

The Birth of Gender DynamiX: Is it a Boy? Is it a Girl?

Monday, 03 July 2006

The gender question - "is it a boy or a girl?" - immediately follows any birth. This past weekend a non-profit organisation catering to the needs of transgendered people has been formally established with the intent of addressing this question in the broadest sense.

Gender DynamiX is an organisation that works towards a world in which each person has the freedom to express their own gender - whether it corresponds to their born sex or not. Explains Robert Hamblin, Vice-Chairperson of the Management Committee: "Gender DynamiX is an organisation whose time has come - we are here to support transgendered people, and to change the way society thinks about men and women". The new NGO, which is in the process of being formally registered with the Non-Profit Directorate of the Department of Social Development, had its first Management Committee meeting this weekend in Cape Town. "We offer services to transgendered people and we will offer workshops and training to workplaces, communities, the media, NGO's and government. We will also be fighting the discrimination and violence that transgendered people face," says Liesl Theron, the organisation's founder and director. Gender DynamiX will be working hard to extend its reach to be of assistance to trans-people all over South Africa and to influence policies throughout Africa and globally. "Transgendered people's sense of self is in conflict with the gender assigned to them at birth; they are people who feel their bodies do not reflect their true sex, or who reject society's prescribed gender roles," says Dr Marlene Wasserman, member of the Management Committee.

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Management Committee members of Gender DynamiX are:

Back: Bulelwa Panda (secretary), Robert Bayer, Natalie Dominique Louw, Liam Visser (treasurer)

Front LtR: Nazmah Achmat, Liesl Theron (C.E.O.) Sally-Jean Shackleton (chairperson) Robert Adele Hamblin (vice-chairperson) Absent: Dr. Marlene Wasserman, Rene Bester, and Renisha Perigrino

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