

The Areyto Ceremony

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[Areyto Oath.pdf](#) [2]

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86.32 KB

The history of the Areyto dates back to Taino culture. The Areytos were an important part of religious celebration for the Tainos. The whole tribe took part in these dance and music affairs held to celebrate important events of the village. During Areytos, the Tainos sang about their historical past and about the brave deeds of their heroes.

Through this ceremony, the leaders of the Aspira movement take an oath of commitment to work for the achievement of Aspira's goals no matter what hard work and sacrifices it will require of them.

The idea of incorporating the Areyto ceremony is taken from the Taino Indian ceremony where the leaders sang of the great deeds of their people. The Areytos were religious ceremonies that involved the entire Taino community and neighboring communities as well. Areytos were held in the main plazas at important times. Areytos were long celebrations that included ritual feasting, singing, and dancing. At Aspira, the Areyto ceremony has been developed by each generation of Aspirante leaders into today and it is already one of our traditions.

The Aspira Clubs Federation (A.C.F.) membership committee and Aspira Board of Directors are responsible for planning and conducting it. The ideology behind the use of Taino symbols, language and rituals is to provide our youth with a sense of belonging to something ancestral, to understand our cultural and historic roots from which they will develop their own direction. These are the symbols and ideology of a brotherhood of service.

The Areyto is a private ceremony in which the leaders of the Aspira movement are initiated every year. The participants are reminded that the oath is the oath of a lifelong brotherhood. They take an oath of commitment to work for the achievement of the objectives of the movement no matter what hard work and sacrifices it will require of them. The oath is taken by candlelight or torches, with drums and maracas sounds in the background. The Oath spoken first in Spanish followed by English (in the US mainland) to give the added importance and cultural connectedness to both the oath and the culture.

This ceremony is festive, rather than solemn. A prominent political official or community leader is usually invited as a speaker challenges. At the end of the ceremony all initiated clubs members stand and receive the acceptance from the president and are accepted into the brotherhood.

Today, ASPIRA continues to celebrate the Areyto. It is an opportunity to celebrate the history of Puerto Ricans through cultural activities. The Areyto Ceremony concludes with students and staff pledging their support and commitment to their communities by reciting the Areyto Oath. Attached please find a copy of the Areyto Oath in English and Spanish.

Materials Needed for the Ceremony:

- Candles – one for each student
- White carnations – one for each student
- One glass of water at the main table

Procedure:

- The club advisor will review and discuss on the Areyto Induction Ceremony.
- Students will take part in an “Areyto” Ceremony.
- Each ASPIRA group/ Clubs will present an “offering” in the form of music, dance, poetry, or history all relating to Puerto Rico.
- Should music be selected as an “offering”, it should be Bomba or Plena, historical roots of Puerto Rico.
- Students from different countries will represent a country with music or dance.

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