

## The Areyto Ceremony

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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 ceremony is held to initiate each club. The president of the club presents a request to the ACF Nitaynos (club officers) to initiate his/her club consisting of (number) of members. The president of the A.C.F. then initiates the club by hearing their oath all together. The Executive Director of the associate and the ACF President presents to each member their membership credentials (certificates, ID's, pins or shirts as applicable).



This ceremony is festive, rather than solemn. A prominent political official or community leader is usually invited as a speaker. There are often short speeches that state the priorities and objectives for the next year, mark the strength existing in the group and request everyone's efforts in accomplishing the goals of the coming year. The group should, emerge ready to act, impressed with their strength and motivated to face their 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.

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 connect ness to both the oath and the culture.

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