



Robert Borofsky <borofsky@publicanthropology.org>

Re: Aloha (from Hawaii)

1 message

hlong@patriot-news.com <hlong@patriot-news.com>
To: Rob Borofsky <borofsky.hpu@publicanthropology.org>

Mon, May 17, 2010 at 9:38 AM

Dear Rob,

Thank you again for your time last week. We did write something on Sunday about the blood samples. I am attaching a pdf copy of the print edition. It is online here: http://www.pennlive.com/editorials/index.ssf/2010/05/overdue_psu_should_return_amaz.html

Penn State sent us a lengthy note last week indicating that they are still trying to return the samples. They claim the hold up is with the U.S. HHS and the Brazilian gov't. I thought you might be interested in some parts of their reply excerpted here:

Sending back these samples requires a great deal of care to protect them from damage. It is not as simple as packing them up in a cooler and putting them on a plane. As you may know, the samples are currently stored at temperatures of approximately minus 40 degrees celsius. These samples have been frozen for 30-40 years, and when they raise to room temperature, some of them may crack or burst in the thawing process if not protected appropriately. These samples need to be handled and transported in a manner that respects the rights of all the Yanomami sample donors and their families.

Penn State has not for decades used these samples and would very much like to return them.

In November 2009, Penn State corresponded via e-mail with the U.S. Department of HHS regarding the correct protocol for returning these samples and we suggested procedures and measures that should be taken. As far as we can tell, that document remains in the queue with the federal government.

But the wheels are turning (slowly) just recently a set of Brazilian Yanomami DNA samples that were housed at Binghamton University were brought to Penn State, so that when the return does occur, both sets will go back together. There also is a material transfer agreement in the works with the Brazilian government through its embassy, so we are moving forward.

We will keep an eye on future developments and probably weigh in again late summer or in the fall.

Heather

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From: Rob Borofsky <borofsky.hpu@publicanthropology.org>
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Date: 05/12/2010 02:51 PM
Subject: Aloha (from Hawaii)
