities in the near future. ●



**Borikén Taíno Leader Speaks at IITC Conference at the Red Bay Ground, Florida**

For more information on the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) visit <http://www.treatycouncil.org/>

### UCTP Welcomes Newest Representative'

UCTP REGIONAL COORDINATING OFFICE - The United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP) is honored to inform our community that **Dr. A.D. Cropper Ph.D (Kalinago Carib)** has now taken on the responsibility of UCTP Liaison Officer to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

*(Story continues on page 2)*



**NEW UCTP Rep. Story cont. from pg 1**



**Dr. A.D. Cropper with Humbolt Students attending the AISES National Conference in North Carolina.**

Dr. A.D. Cropper is a native Trinidadian who currently resides in Rochester, NY with his wife Natalie Rogers-Cropper and their daughter Iala Kitanyea. Dr. Cropper is employed by ITT Industries Space Systems Division. He has a long and distinguished community service record and has been affiliated with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) for the past 15 years.

Recently, Dr. Cropper was honored by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honorable Professor Max Richards, with the prestigious “Icons in Science and Technology” award.

The UCTP looks forward to working together with Dr. Cropper in solidarity with Trinidad’s Indigenous Peoples. ●

**International Women’s History Month Spotlight:  
Mildred Mucara Torres - Speeg**

MOUNTAIN CITY, GEORGIA - Taíno community leader and elder Mildred "Mucara" Torres Speeg continues to gain considerable attention for her exquisite works of art locally and internationally.

A Boriken Taíno who resides in Georgia, Millie's story was featured recently in the Rabun's Laurel (Jan. 2006, pg. 36) Magazine. Her work continues to be shown in galleries throughout the state of Georgia and she recently completed a showing at the Dorothy Dove Gallery in historic Clarkesville, Georgia.

Last year her work, “Guabancex: Taíno Spirit of the Hurricane” was featured at the internationally acclaimed exhibition, *In Celebration of Indigenous Peoples* held at United Nations Headquarters.

Elder Mucara Torres-Speeg is the United Confederation of the Taíno People Liaison Officer for the State of Georgia, an active member of the NGAG and past president of the Albany Georgia Artists Guild.

Her stunning work can be viewed at [www.WorldsBestArt.com](http://www.WorldsBestArt.com) as well as [www.nighteaglestudio.com](http://www.nighteaglestudio.com). ●



**Master portrait artist Millie Mucara Torres-Speeg at her recent gallery showing at the Dorothy Dove Gallery in Georgia. Shown with Gallery owner Dorothy Dove (left), elder Mucara os shown displaying two of her works: “Guabancex (Taino Spirit of the Hurricane)” and “Visions I see”.**

**Taino Leaders Share Experiences at UCLA**

LOS ANGELES, CA - During the weekend of January 14th Boriken Taino community leader, Grandmother Naniki Reyes Ocasio took a trip from the island to Los Angeles to join DeAnna M. Sarobei Rivera, one of the UCTP's two

California Liaison Officers, in attending a conference on indigenous peoples' cultural resource management.

The conference, *Sharing Interpretations of California History*, took place on the land of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, which happens to be the tribe responsible for starting Professor Rivera's program at UCLA, the Tribal Learning Community & Educational Exchange (TLCEE).

Grandmother Naniki came to the LA area both to attend this conference and to speak with UCLA students who have been doing research on behalf of the UCTP.

At the conference, elder Naniki was greeted by UCTP Liaison Officer John Hu'acan Vidal and several California indigenous community members. Many of the topics, though often California specific, included the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the protection of indigenous peoples' knowledge from outside researchers.

Much of the discussion was related to Taíno concerns and Grandmother Naniki kept saying, "it's so nice to be at a conference that I didn't have to plan!" One thing she did do for the conference, however, was supply the gifts for the presenters – each one received a bag of Café Oroco, grown on Grandmother Naniki's land.

After the conference weekend, Grandmother Naniki met and had lunch with the UCLA law students to talk about their work. One of the students, Eric Sanchez, wrote extensively about California models of indigenous cultural resource management the Taíno could borrow from and tailor for our own purposes.

*(Story continues on page 3)*

**UCLA Story cont. from pg 2**

Sandy Chang, a new student to the project, learned more about the community's issues and about the Occupation of Caguana Ceremonial Site in August 2005.

Apart from meeting with the law students, Grandmother Naniki joined brother Hu'acan Vidal in a conversation with UCLA undergraduate and graduate students about indigenous education. One of the interesting notes from the discussion was when Grandmother Naniki asked one of the students, Leticia Miranda, if she could borrow her phrase, "language reclamation." As Ms. Miranda described the phrase, it included the idea that our indigenous languages were taken from us. Unlike the word "revitalize," which implies the language simply died off on its own and we are now bringing it back to life, "reclamation" sets out the reality that there was a taking and now we are taking the languages back.

A lot of sharing and learning occurred over Grandmother Naniki's visit. Professor Rivera noted that elder Naniki's company was "indeed a blessing and a reminder of all the amazing work we each have ahead of us." ♥

The UCTP would like to say Bo Ma'tum (thank you) to Jennifer Leal for paying such close attention to Grandmother Naniki's needs during her visit to Los Angeles.

### **Carib Cultural Village by the Sea**

ROSEAU, DOMINICA – February 2006 marked the historic opening of the Kalinago Barana Aute or Carib Cultural Village by the Sea on the island of Dominica, West Indies.

The Kalinago Barana Auté is built on 4.2 acres of land and boasts a number of structures, including an

Administration and Interpretation Centre, a craft shop, Demonstration Buildings, a Snackette, and a "Karbet" or traditional meeting house similar to a "Caney" for the Taíno.

Situated close to the sea, includes hiking trails, a waterfall and a river flowing through it.

According to the Government Press Secretary the "Kalinago Barana Auté honors the diversity, history and heritage of the Kalinago people by presenting their customs and cultural traditions and by providing an opportunity for visitors to experience, learn about and appreciate their way of life."

The Project is expected to offer many opportunities and services to the Kalinago people. ●



**The Karbet or meeting houses at the Carib Cultural Village by the Sea in Dominica.**

### **UCTP Community News**

**Keeping Them in Our Prayers:** The Garcia Family expresses their appreciation to all those who kept their son **Andre Garcia** in prayer during his two weeks in Iraq. He is back home for the moment but Andre and his group will probably have to return to try and complete their objective...

Community member Vanessa Inarunikia Pastrana has requested prayers for her son, **John Mathew "Manturey" Concepcion**, who is enlisted in the U.S. Army and currently stationed in Germany but will be leaving for Iraq shortly...

UCTP rep. Tati Conley has requested community prayers for her son **Jimmy Eric Conley** as he starts his tour of duty in Iraq... Jimmy Eric Conley is serving in the US Marine Corps, Infantry..

On behalf of the UCTP, we ask the Creator to watch over all our young warriors them and return them safely to their families and our community.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAYS:** Our January, February, and March birthday wishes go out to UCTP Webmaster **Glenn Welker** and "Voice" staff member **Roger Atiluibancex Hernandez** as well as **Joseph Borrero** ; **Sylvia Karayaturey Rosario** ; **Hailey and Calista Conde**, and **Sylvia Guarixcoa Santiago**...

**Taino Communications:** Keep updated on Caribbean Indigenous Issues via our "**Taino News and Information Email List**" and our **UCTP Web Log**.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**IMPORTANT UCTP NOTICE:** Are you being counted among your Nation? If you are a Taíno, Carib or Arawak and would like information on the **UCTP Taíno Population Census** and **Tribal Registration Program**, please visit our award winning web portal [www.uctp.org](http://www.uctp.org) or write to our postal address in New York.

### • 2nd ANNUAL GARIFUNA COMMUNITY FORUM

**Date: 11 March 2006 • Place: Los Angeles Southwest College, 1600 West Imperial Hwy, Los Angeles, California**

*Event is sponsored by Garifuna American Heritage Foundation United, Inc. ([www.garifunaheritagefoundation.org](http://www.garifunaheritagefoundation.org)) and will feature keynote speakers and live performances from 10am – 5pm. For additional information call (323)898-6841*

### • Taíno Areito and Unity Gathering

**Date: 17 – 19 March 2006 • Place: Three Rivers American Indian Center, 200 Charles St., Dorseyville, PA**

*Hosted by the Caney Spiritual Circle, the event is open to all Taíno People. For more information on this event and nearby hotels, contact Miguel Sague by email at [sobaokokoromo@aol.com](mailto:sobaokokoromo@aol.com) or by cell phone at (412) 901-5427*

### • Fifth Session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

**Date: 15 – 26 May 2005 • Place: United Nations Headquarters, NY**

*This years' theme is "The Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples: Re-defining the Millennium Development Goals. For information visit the UNPFII website at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>*

**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 [la\\_voz\\_taino@yahoo.com](mailto:la_voz_taino@yahoo.com)

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### THE VOICE OF THE TAÍNO PEOPLE

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