

Context: Article discussing the up-coming Treaty Signing between Higuayagua Taíno of The Caribbean and The Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee

Source: <https://www.yourconroenews.com/neighborhood/moco/opinion/amp/Dr-Robin-Montgomery-Heritage-Museum-embracing-15597172.php>

Article: **Dr. Robin Montgomery: Heritage Museum embracing world currents**

on September 25, 2020



Photo: Cody Bahn, Houston Chronicle / Staff Photographer

County historian Robin Montgomery and co-author/daughter Joy Montgomery hold their newest book "Sam Houston's Quest: The Cherokee and African-American Virtue Agenda" and a certificate signed by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick declaring Robin Montgomery a "True Texan" by the Texas State House on Saturday, Oct. 20, 2018 at the Heritage Museum in Conroe. Joy Montgomery, Executive Director at the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County, will participate in a conference at Ellijay, Georgia which will feature representation of both the Cherokee and the Taino at the highest levels.

The 21st century is giving rise to recognition of rights of Indigenous peoples highlighted by the recent US Supreme Court case of *Mc Girt versus Oklahoma* July 2020 and the passage of the United Nation's Declaration of Indigenous Rights in 2007. Beneficiaries of these events include the Cherokee and the Tainos, the latter originally of Puerto Rico. Into this milieu the weekend of Oct. 3 will be Joy Montgomery, Executive Director of the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County, located at the northwest end of Candy Cane Park off I-45 in Conroe.

By special invitation, Joy will attend a prestigious conference at Ellijay, Georgia which will feature representation of both the Cherokee and the Taino at the highest levels. Among Joy's credentials for the meeting is a term as secretary of the Cherokee Trail of Tears Association of Tennessee while she is also a card-carrying member of the Taino Tribe. Her hostess at Georgia will be Monika Ponton-Arrington, PhD, a Taino chief, who is married to Fulton Arrington, a leader among the Cherokee.

Dr. Monika Ponton-Arrington's extensive credentials include the position of Executive Liaison of Indigenous Affairs -North American Division- for the Interfaith Peace Building initiative to the United Nations in New York, a UN accredited non-governmental Organization (NGO). Monika is also a member of the UN Council of Indigenous Peoples with duties as a justice or judge in issues bearing on international indigenous law. She furthermore, has advocated before the UN for Puerto Rico.

Indications of Monika's success lie in multiple awards for her efforts. Among these is the prestigious Golden Rule Humanitarian Award, received first at the Gerald Ford Presidential Library. The award centers on the Biblical charge to "Treat others as you would like to be treated." The grand award exemplifies her success with such prestigious entities as the African Union, the United Religion Initiative and others.

Monika's credentials extend to the Elite Global Network of Women referenced as the "Changed Nations Alumni". She is also Executive Director of Indigenous Women's Knowledge, Inc., an Indigenous Peoples Organization (I.P.O.). She lives with her husband in Ellijay where she is on the staff of the National Wellness Center. Among her academic credentials is graduate of the National Wellness Institute.

The benefit to Joy and the Heritage Museum from these contacts lie in a first-hand look into world- wide initiatives impacting world culture trends and historical interpretations. This sets up opportunities for precious data collections and contacts for program presentations featuring information on world trends in

cultural and historical interpretation.

The information thus garnered feeds into keeping abreast of the ever- changing dynamics of the field of history, itself, both as an academic and as a socio-political phenomenon. Groups associated with the museum such as the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe, Hispanic and African American groups and individuals, along with practitioners and philosophers of art are a few segments subject to multiple benefits and rewards. These place the museum in a position to relate opportunistically to ever evolving trends and events in world cultural and historical venues.

With a frame of reference set strategically on such world trends, the board and friends of the Heritage Museum contribute yet another element to the drive of so many ushering Conroe and Montgomery County into a world cultural center.

Dr. Robin Montgomery is a native of Montgomery County and is an author, retired professor, historian and columnist for The Courier.