



**DWA FANM**  
COMMITTED TO THE RIGHTS OF HAITIAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

P.O. Box 23505  
Brooklyn, New York 11202  
Ph. (718) 230-4027  
Fax (718) 230-3194

## **Dwa Fanm, INC. - BOARD PROSPECTUS**

Dr. Betina Jean-Louis  
Chair, Board of Directors

74A 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Farah Tanis  
Co-Founder, Executive Director

Phone: (718) 230-4027  
Fax: (718) 230-3194

### **History and Mission**

Dwa Fanm, Inc. is a women's rights organization committed to empowering all women and girls with the freedom to define and control their own lives. Through advocacy and grassroots programs, Dwa Fanm works to end discrimination, violence, and other forms of injustice in the United States and abroad. Dwa Fanm started as a volunteer-run organization in mid-1999 when a group of eight Haitian and American women from diverse fields met to discuss the state of women's rights in Haitian immigrant communities in the United States and in Haiti. In the beginning, the organization intended to focus primarily on policy advocacy but we quickly realized that we are in a unique position to meet the tremendous demand for services from our underserved communities. Dwa Fanm is taking a more integrated approach, realizing our objectives through a combination of service provision, advocacy, leadership development, community organizing and education, all in the service of combating violence and advancing the rights of Haitian women and girls.

### **Our Work**

Dwa Fanm's initiatives adopt a human rights perspective and are based on the premise that it is not enough to provide services to women or to promote an end to women's rights violations without challenging the systems and communities that perpetuate such violations. Dwa Fanm's Efforts expose gender-based discrimination as a fundamental injustice and work creatively to engage a cross section of systems and community members, not just women, in order to create social change. Dwa Fanm uses the broader framework of human rights to create a legitimate channel for discussing women's needs and priorities and holds the state, community and individuals accountable for treating women and girls as valuable and equal human beings.

### **Looking to the Future**

Through the vital and continued support of its core group of dedicated volunteers and donors, Dwa Fanm looks forward to expanding the geographic reach and scope of its services.

Because the need is so great, Dwa Fanm plans to expand the SuperFriends program so that it can reach a larger number of children in all five boroughs; for example, tutoring – one aspect of our volunteer support to children – will be developed. Meanwhile, Dwa Fanm must stabilize its funding and operations by strengthening and expanding its Board of Directors.

## **The Board**

Dwa Fanm is at a key transitional point in its development. After a period of instability and multiple changes, Dwa Fanm now needs to expand its board to include people with a wider range of expertise, and from diverse backgrounds – people who can provide knowledge and resources to guide Dwa Fanm into the future and who can help the current members undertake the multiple demands of board membership.

The mission of the Board is to promote growth and development of Dwa Fanm by:

- Encouraging excellence in its program
- Assuring the continuing financial and reputational health of the organization
- Being ambassadors for the organization, seeking out opportunities to make friends for the organization and inform others about it
- Supporting individuals, children and families served by our programs.

The Board executes its mission by:

- Establishing long-term goals for Dwa Fanm and creating policy and planning frameworks that will help to achieve the goals
- Supervising and supporting the Executive Director, ensuring s/he has adequate staff and resources to meet goals
- Monitoring financial and operating performance to assure conformance to mission and plan (approving the annual budget)
- Establishing procedures for Board governance and self-assessment, for qualification and nomination of new directors and for periodic review, rotation and replacement of Board members.
- Representing Dwa Fanm to the public, raising public awareness and support for Dwa Fanm's mission and activities.
- Raising funds to ensure that the organization has adequate financial resources to carry out its mission and activities.

Expertise that would be particularly beneficial at this time is described below. Dwa Fanm particularly welcomes individuals who

would look forward to assuming leadership roles on the Board over time.

**Fundraising:** Dwa Fanm must continually maintain and expand its donor base. A board member with knowledge of foundation and corporate philanthropy would be a valuable resource, as would a Board member with creativity and experience with special events fundraising. The Board would greatly benefit from individuals who can provide information and access to funding opportunities.

**Public Relations/Media:** Building public awareness is a critical component of Dwa Fanm's mission, both in reaching out to those in need, and in influencing public policies. A professional with the expertise to guide Dwa Fanm's public relations strategies and its access to media opportunities would be valuable on the Board.

**Strategic Planning:** Dwa Fanm's first strategic plan was developed for 2005-2009 and defines the direction and expansion of our organization for the next five years. Our comprehensive strategic plan, which is based on Dwa Fanm's past experience and success working in the Haitian community, addresses the following areas:

Capacity building—add administrative staff (including a deputy director and administrative assistant) and direct service staff (including legal, housing, and economic empowerment staff);  
Board development—recruit new Board members, improve Board communication and structure, provide Board training and orientation for new members, conduct Board evaluation, increase Board members' responsibilities in regard to fundraising, external communications, etc.;  
Program development—add legal services, safe dwellings, and a women's shelter for victims of violence and expand our hotline, literacy, employment-related programs, and a Senior services program;  
Promotion—increase the number of public service announcements, conferences, poster campaigns, and events to raise consciousness about violence against women and Dwa Fanm's services, and promote policies through policy briefs, etc.;  
Partnership—expand services to other locations in NYC and Long Island in partnership with other organizations that provide advocacy and service to Haitian women and girls. Develop partnerships with women's organizations in Haiti.

## **Responsibilities of a Board Member**

Board members of Dwa Fanm are expected to:

- Attend Board meetings, serving on committees and contributing to the execution of the Board's responsibilities; board members are expected to attend most meetings

- Attend an annual meeting to review roles and responsibilities, performance of staff and Board members, review past year activities and establish a Board meeting calendar for the upcoming year
- Exhibit an interest in issues pertinent to immigrant women and girls, becoming knowledgeable about Dwa Fanm and its programs and being an advocate of Dwa Fanm to the public, individuals, organizations and governments
- Support Dwa Fanm through personal financial commitment and by assisting in obtaining financial support from others; individuals should support Dwa Fanm financially to the best of their abilities, but are also expected to contribute by lending their professional experience and stature to Dwa Fanm programs and by being ambassadors for Dwa Fanm to the world at large
- Maintain and improve the professional image of the organization
- Take advantage of opportunities to connect to the work and mission of the organization