

The Minnesota African Women's Association is committed to the advancement of women refugees and immigrants from all over the African continent. MAWA encourages confidence and hope through the implementation of programs ranging from leadership development to cross-cultural education. Our culturally diverse board seeks to establish social and systems change within the African community in Minneapolis-St. Paul by maintaining a remarkable perspective on the issues that face African women and their families.

MAWA, a 501c3 non-profit organization, was established in March of 2002. We participate with various schools, mutual assistance associations and mainstream non-profits to broaden the influence of our vision. Our programs are often influenced by our participants and African women.

◆ **Mission:** To promote the health and well-being of African Refugee and Immigrant women and their families in Minnesota.

◆ **Vision:** Our vision is to create an African women's organization that nurtures and draws strength from African refugee and immigrant women.

◆ **Goals:**

- Assisting women and girls from all parts of Africa access and navigate services to resolve basic needs; And
- Promoting the social, economic and political integration of women and girls through leadership development programming.
- Educating Africans and non-Africans about the issues African women and girls face;
- Building bridges/creating opportunities for African women and girls to network with each other and with mainstream organizations/individuals;

### ◆ Staff

- Executive Director: Nyango Melissa Nambangi, MA
- LaBelle N. Makane , Girls Leadership Coordinator
- Bola Adediran/Miata Getaweh, Job Counselors
- Hani Husein, Refugee Programs Coordinator
- Christelle Womas, Youth Programs Staff
- Frank Thomas, Jeanne Kotor Akouvi , Sewing Program staff

### ◆ Board of Directors

- Anietie Umoeka, Chair
- Diana Hawkins, Secretary
- Elizabeth Bel
- Maureen Wilson
- Lucy Ekanem
- Hanifa Bacchus

### ◆ Funders

- DHS-RPO
- Jay and Rose Phillips Foundation
- Karen Viskochil Fund
- Mardag Foundation
- McKnight Foundation
- The Minneapolis Foundation
- Office of Minority Health
- Office of Refugee Resettlement
- Pan-African Women's Philanthropy Fund
- Westminster Presbyterian Church
- Altrusa Club of St. Paul
- Minnesota Refugee Employment Office



*Minnesota African Women's Association*

Promoting the Health and Well-Being of African Refugee and Immigrant Women and their families in Minnesota



~Research and Education~  
 ~Organizing and Building Community~  
 ~Advocacy~  
 ~Leadership Development~

3300 Bass Lake Road, Brookly Center, MN  
 Ph: 612/588-7666. Fax: 612/588-7972  
 Email: mawa0302@yahoo.com  
 Website: www.mawanet.org

*Home of the African Girls Initiative for Leadership and Empowerment (AGILE) program*



**MAWA**

*Minnesota African Women's  
Association*

## ◆ Youth Leadership

The African Girls Initiative for Leadership and Empowerment is designed to aid in the success of young African women. Comprised of six school clubs in the surrounding Twin Cities area, AGILE serves to motivate and educate in all arenas of life including self-esteem improvement, skill

building and socialization. AGILE commissions these young women as leaders by empowering their cultural identity and investing in their natural abilities and gifts.



College Tour 2009

By encouraging them to further their education with college attendance, AGILE seeks to create better opportunities for these Pan-African youth.

## ◆ Refugee Employment Services

MAWA works with SEARCH and The Karen Organization of Minnesota to provide job counseling for African women, assessing their skill areas and assisting them with job placement in the Twin Cities area.

## ◆ Refugee Social Services

Our Refugee Family Advocate provides Settlement Services to recently arrived refugees from Africa. This program receives funding from the Minnesota Refugee Program Office and joins with 3 other organizations to resolve the basic needs of refugees as well as create a community of support for those who have been displaced by war.

## ◆ African Women's Sewing Program

Our Refugee Women's Sewing Program equips African refugee women with job readiness and the necessary trade skills to approach life in America with confidence while enabling them to provide for themselves and for their families.



Graduates in Dresses Sewn

## School Navigator

School Navigator collaborates with area schools and organizations to create educational awareness for refugee and immigrant parents by supplying them with resources and communicating school standards and expectations as well as knowledge of school operations. Navigator also works with parents, compelling them to be an integral part of the advancement of their child's education. Based out of a school in Brooklyn Park, School Navigator gathers school and community-based resources to meet the



Summer Camp  
2008

needs of African refugee and immigrant children.

## ◆ Health Programs

MAWA provides a variety of health and health education services:

- The African Outreach Health Center is a no-cost health center offering family planning education, pregnancy testing and STD screening and treatment as well as many other services.
- Culturally Appropriate HIV/AIDS education and research.
- Promotes a tobacco-free lifestyle in the lives of African immigrant and refugee youth.

## ◆ African Harmony

African Harmony is a vocal group representing many areas of Africa. Through traditional and contemporary song and dance, this talented group infuses a dynamic form of the cultural arts into the Twin Cities community. Vibrant and expressive, African Harmony uses dance, movement, singing and drumming to create an artistic experience unlike any other in the area. African Harmony has performed at the International Women's Day Event, Westminster Presbyterian Church, The Basilica and Science Museum Festival of Lights. African Harmony does not charge a fee to perform but does accept donations to defray any costs involved.



African Harmony at the Basilica