

# News from SAIIC...



This has been a very busy Spring as SAIIC has enjoyed visits from many Indigenous people from South and Meso America. Many of these visitors were here for the Abya Yala Fund board meeting the beginning of May (see story page 37).

**Aucan Huilcaman**, a Mapuche leader from southern Chile, toured the United States in May to denounce efforts to extend NAFTA to Chile and the negative impact it has on Indigenous peoples there. He gave several presentations and a press conference while he was in the Bay Area.

**José María Cabascango**, Quichua from Ecuador and coordinator of Territory and Policy at CONAIE, spent several days with us in June on his way back to Ecuador from the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) meeting in Alaska. We conducted an interview with José María about his experiences with the Indigenous movement in Ecuador which we will print in the next issue of *Abya Yala News*.

**Nilo Cayuqueo**, who has been coordinator, director, and co-founder of SAIIC for 12 years, will turn the directorship of SAIIC to Amalia Dixon, a Miskitu from

Nicaragua. Nilo will spend more of his time working with Abya Yala Fund, but also will remain as active board member of SAIIC while helping Amalia in the transition. Also, Nilo has been awarded a Vanguard Foundation Sabbatical Fellowship. The sabbatical will allow Nilo to take two months of vacation. He is planning to go to the south to visit Indian communities. Congratulations.

**Amalia Dixon**, who has long-term experience with Indigenous organizations and the autonomy process on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, has been chosen as the new director of SAIIC. We are arranging her visa so she can work in the Oakland office. She recently attended the IITC meeting in Alaska where she made many friendships and learned much about the situation of Indigenous peoples in North America. (She will continue in SAIIC the work Nilo has been doing for many years.) Welcome, Amalia.

SAIIC board member **Carlos Maibeth** has been actively involved in a project to help electricity to the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua through the use of solar panels. A recent fundraising in Berkeley, California, raised funds for this project.

**Joe Bryan** is working in the SAIIC office for a month this summer as an Intern. Joe is a Community Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies major at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Part of this major entails a six-month internship with a social change organization. After his time with us, Joe plans to continue his Internship in the Ecuadorian Amazon at the AMAZANGA institute.

SAIIC is also pleased to announce that **Gilles Combrisson** has joined us as our new Journal Coordinator. Gilles has just finished his degree in Latin American and Iberian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He worked for six months last year with the Shuar Federation in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

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