

GREEN GRADUATES

The Official Newsletter of the UMB MCST Medical Cannabis Student Association



The Latest in Cannabis News

With support for cannabis being at an all time high, it is not presumptuous to expect that cannabis reform will be a hot topic with the new 118th Congress. In January, the Republican led House filed the first cannabis reform policy of the year. Introduced by West Virginia Republican, Alex Mooney, and sponsored by several other Republican members--including Congressional Cannabis Caucus co-chair, Brian Mast--the "**Second Amendment Protection Act**" would seek a federal amendment to the statute prohibiting those using cannabis from possessing or purchasing firearms. As the current law stands, by utilizing even medical cannabis, individuals are considered "unlawful users of or addicted" to a federally illegal substance, barring them from their second amendment right to bear arms. The existing conflict between state and federal law continues to perpetuate the discrimination of cannabis consumers, despite a vast majority of American citizens demanding policy change. To read more about this proposed amendment [**CLICK HERE.**](#)

UPDATE:

NEW MCSA MEETING TIME

In case you missed our email regarding our meeting times, the MCSA General meetings will no longer be held on the second Monday of the month.

Our **General Meetings** are now on the **second Thursday** of each month at **5pm PST/ 8pm EST!** All are welcome to network, discuss concerns with the program, and collaborate on how we can improve the MCSA and our overall experiences within the MCST program.

To join these meetings via Zoom,

[**CLICK HERE.**](#)

MCSA Executive Board

President: Alexandra Harris

Vice President: Brittney Naaman

First Year Vice President: Cody Funderburk

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Vice President: James Bacinski

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Director of Administration: Robert Rispoli

Director of Finance: Marijeanne Santina

ADVOCACY

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First Year Vice President: Brandon Smith

Advocacy Day Director: Krystal Selover

EDUCATION

Vice President: Emily Jacobs

First Year Vice President: Kyle Surbrook

Educational Director: Erin Walsh

NETWORKING

Vice President: Ronald Morton

First Year Vice President: Markale Kelly

Director of Networking Events: Margret Thirston

Director of MCSA Future Professions: Cento Sharp

Director of MCSA Business Owners: Shawn Williams

Director of Alumni Relations: Karen Jaynes & Shanetha Marable

Cohort 2022 Liaison: Codi Peterson

& Shanetha Marable

MEMBERSHIP

Vice President: Leah Johnson

First Year Vice President: Majeanne Nganga

Director of Leadership & Transitions:

Crystal Haynes

MARKETING

Vice President: Vincent Clancy

First Year Vice President: Victoria Grasso

Director of Social Media:

Director of Newsletter: Darcey Paulding

Director of Merchandise: Cynthia "CK" Johnson

PROGRAMMING

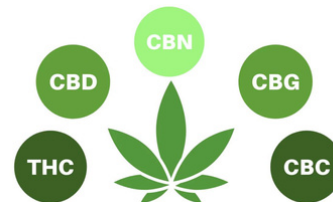
Vice President: James Schwartz

Upcoming Events

Dr. Jordan Tishler

Thursday, Jan. 16th @ 5pm PST/8pm EST

This month's event features **Dr. Jordan Tishler**, president of the Association of Cannabis Specialists, internal medicine/emergency physician, and cannabis educator and advocate. Dr. Tishler is a graduate of Harvard Medical School, having spent time working with underserved communities and patients harmed from alcohol and drug use. His passion for cannabis partially stems from never having witnessed a cannabis overdose, acting as a catalyst for his research into cannabis safety and treatment. Dr. Tishler speaks frequently on the applications of medical cannabis, with the goal of educating lawmakers, clinicians, and consumers on appropriate patient care. This virtual event is accessible to all. To join, **[CLICK HERE!](#)**



Cannabis Research

A recent study from the University of Colorado Boulder found that legal cannabis does not increase additional substance use and is not a gateway drug. The study also found no correlation between legalization and "cognitive, psychological, social, relationship, and financial problems." While this topic has been discussed for decades now, more and more data is coming out to debunk this myth. To learn more about UC Boulder's study, **[CLICK HERE.](#)**

Check Us Out on Instagram!

If you are active on Instagram and have not yet done so, please follow us! We will be posting about upcoming events and the different ways the MCSA is getting involved. To connect with us, follow **[@umb.mcsa](#)**

Check out our Jobs Board Database!

Don't forget to stay up to date on the latest jobs in the cannabis industry by accessing our database created by Cento Sharp, Director of MCSA Future Professions. **[CLICK HERE](#)**



Alumni Spotlight

Tecoya Farrakhan, PharmD., MBA, MS, CHC, & Karriem Farrakhan, PharmD., MBA, MS

By Karen Jaynes, Director of Alumni Relations

Tecoya and Karriem are our featured Spotlight alumni for February 2023. Together, they have both received their PharmD. from the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Pharmacy, and they received their MS graduating from the 2021 MCST inaugural class. In addition, they have earned their MBAs from the University of Baltimore Merrick School of Business. Tecoya has earned her CHC (Certified Functional Medicine Health Coach) Certificate from the Functional Medicine Coaching Academy, a Certificate in Plant-based Nutrition from Cornell University and Integrated Health & Wellness Coaching Certificate in Holistic Health & Wellness from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. They are entrepreneurs, business and life partners, co-founding their company, Rootimentary Wellness, LLC in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore areas. Prior to starting their own business, they have each held leadership positions in health and pharmacy organizations. Most recently, prior to Rootimentary Wellness, Tecoya was the General manager and clinical director for Curio Wellness.

What was your inspiration to join the MCST Master's Program?

Both Karriem and I were inspired to join the Cannabis Science and Therapeutics Masters Program after learning in 2015 how beneficial cannabis medicine seemed to be as an adjunct or replacement therapy for several clinical conditions plaguing our society today. Additionally, cannabis medicines seemed to also become beneficial in the treatment of various animals as well. All of this was intriguing and aligned with our personal and professional beliefs regarding the importance of appropriately integrating sound alternative medicinal therapies with traditional medicinal therapies. Cannabis therapeutics answered our desire to be able to share the “power of plants” in a number of ways. We were already advocates for incorporating plant-based lifestyle elements into the lives of our patients, as we'd already seen the power of plants when they dominate the human diet. Cannabis and other plant-based medicines have now become an important part of our continued learning and how we practice our craft as pharmacists, health coaches, and entrepreneurs.

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By Karen Jaynes, Director of Alumni Relations

While in the program, was there a pivotal moment or realization of your potential impact having this degree?

A bit. The decision to trust and join the program at our alma mater itself was a pivotal moment for us. Additionally, it broadened our ability to expand our clinical support offerings and re-brand our health and wellness company to Rootimentary Wellness, which allows us to incorporate more of our medicinal cannabis educational tools and services. With this degree, Karriem and I are able to establish ourselves as knowledgeable resources in the cannabis industry.

Since graduating, how has the MCST Graduate Studies shifted your personal and or professional focus?

Yes, please see above.

Any final supportive words for your fellow Alumni and the current MCST students?

The best guidance we would share with our fellow alumni and current MCST students is to be “present.” We would tell students to place themselves into groups, networks, and opportunities focused on their areas of focus within the industry. Being open to and considering unique opportunities to explore (outside of what were planned opportunities) is often where exponential personal and professional growth occurs.



Are you an alumnus who would like to be featured in an upcoming Spotlight?

We would love to hear your story.

Are you connected to an MCST alumnus who would be perfect for Spotlight?

Reach out to Karen Jaynes at karenjaynes@umaryland.edu