



Gina Cheron, Board Chair and Farah Tanis, Executive Director of Dwa Fanm
Accepting the New York State Freedom Award 2004-Governor's Justice, Freedom and Courage Awards To End Domestic Violence

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LOCAL ORGANIZATION RECEIVES GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR FIGHTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Dwa Fanm and NY Yankees' Joe Torre Recognized for Their Efforts

Brooklyn, New York - October 4, 2004– On Monday, October 4, Dwa Fanm joined nine other crusaders at the Governor's Mansion in Albany. The purpose was to receive one of Governor Pataki's coveted "Justice, Freedom and Courage Awards to End Domestic Violence." This is the fourth year of the Governor's initiative, which is designed to recognize individuals and organizations whose exemplary actions are particularly innovative and demonstrate a long-term commitment to ending domestic violence.

"Over the years, New York has made great strides in fighting domestic violence in our homes and in our communities, thanks in large part to the efforts of many, like those we honor today, who have dedicated their time and effort to combating this horrible crime," Governor Pataki said.

Dwa Fanm, nominated by the Kings County District Attorney's Office was recognized for its innovative programs, strong relationships with the community and its human rights approach to addressing the issue of violence against women.

Farah Tanis, Executive Director of Dwa Fanm said about winning the award "This Award is a testimony to Haitian women survivors' strength, heroism and determination to live, free from being regularly beaten and raped in their own relationships, in their own homes."

In addition to the Justice, Freedom and Courage Awards, which are selected in a competitive process, the Governor bestowed a special "Visionary Award" upon Joe Torre, manager of the Yankees and founder of the Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation. Mr. Torre is being recognized for creating the foundation to help raise public awareness of domestic violence.

Mr. Torre also lent his voice in support of the effort to raise public awareness of domestic violence by recording two radio public service announcements for the State. In the spots, Mr. Torre talks about his personal experience as a child growing up in a home with an abusive father. The powerful spots will be distributed this week to be aired statewide.

The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) is the lead agency overseeing the Justice, Freedom and Courage Awards initiative. Charlotte A. Watson, Executive Director of OPDV, said, "The Governor's Justice, Freedom and Courage Awards to End Domestic Violence pay tribute to individuals and organizations who have made a difference in their communities and the state in the effort to end domestic violence.

Today's recipients have demonstrated tenacity, creativity, and brilliance in their efforts. Governor Pataki's leadership and commitment to end domestic violence serve as a model for the nation. The partnership of Governor Pataki, Joe Torre, advocates, and, most importantly, battered women, has resulted in astounding change within New York State."

In addition to Dwas Fanm, awards were given to Sanctuary for Families' Center for Battered Women's Legal Services in New York City, Wanda Lucibello of Brooklyn, Phyllis B. Frank of New City, Business and Professional Women of Tech Valley in Ballston Lake, My Sisters' Place of White Plains, and Jan Demers of Malone. Courage Awards were given to Deanna Courtney of Tupper Lake, Kim Nimoy of the Bronx, and Linda Shutts.

Governor Pataki also proclaimed October to be Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Throughout the state, local organizations will be taking part in activities designed to raise awareness of domestic violence, ultimately helping to save the lives of victims and their children.