

GREEN GRADUATES

The Official Newsletter of the UMB MCST Medical Cannabis Student Association



Congratulations MCST Students!

With the spring semester coming to a close, the MCSA would like to recognize the academic accomplishments of the students in the MCST program and congratulate all on a successful year! We would also like to extend our deepest congratulations to the Class of 2023. With graduation just days away, you should be immensely proud of the hard work and dedication you have given to this program over the last 24 months. While the work we do as MCST students is challenging, the impact we will make--and have made already--in the cannabis space is monumental. The cannabis industry needs educated advocates, clinicians, pharmacists, etc. to advance cannabis policy and improve patient access. In an effort to increase participation in our Master of Science program and recruit likeminded and passionate individuals, please continue to share your experience as a MCST student with others! By increasing the number of students who matriculate through this program, the future of cannabis research, science, and education will only improve.

Stay Informed

Be sure to stay informed with all MCSA happenings by following us on instagram ([@umb.mcsa](https://www.instagram.com/umb.mcsa)), and don't forget to bookmark our Jobs Board Database, created by Director of MCSA Future Professions, Cento Sharp! To access the database, [CLICK HERE](#)

'23 GRAD PARTY!

For the '23 Cohort, there will be an afterparty held from **6pm-10pm** at the **Courtyard Gaithersburg Washingtonian Center - Rio Center**. All are welcome! Please RSVP to Brittney Naaman ASAP and include the total number of guests going: bknaaman@gmail.com
Venmo contributions of \$10/attendee are strongly encouraged: [@Brittney-Naaman](https://www.instagram.com/Brittney-Naaman)

MCSA Involvement

As the 2022-2023 academic year comes to a close, we invite all who are interested in joining the MCSA or becoming an Executive Board member to reach out via email: mcsa.umb@gmail.com

MCSA Executive Board

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Director of MCSA Business Owners: Shawn Williams

Director of Alumni Relations: Karen Jaynes & Shanetha Marable

Cohort 2022 Liaison: Codi Peterson

& Shanetha Marable

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Director of Newsletter: Darcey Paulding

Director of Merchandise: Cynthia "CK" Johnson

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Vice President: James Schwartz

A Note From the Newsletter Director,

Darcey Paulding

When the MCSA Executive Board was discussing how to increase the reach of our organization, we knew a newsletter would be an effective way to spread awareness of MCSA events, share up to date research and legislative happenings, and create a more collaborative network for our community. While the format and logistics were unclear from the start, through collaboration and hard work, I can confidently and proudly say that we created something truly impactful. The response and support we received from our monthly editions has been incredible, not only from our own program and cohort but the UMD School of Pharmacy in general. I want to personally thank you all for taking time to read our monthly issues and providing us with such positive feedback. While I would like to extend my gratitude to all Executive Board members for working tirelessly on monthly events, networking opportunities, fundraising events, and advocacy initiatives, I would like to give a special thank you to **Karen Jaynes**, Director of Alumni Relations. As you may have noticed, Karen conducted interviews with alumni each month as part of our **Spotlight Feature**, and its inclusion has given all of us insight into what life may look like after completing this program. While looking towards the future is exciting, there is no denying that it can be quite anxiety provoking. Through our Spotlight Feature, Karen and the wonderful alumnus she spoke with showed us all that the future is incredibly bright, and despite challenges that may come up, we must never forget what our "why" is: **changing the cannabis political landscape and advocating for the medicinal value of cannabis**. Thank you Karen & the entire MCSA and MCST student body for your passion and dedication!

Upcoming Events

Medical Cannabis Advocacy Academy & Hill Day
Monday 5/15 & Tuesday 5/16 at The Festival Center in
Washington D.C.

This advocacy event, hosted by Americans for Safe Access, is focused on bringing advocates together from across the country to continue the fight for increasing accessibility to medical cannabis. Beginning at **8 AM on Monday, May 15th**, this two day event will feature advocacy training workshops, giving individuals the opportunity to practice campaign messaging and advocacy strategy skills. Groups of participants will also be heading to the Hill during Hill Day, where they will be able to meet with congressional members, share their personal experiences with cannabis, and practice lobbying skills. For a detailed agenda and more information regarding how to RSVP for the event, **[CLICK HERE](#)**.

Expungement Clinic

Sept. 2023 date TBD @ The Impact Hub in
Baltimore

We are making progress on planning our Expungement Clinic! The goal of this event is to help those with cannabis charges regain their rights and clear their records of unjust cannabis related offenses. We hope to offer additional services, such as professional skill and resume building, connecting individuals to employers, digital expungement, etc. The MCSA will be collaborating with pro bono attorneys, the Maryland chapter of NORML, and Mitzi Wall from Freedom Grow to spread meaningful messages about the harms and negative impacts of cannabis prohibition. If you are interested in volunteering, contact **makenna.campbell@umaryland.edu**

University of Maryland Baltimore

Medical Cannabis Science & Therapeutics Program

Medical Cannabis Student Association

Vol. 09 Newsletter

Alumni Spotlight: Remy Alvarez, MS

By Karen Jaynes, Director of Alumni Relations

Remy Alvarez is a Marketing Manager at Trulieve, the leading female led Cannabis MSO in the U.S. Previously, Remy worked as an Outreach Director with Green Health Docs, a minority led Cannabis based MSO. She was in the first graduating class of University of Maryland Baltimore Master's in Medical Cannabis Science and Therapeutics program and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Deaf Studies from Towson University.

Remy specializes in building new cannabis markets through partnerships, education and digital and social presence. Her greatest achievement in life? Getting married on 420 to her best friend surrounded by her family.

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

My family inspired me to join the MCST Master's Program. My mother specifically encouraged me, after she noticed the impact that Medical Cannabis is making on the world. My sister and my husband were also both in the Medical Cannabis industry at the time, and they helped me realize that there is a great need for Medical Cannabis professionals, so they both motivated me to be one of the first pioneers of this program.

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

At the symposium, I noticed that there was a great representation of diversity among the students. However, there were only a couple of Latinos represented, and I was one of them.

This is not surprising at all considering how many of my fellow Latinos have been impacted by the War on Drugs. It is a huge reason why many families immigrated to the states--my family included. It was at that moment that I knew I was meant to get this degree to change perspective, to make a difference, and to encourage other Latinos who want to get into the Medical Cannabis Industry

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

I learned so much in the MCST Graduate Program, and I carry a lot of knowledge with me to this day in my position. Education has always been #1 for me personally, but I have grown to learn that encouraging and promoting education is a MUST in this industry. I have made it a priority in my life to share knowledge and help educate and mentor those around me.

Alumni Spotlight: Remy Alvarez, MS

By Karen Jaynes, Director of Alumni Relations

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

Connect, connect, connect! This program does not only offer academics, it offers lifelong relationships and partnerships

The Alumni Relations' mission is to connect and sustain alumni relationships and networking opportunities within the MCSA for current MCST students and graduates.

*Interested? We'd love to have you!
Please reach out to Karen at karenjaynes@umaryland.edu.*

Are you an alumnus who would like to be featured in an upcoming Spotlight, or are connected to an MCST alumnus who would be perfect for Spotlight? We want to hear from you!



Just a Final Note...



I am reflecting on a bittersweet moment, our final class of 2023 Newsletter.

I love the grassroots community feel of a good newsletter. Readership is free and subscribe-able for individuals looking for the most up-to-date information relevant to issues most important to them. You can say that this alumni column was that for me.

I wanted to know, like so many of you:

- *What were graduates doing with this degree?*
- *How did they merge their specialties, previous experiences, and education into a more informed medically and scientifically focused-cannabis industry?*
- *How did what they learned in the lectures offer opportunity and voice through their professions and their passions?*

Because if you haven't figured it out by now, EVERYONE in cannabis is here because they are passionate about it. Either they, or someone they care deeply about, have intersected cannabis in a way that has changed lives, for the better, by alleviating suffering, or sometimes not so better, when it meant serving time for cannabis.



Final Thoughts Continued...

By Karen Jaynes, Director of Alumni Relations

As we move forward, Class of '23, the third cohort in this pioneering program, my hope is that we proceed with awareness:

- *Awareness of our privilege to have been educated in cannabis at this degree, and to do everything we can to promote and support the education of others, in all ways, and especially in cannabis.*
- *Awareness of the legacy individuals who, over the past fifty years, navigated in the shadows of cannabis punitive policies and law enforcement operating as a scapegoat for racism in our country.*
- *Awareness of vulnerable patient populations of all ages dosing in medical cannabis and their needs regarding routes of administration, standardization, protections, and patient care from informed practitioners.*
- *Awareness of the priority of public health and safety from plant to patient, by being accountable to industry standards and responsible marketing and product labeling.*
- *Awareness that regulators and legislators are actively seeking your input as states and the federal government continue to learn, review, and reform laws and policies.*
- *Awareness of the needs for social justice reformation, equitable opportunities, and re-entry inclusions to be written into the legislations for cannabis regulation at all government levels.*
- *Awareness and patience as our nation heals from a century of highly effective, belief system stigma that programmed generations of people during the War on Drugs. We are instrumental in this relearning and it is time for us to share. We share with science and education.*

I am so proud of us. I am so proud to sit in community with the greatness that is all of you. It's been an honor to have shared these past two years getting to know you and helping you get to know those who came before us, through the Alumni Spotlight. I hope you enjoyed the series, and that the classmates of 2024 choose to continue to share alumni stories, in their own way, with all of us.

Much love and success to you all.

*Gratefully,
Karen*

