

## Benefits of DONA International Affiliation

By *Patty Brennan, BDT(DONA), PDT(DONA)*

### Definition of “Premier”

First in position, rank or importance  
First in time, earliest

#### *Conclusion:*

*For an organization to call itself “premier” is a measurable claim rather than an assertion made from nothing.*

- ✓ **#1 Position.** DONA International is the oldest and largest (premier) professional doula training and certification organization in the world. Since 1992, DONA has set the standard for scope of practice, evidence-based training, certification and re-certification for doulas.
- ✓ **International Reputation.** DONA’s founding members—Penny Simkin, the late John Kennel, Marshall and Phyllis Klaus, and Annie Kennedy—are internationally renowned maternal-infant advocates and doula movement leaders. They have set a high bar for excellence in our profession.
- ✓ **Sustainability.** As a nonprofit organization, DONA International was never intended to generate income for the benefit of an individual or group of individuals. Any funds earned by DONA are invested in serving the needs of members and the overall mission of the organization. Under the leadership of a Board of Directors, this nonprofit is designed to be in existence “in perpetuity.”
- ✓ **Adaptability.** DONA has proven that it can and will evolve in response to member needs, an ever-changing culture of birth, and emerging market trends. There is nothing that shows the strength of an organization more than bouncing back stronger after a couple of tough years (let’s call it growing pains). Well done DONA!
- ✓ **Portability.** Through DONA International’s global marketing efforts and referral system, DONA credentials are recognized and command respect worldwide.
- ✓ **Community.** Stay current on major events and advancements in the doula profession and perinatal field through DONA International publications, conferences, webinars, social media, networking opportunities and access to leaders in the profession.

### Benefits of DONA Membership

- ✓ **Receive *International Doula*.** Members receive quarterly magazine focusing on issues related to birth and postpartum support and the doula profession.

- ✓ **Receive *eDoula*.** Members receive quarterly e-newsletter that keeps them up to date on DONA International news, doula trends and more.
- ✓ **Access *The DONA Doula Chronicles* blog.** Provides timely information, resources and inspiration.
- ✓ **Join the DONA Member Facebook group.** Provides a safe space for peer-to-peer support for both new and seasoned doulas.
- ✓ **Purchase doula liability insurance.** Guaranteed group rates for DONA members through CF&M Group Insurance.
- ✓ **Enjoy member discounts.** Attend the annual conference and webinars at discounted member rates; numerous opportunities for continuing education.

## Benefits of DONA Certification

- ✓ **Be recognized.** International recognition as a certified professional doula with the world's premier doula organization; very portable credential. Wear your DONA International "certified doula" nametag with pride!
- ✓ **Join a referral network.** DONA International has the most extensive and thorough online referral system of any doula organization. Certified doulas receive a listing in DONA's Referral Directory.
- ✓ **Command higher fees.** Doula surveys have established that (1) certified doulas make more money than uncertified doulas and (2) DONA-certified doulas command higher rates than doulas certified by other organizations. See Kim James' blog post for the details (<http://donainternational.org/2015/07/22/certification-matters-cds-and-pcds-get-higher-fees-more-clients/>).
- ✓ **Maintain high standards for the doula profession.** DONA-certified doulas agree to work within an evidence-based scope of practice that limits doulas to support practices that truly benefit and empower families while prohibiting practices that may prove harmful.

Compiled by Patty Brennan, author of *The Doula Business Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (2014) and *The Doula Business Guide Workbook* (2016). Patty is a DONA International approved birth and postpartum doula trainer. She is the owner of Center for the Childbearing Year, a childbirth education and doula training center located in Ann Arbor, Michigan ([www.center4cby.com](http://www.center4cby.com)).