

Women Shine at MJBizCon: Cannabis Industry Leaders Honored

Women are Making Significant Strides in the Cannabis Industry, and Their Contributions Are Being Recognized on a Global Stage

In a rapidly growing industry that has historically been male-dominated, women are now leading the charge, bringing fresh perspectives, innovation, and advocacy to the cannabis sector. Last week, the 12th edition of the MJBizCon, the annual business conference for the marijuana industry, provided a platform to honor these trailblazing women. During the event, the networking session titled “Empowering Women in Cannabis” celebrated the exceptional contributions of women who have broken barriers and shaped the future of cannabis.

This gathering was not only a moment of recognition but a powerful symbol of how far the industry has come in terms of diversity and inclusion. As more women make their mark in leadership roles, their influence is being felt across various facets of the cannabis world, from policy reform to business innovation.

The Significance of Empowering Women in Cannabis

The MJBizCon’s focus on empowering women highlighted the growing presence and leadership of women within the cannabis space. As the legal cannabis market continues to expand, so does the influence of women who are making critical decisions in shaping the industry’s future. The “Empowering Women in Cannabis” event brought together influential women from all over the world, many of whom are at the forefront of significant change in the cannabis ecosystem.

Women in the cannabis industry are not just filling traditional roles—they are leading major cannabis companies, developing policy frameworks, advocating for social justice, and creating new markets. Their contributions are reshaping perceptions of the cannabis sector while driving its professionalization and mainstream acceptance.

Dasheeda Dawson: Breaking Barriers and Driving Innovation

Among the honorees was **Dasheeda Dawson**, a global cannabis advocate and award-winning business strategist. Dawson’s career is a testament to her commitment to both social justice and the cannabis industry. As the founding director of Cannabis NYC, she has played a critical role in shaping New York City’s burgeoning cannabis market. Dawson is also the co-founder of the **Comprehensive Health Equity Movement** and the founding board chair of the **Cannabis Regulators of Color Coalition (CRCC)**, a national nonprofit that supports cannabis policy and implementation for leaders of color.

Dawson’s groundbreaking work has made her a leading voice in the fight for equitable cannabis policies. She is the author of “**How to Succeed in the Cannabis Industry**,” a best-selling book that offers guidance to individuals seeking to enter the cannabis sector. Her leadership and advocacy work aim to ensure that

marginalized communities benefit from the opportunities presented by legalization, setting a high standard for equity in the cannabis industry.

Jamie Pearson: A Global Consultant and Investor

Another standout at the event was **Jamie Pearson**, a well-respected speaker, consultant, and investor based in Billings, Montana. Pearson is the founder and leader of **New Holland Group**, a global consulting firm specializing in international business development, strategy, marketing, and capital raising in the cannabis sector. With over 25 years of experience in both the U.S. and Europe, Pearson has worked with a range of clients to help them expand their cannabis operations across borders.

As an advisor to several cannabis industry entities—including **Dop Drinks**, **The Cannabis Summit**, and **Marley One**—Pearson's expertise is in high demand. She is a passionate advocate for leadership, environmental sustainability, and social governance (ESG) strategies within the cannabis industry. Pearson's work continues to inspire a global audience and paves the way for future growth in international cannabis markets.

Jeanne Sullivan: A Venture Capitalist for Cannabis Reform

Jeanne Sullivan, the Chief Investment Officer of **Arview Ventures**, is another prominent figure in the cannabis sector. As a seasoned venture capitalist and cannabis reform advocate, Sullivan has dedicated her career to mentoring entrepreneurs and advising cannabis companies on strategy and financing. Her leadership extends beyond business to activism, as she is a fierce advocate for the legalization and reform of cannabis policies across the U.S.

Sullivan's efforts in the cannabis sector have earned her recognition from **Forbes**, which named her one of the women venture capitalists changing the world. Her work in technology venture capitalism has also made her an invaluable advisor to the cannabis industry, helping companies navigate the complex financial and regulatory landscapes. In addition to her work in cannabis, Sullivan has been recognized by the **New York Hall of Science** for her contributions to inspiring women and girls in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields.

Angela Cheng: Revolutionizing Cannabis Marketing

Marketing is an essential component of the cannabis industry, and **Angela Cheng**, the global Chief Marketing Officer of **Sunderstorm**, is leading the charge in this space. Cheng oversees **Kanha**, Sunderstorm's flagship cannabis edibles brand, which has expanded rapidly since its inception in 2015. Under Cheng's leadership, Kanha has grown from a California-based product to a national and international brand with a presence in Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, and even Thailand.

With more than two decades of experience in highly regulated industries, Cheng is regarded as an authority in cannabis marketing. She has proven that it is possible to successfully market cannabis in an era of heavy regulation. Her recognition as one of **MarComms Most Influential of 2024** by **The PR Net** further cements her position as a pioneer in cannabis marketing. Cheng is the first cannabis marketer to earn this distinction, an achievement that reflects her profound impact on the industry.

Dr. Rachel Knox: A Champion for Health Equity

Lastly, **Dr. Rachel Knox** is another powerful voice in the cannabis space, known for her expertise in cannabinoid medicine and health equity. Dr. Knox is the president of the **Comprehensive Cannabis Health**

Equity Movement (CHEM) and co-founder of several initiatives aimed at promoting health equity in cannabis and psychedelic treatments. Her work in cannabis health is deeply rooted in the belief that the benefits of cannabis should be accessible to all communities, particularly those that have been disproportionately affected by the War on Drugs.

Dr. Knox is a prominent advocate for policy change and serves on several important boards, including the **Minority Cannabis Business Association** and the **Cannabis Regulators of Color Coalition**. Her research and advocacy work continue to push for changes in cannabis policy that prioritize health equity, ensuring that marginalized communities are not left behind as the industry grows.

A Bright Future for Women in Cannabis

As these women continue to break new ground in the cannabis industry, their stories serve as an inspiration to the next generation of leaders. From business executives to policy experts and health advocates, women are leading the charge in transforming the cannabis sector into a more inclusive, equitable, and innovative space. Their contributions are not only changing the cannabis industry but also driving broader societal change that will resonate for years to come.

As the cannabis industry continues to evolve, women's roles in shaping its future are becoming more pronounced. The recognition of their achievements at events like MJBizCon highlights the critical role they play in shaping the legal cannabis market and ensuring that the benefits of legalization reach all communities. The future is bright, and women are leading the way.

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