

Dr. Maryse Nazon
HoHAYE's Person of the Year
by Dr. N. Karen Thames

Maryse Nazon is a psychotherapist, consultant, coach, professor and trainer. She holds a Master of Divinity and a Doctoral degree in Psychology and is a certified substance abuse counselor (CADC) and Mental Health Substance Abuse Specialist (MISA I). She has over 27 years of experience in the mental health field and has worked in corrections, child welfare, and mental health.

She is experienced in providing a variety of mental health services (psychological assessment and evaluation, bonding assessment, parental fitness and substance abuse assessment), auditing and accreditation procedures, grant writing and proposals. She is also experienced in developmental psychology and she has a great deal of expertise in the treatment of children suffering from abuse, neglect, and trauma. She is adept at coordinating and supervising services offered at residential programs in correctional and child welfare facilities including supervising clinical staff and students. She is currently in private practice and a professor at Chicago State University and University of Phoenix in Chicago.



She also conducts seminars and workshops on a variety of psychologically, spiritually and organizational related topics. She is a board member of Operation SOS, a charitable organization. She co-chairs the Substance Abuse/Violence Task Force at Chicago State University. She is a member of Ambassadors of Love and Transformational Group at Christ Universal Temple. Finally, Dr. Nazon is the chair of the Committee for the Empowerment of Youth and Families of HOHAYE.

Dr. Maryse Nazon is many things. One could say that she wears many hats. She is a psychologist, professor, expert, and mentor. To me, she is my inspiration. I met Dr. Nazon while at graduate school at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. I was taking a psychology of women's course. I remember sitting in that room waiting for the professor to come in. This was the summer of 2001. I was a little anxious, not knowing what to expect. I was also several months pregnant with Courtney and quite physically uncomfortable. But, I was eager to learn and take one more course toward my degree. Dr. Nazon walked into the room and began to introduce herself to the class. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but I felt connected to her from the beginning. Then, I quickly found out that Dr. Nazon was born in Haiti. I was so excited, as she was the first and only Haitian professor to teach in our program. I was only one of three Haitian students in the entire Doctoral program. So, meeting Dr. Nazon caused me to feel so inspired. In that class, Dr. Nazon motivated me to be my best, be continually self-reflective, and to strive for excellence.

Since then, Dr. Nazon has inspired and motivated myself and many others. I was graced and blessed to have her in my corner every step of the way. Dr. Nazon was on my dissertation committee and she worked me hard! Out of love and faith, she provoked me to only do work that reflected total excellence. That period in life was not easy. I was married with a small child and trying to complete that last stage of school. There were many times when I, personally, felt like giving up. However, Dr. Nazon always encouraged me to keep going and to never settle for anything less than the best. I did get through my dissertation and earned my Doctorate in August, 2005. I thank Dr. Nazon for being with me every step of the way.

Dr. Nazon has never turned her back from me. She continues to serve as a mentor for me and many other young people in the community. She inspires many who strive to live out their visions. While balancing a busy schedule of teaching, private practice, and conducting church workshops; Dr. Nazon still commits to engaging in services to help the community. While participating in other volunteer work, Dr. Nazon commits to being a chair of the committee for the empowerment of youth and families of HOHAYE. She

devotes time, energy, effort, skill, and mentorship to the committee and works hard to give her best. I think we can all say that we are truly grateful for her tireless work.

On behalf of Hope for Haitian American Youth and Elderly, it is my pleasure to present this year's Special Distinction Award in Psychology to my mentor, my colleague, and my friend, Dr. Maryse Nazon. We thank you for your continual work, your legacy, and your contribution. Please accept this award as a symbol of our gratitude and recognition of who you are. You inspire all!!!

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