



VINCENTIAN FAMILY HAITI INITIATIVE
INITIATIVE DE LA FAMILLE VINCENTIENNE EN HAÏTI
INICIATIVA DE LA FAMILIA VICENCIANA EN HAITÍ

April 2013 Newsletter



**Support a business to employ Haitian women
the Daughters of Charity taught to sew**

There are 120 sewing stations at the Daughters of Charity compound in Citè Soleil, Haiti, buzzing with colorful fabrics. Women who live in this ultra-poor neighborhood pay 75 cents daily for access to supplies and sewing machines so they can clothe their children and make products to sell as street vendors. Nearby, women sit on folding chairs arranged in circles performing delicate embroidery on

tablecloths, coasters and notecards.

The Daughters have been teaching Haitian women to sew and embroider for nearly 40 years. Now, the Vincentian Family Haiti Initiative (VFHI) is launching a for-profit business that creates an opportunity for the women to improve their circumstances.

The VFHI is currently [matching all donations](#) on Zafèn to help get the business up and running. The goal is to raise \$50,000.

The women will work in a clean, safe environment and receive a hot meal every day they work. The business is designed to share income with the workers and support much more than Haiti's \$5-a-day minimum wage, all while introducing the women to the professional business world.

"The women I have met in the Daughters sewing shop are highly skilled," says Regine Theodat, national director of the VFHI. "The back of their embroidery looks as beautiful as the front."

Women from the Daughters' shop will be invited to contract their services to the new business. Their first project is to embroider about 167 flags for government buildings to celebrate Haitian Flag Day. It is an order placed by three Haitian Diaspora organizations who hope to generate national pride when flags fly above small municipal buildings across the entire country, not just in Port-au-Prince.

Theodat is seeking to hire an international business development and marketing specialist to secure orders and expand the new business beyond the initial workers.

If you have a potential job for these women, such as school uniforms, hand-made products for fundraisers, embroidered linens, embellished notecards or other products, please contact Theodat at regine.theodat@gmail.com.



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ZAFÈN 3 YEARS CELEBRATION
MÈSI THANK YOU MERCI
\$1.6 MILLION RAISED • 3 YEARS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL IMPACT

IT'S OUR BUSINESS TO UNLEASH HAITI'S PROSPERITY

Zafèn, one innovative solution to Haiti's poverty, is celebrating 3 years of success

Port-au-Prince, April 5th—[Zafèn](#) is celebrating three years of entrepreneurial success and Global Crowdfunding Day. Since launching in April 2010, Zafèn has surpassed expectations by raising \$1.6 million for 300 entrepreneurs in 33 cities around the country and donating to worthy social projects. These results show the power of Haitian entrepreneurs partnering with Diaspora and friends. Zafèn is the first and only crowdfunding site with a major emphasis on supporting Haitian small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). "We came up with this idea knowing that struggling and new Haitian entrepreneurs have a hard time accessing capital and growing their businesses," said Katleen Félix, chair of the [Haitian Hometown Associations Resource Group](#).

"These results call for celebration," says Iryvne Jean-Baptiste, Zafèn's manager:

- \$1.6 million lent to 300 entrepreneurs and donated to social projects
- 33 cities in all 10 departments
- 5,000 scholarship for students
- 667 jobs created by Zafèn-supported entrepreneurs
- 83% reimbursement rate

This crowdfunding site addresses the urgent needs of Haitian entrepreneurs and of the Diaspora and friends who are looking, beyond remittances, for ways to stimulate the country's economy. The goal is for local entrepreneurs to spark job creation and economic growth.

"Zafèn is encouraging people of Haitian heritage, individuals, and organizations around the world to collectively engage in Haiti's economic expansion. They do so by choosing a project on [www.zafen.org](#) and lending as little as \$25," declared Carine Roenen, executive director of [Fonkoze](#), one of the founding partners.

"Zafèn also supports the education of children, because they are Haiti's future leaders," said Rev. Joseph Agostino, C.M., coordinator of the [Vincentian Family Haiti Initiative](#).

There is an incredible momentum to cultivate the Haitian entrepreneurial culture. Start by spreading the word about Zafèn and Haitian entrepreneurs. Let's work together and lend so we can unleash Haiti's prosperity. To lend please visit: [www.zafen.org](#).