

WE WERE BUILT FOR THIS MOMENT

Drug Policy Alliance
2020 Annual Report



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WE ARE THE DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE

The Drug Policy Alliance is the leading organization in the United States working to end the war on drugs, repair its harms, and build a better approach. We envision a just society in which the use and regulation of drugs are grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights. We fight every day and at every policy level – local, state, federal, and international – to change laws, advance justice, and save lives.



2020: YEAR IN REVIEW



The U.S. House of Representatives passed the MORE Act.

Drafted by DPA, it is the first piece of comprehensive marijuana reform legislation that de-schedules marijuana – and the only one centered in reparative justice – to pass either chamber of Congress.

Thanks to years of work by formerly incarcerated leadership, student leaders, DPA, and a coalition of partners, **Congress finally lifted decades-long bans on student financial aid for people behind bars and those with drug convictions**, ending policies that were cruel and counterproductive barriers to education.

As the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, DPA:



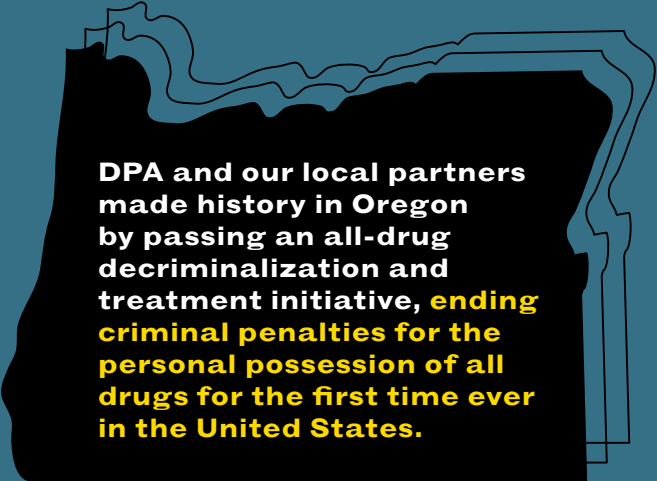
fought to make sure that **harm reduction programs** were deemed “essential services”.



advocated for **emergency funding** as the overdose crisis intensified.



demanded that policymakers **release people from jails and prisons** and stop all drug arrests.



DPA and our local partners made history in Oregon by passing an all-drug decriminalization and treatment initiative, **ending criminal penalties for the personal possession of all drugs for the first time ever in the United States.**



When people took to the streets to demand justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and all the victims of state violence, DPA worked with the Movement for Black Lives to include **drug decriminalization in the BREATHE Act, a groundbreaking racial justice bill proposal for Congress.**



91%



95%

Oregon estimates that drug possession arrests will plummet by 91% and racial disparities by 95%.



Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota **legalized marijuana** on Election Day.

1 IN 3 AMERICANS

now live in states with legal access for adult use.

WE WERE BUILT FOR THIS MOMENT

At the Drug Policy Alliance, 2020 was a year of fear and hope, but also clarity of purpose: we have always known that the war on drugs is a war on people, and we will always fight for people. This past year shone a light on that truth in ways that were sadly but entirely predictable, as injustices compound in times of crisis.

Drug policies should be about health. This year, we saw COVID-19 tear through prisons, jails, and detention centers, crowded with hundreds of thousands of people incarcerated for drugs. We also saw the pandemic fuel a major upsurge in drug overdose deaths, exposing the paucity of services for people who use drugs and the barriers – always cruel and senseless – that they face.

As long as the country's drug policies fail to prioritize health, we will fight. We will fight for decarceration paired with re-entry services, and for better access to health and harm reduction programs.

Drug policies should be about justice. This year, we saw Black lives end at the hands of police, with law enforcement and the media using victims' drug involvement as an excuse. As a mass movement for racial justice swelled, we joined our allies in the streets, calling out the racism in the criminal legal system and demanding reform.

As long as the country's drug policies fail to prioritize justice, we will fight. We will fight to decriminalize all drugs, and to reinvest law enforcement resources into services that contribute to community safety and wellbeing.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the national reckoning with systemic racism and white nationalism, and the threats to our democracy, DPA remained focused. The lifesaving reforms we have championed for decades have never made more sense. We were built for this moment.

Drug possession is the most arrested offense in the country. Since our founding, DPA has worked to eliminate criminal penalties for all drugs – not just marijuana. On Election Day in 2020, we finally made it happen, when Oregon voters approved Measure 110, our first-in-the-nation all-drug decriminalization and treatment initiative. It was a paradigm-shifting win, showcasing the power of DPA's approach.

Oregonians resoundingly chose health over punishment, inspiring advocates across the country to imagine a future where drugs are decriminalized. And Oregon is just the beginning – we are already working on similar campaigns in states from Vermont to California and even at the federal level.

At the same time, despite two out of three people supporting its legalization, one person is still arrested for marijuana in the United States nearly every minute. Every hour. Every day. We chipped away at that painful reality on Election Day, passing marijuana legalization in Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota, along with medical marijuana measures in Mississippi and South Dakota. We won every single ballot initiative

we supported this year. In 2021, all eyes are on DPA-led legalization campaigns in New York and New Mexico.

At the federal level, amidst the political chaos, the House of Representatives made history in December, voting in favor of the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act, the first comprehensive marijuana reform legislation ever approved by either chamber of Congress. DPA worked tirelessly on the MORE Act for years, collaborating with Rep. Jerry Nadler and then-Sen. Kamala Harris to draft and introduce it, and building a powerful marijuana justice coalition to advocate for its passage.



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Beyond the criminal legal system, the drug war is insidious, corrupting institutions and punishing people in every aspect of their daily lives, including education. For years, DPA fought to reinstate Pell Grants to people behind bars and to remove the “drug question” from federal financial aid forms. In the final weeks of 2020, we succeeded, as Congress repealed the law that made students ineligible for federal financial aid if they had been convicted of a drug crime, and lifted the 1994 Crime Bill ban on aid for students in prison.

This past year was a lot. Heartbreaking, inspiring, exhausting, and exhilarating. But with you fighting by our side, we prevailed.

Together, we are building the world we deserve. Together, we will realize our vision for drug policies grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights.

With gratitude and hope,
Kassandra and Derek



Kassandra Frederique
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kassandra Frederique".



Derek Hodel
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Hodel".



DRUG WAR POLICING

Police are the frontline of drug war enforcement, and criminalization enables them to target, harass, and handcuff millions of people every year – especially people who are Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, women, young, and low-income – and entangle them in the criminal legal system. For non-citizens, the consequences of drug war policing are also severe – potentially leading to mandatory detention or deportation, or making them ineligible for lawful immigration status or asylum.



**Drug possession is the
most arrested offense in
the United States, with**

ONE ARREST EVERY 23 SECONDS.

The war on drugs has fueled militarized policing, most prominently through the Department of Defense's "1033 program." Since its creation in 1990, it has resulted in the transfer of approximately \$7.2 billion in military-grade equipment to state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. This includes armored vehicles, assault rifles and other weapons, and explosives, as well as funding for special tactical teams for drug investigations.

Militarized responses to drug use prioritize brutal enforcement, criminalization, and punishment over community safety, health, and dignity. Often, jurisdictions in small towns receive equipment for which they have no rational use. This encourages a type of policing that is particularly violent, and has been shown to increase the number of police killings.

Drug War Policing in Black Communities – To End the Drug War, Black Lives Have to Matter

Time and time again, drug use and possession – whether real or perceived – serve as a justification by law enforcement to dehumanize, strip dignity from, and ultimately kill people of color. As the righteous uprisings against state violence last year made clear, Black people regularly bear the brunt of violent drug war policing.

George Floyd drew his last breaths as a police officer taunted "don't do drugs, kids" to the gathered crowd, and the press assailed his character for drug use and a prior drug arrest. Breonna Taylor was shot to death in her own bed by Louisville police who were serving a baseless warrant in a drug investigation.

DPA will continue fighting to remove drug involvement as a cover for disregarding the dignity and sanctity of human life.

These killings, and the subsequent nationwide protests, reignited debate around the role of racism and policing in the drug war, as well as in society more broadly. In the days and weeks that followed, DPA stood in solidarity with protesters taking to the street across the nation and around the globe. We led a coalition of national organizations in a letter to Congress urging an end to the Trump Administration's use of DEA resources to enforce laws that bear no relationship to drugs, particularly its plan to investigate events surrounding the protests.

In June, alongside Communities United for Police Reform, DPA helped pass the Safer New York Act, a package of bills that included several measures to address racism in policing, including practices that target people who use drugs, as well as the repeal of Section 50-A. For decades, Section 50-A had been used to hide rampant abuses by law enforcement, making New York one of the worst states in the country in terms of police secrecy and lack of transparency. Our victory was a crucial step towards ending an era of exemptions that allowed police departments to hide patterns of brutality, sexual violence, and other abuses.

DPA will continue fighting to remove drug involvement as a cover for disregarding the dignity and sanctity of human life, and we are determined to hold the involved institutions accountable.

We know the drug war did not create institutional racism in the U.S. However, it feeds and bolsters the racist structures that extinguish Black life daily. The disproportionate focus on the risks of drugs, rather than the risks of the drug war, has been a distraction from the ways in which the color of a person's skin, their perceived gender, or their socio-economic status make them a target for harassment and, far too often, death.

We refuse to stand by while another person cries out, as Eric Garner and George Floyd did, "I can't breathe," as law enforcement ends their life.

Ending the failed war on drugs is not enough to end racism, but it will disrupt a system that chips away daily at the very core of our shared humanity. We stand ready to work with our allies to do our part.

A group of people, mostly wearing face masks, are walking in a line outdoors, holding protest signs. The signs are white with black text. One sign clearly says "NO MORE OVERDOSES", another says "MORE HUMANE", and a third says "A BETTER OREGON". The background shows a brick building and trees. The overall image has a blue tint.

DECRIMINALIZING DRUG USE AND POSSESSION

Drug possession is the most arrested offense in the United States, with one person arrested every 23 seconds. An arrest, even if it doesn't result in a conviction, can lead to loss of employment, housing, parental rights, immigration status, and more. This overemphasis on criminalization distorts systems of care for people struggling with substance use disorders, contributing to an acute shortage of services for those who need and want them, and represents a vast waste of government resources.

The criminalization of drugs is a devastating form of systemic oppression.

The criminalization of drugs is a devastating form of systemic oppression: Black people in the U.S. are three times more likely to be arrested for drug use than white people, despite using drugs at the same rate – and in some places, the disparities are far greater.

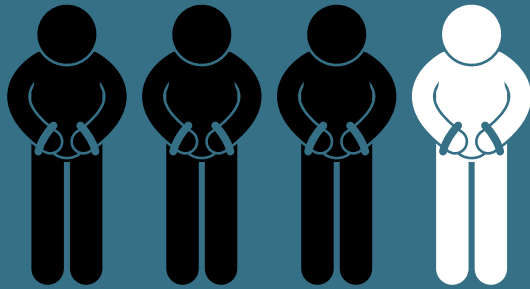
Latinx people are also disproportionately harmed by the criminal legal system, although there is a serious lack of data due to how most states report criminalization statistics. In New York City, for instance, we know that Latinx people are arrested at nearly four times the rate of white people for marijuana, even though both groups use marijuana at a similar rate. We also know that 50% of federal drug cases are brought against people classified as Hispanic, even though this group makes up just 17% of the U.S. population.

As our country reckons with police violence, drug decriminalization is a concrete and effective solution to disrupt arrests, divest from the failed system, and invest in a compassionate alternative that has the potential to save lives through access to treatment and harm reduction.

In November 2020, DPA and our partners achieved the most significant drug policy reform victory since the disastrous modern-day war on drugs began almost 50 years ago. Voters in Oregon passed Measure 110*, the Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act, which ends criminal penalties for the personal possession of all drugs, for the first time ever in the United States. The measure also substantially expands access to evidence-informed services for substance use disorder, which can include drug treatment programs, harm reduction and recovery services, and housing assistance, funded with marijuana tax revenue and savings reinvested from the criminal legal system. The measure passed on Election Day with a resounding 58.5% of the vote and a 17-point margin of victory.

Measure 110 was designed and spearheaded by Drug Policy Action, DPA's advocacy affiliate, in partnership with a broad and deep coalition of state-based allies. It was informed by years of DPA's policy and public opinion research, as well as by close consultation with local stakeholders and allies in Oregon.

*This campaign was supported by Drug Policy Action.



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ARE THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY
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THAN WHITE PEOPLE,
DESPITE USING DRUGS
AT THE SAME RATE.**

As with everywhere in the United States, criminalization has caused untold devastation in Oregon. Law enforcement made 8,700 drug possession arrests in 2017. Black people were more than twice as likely to be convicted of felony possession despite no disparity in use, while Indigenous people were convicted at five times the rate of white people. One in ten Oregonians struggles with substance use disorder, and the state ranks nearly last in the country in access to publicly funded drug treatment programs. Oregon voters rightfully viewed this as a major crisis in their state. The Measure 110 victory is a landmark declaration that it's time to stop criminalizing people for drug possession and instead shift to a health-based approach.

The pandemic, which emerged as we were collecting signatures to qualify for the ballot, only made the campaign more urgent and compelling. As we well know, incarceration is a vulnerability in the fight against COVID-19 – people in jails and prisons, and those living in surrounding areas, are at greater risk of infection due, in part, to the relentless frequency of drug arrests. Social distancing orders exacerbated already-senseless barriers to services, causing a surge in overdose deaths.

It's time to stop criminalizing people for drug possession and instead shift to a health-based approach.

Meanwhile, the uprisings against state violence amplified calls for groundbreaking legislation to disrupt the system of incarceration and policing, and invest in non-punitive alternatives.

Measure 110 is a powerful mandate to treat drug use as a health issue and not a criminal problem, and it's just the beginning. Like with marijuana legalization, DPA will work to ensure this victory sets off a cascade of other efforts across the country. We are now focusing on our national strategy to run similar ballot initiative and legislative campaigns in states from Vermont to California and even in Congress.

At the federal level, we have developed and released a proposed decriminalization framework, The Drug Policy Reform Act, the provisions of which have been included in the Movement for Black Lives' BREATHE Act. This model framework eliminates criminal penalties for possession of small amounts of controlled substances, and shifts federal resources away from futile enforcement strategies to supportive initiatives to protect public health and safety.

At the local level, many district attorneys have declined to prosecute drug possession charges during the pandemic. We are now looking to make those changes permanent, as well as advancing voter referendums or municipal resolutions to make drug possession the lowest law enforcement priority.

In December 2020, we reached another major milestone in undoing the harms of criminalization. After years of DPA working alongside advocates and formerly incarcerated people, Congress passed an omnibus spending package that included provisions to eliminate the question about prior drug convictions on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form that students must complete to obtain financial aid for higher education, and to restore Pell Grants for incarcerated students. Providing educational opportunities to the 71 million Americans with criminal convictions leads to higher incomes, reduces poverty, and improves quality of life for people who are incarcerated.

INTERVIEW: BOBBY BYRD

Bobby Byrd is a father and grandfather from Oregon who became a community organizer for Oregon Measure 110. He explains why he supports the decriminalization of all drugs:

I was arrested for possession of a small amount of cocaine in the early 90s. At the courthouse, I thought I would take a plea deal for three years of probation thinking 'okay I'll do three years of probation, pay the court costs, pay all my fines and I should be done.' But that wasn't the case. This has followed me for over two and a half decades.

I'm a grandfather. I'm a father. I love my kids. I haven't used drugs since '93. The conviction has kept me from getting housing, apartments, getting places near my kids. Now I have to travel three hours to see them.

And it has kept me from jobs. I tried to become a drug and alcohol counselor but was denied a license. I tried to become a phlebotomist, and again, I was denied a license. One time I was working as a cook at Intel. I got a promotion. I got my own little kitchen to cook breakfast. Then they did a background check and next thing you

WE NEED TO SAVE LIVES,
NOT RUIN THEM.




know I'm getting escorted out the door because of that drug charge. It didn't matter how long I had been at the company, how hard I worked, or how good I was at the job.

It makes me feel like I'm trapped, like somebody owns me or something. Before Measure 110, drug laws were the new Jim Crow, that's why Black people are consistently arrested at a higher rate even though drug use is the same rate.

Our country's approach to drugs is wrong. I hope our experience in Oregon inspires other states to stop criminalizing people and ruining lives.

I am so proud to have worked as an organizer for the Measure 110 campaign. Because we won, life will be better for generations of Oregonians. It was an honor to have been part of the team that made it happen.



MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF AN OVERDOSE CRISIS WITHIN A PANDEMIC

The overdose crisis has wrought devastation across the country for over a decade and has sadly shown signs of intensifying in 2020, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As lockdowns and social distancing guidelines were instituted, people accessing substance use disorder treatment experienced serious disruptions to care – most agencies reduced treatment hours, and restricted or ended in-person services. Harm reduction providers were similarly impacted and were forced to find innovative ways to ensure that participants would still have access to sterile syringes and other equipment, as well as life-saving naloxone.

As a result, many people who use drugs struggled with isolation, withdrawal, and a disrupted drug supply. These factors contributed to growing overdose deaths and other drug-related harms in 2020. And, as always with the drug war, these harms were – and are – felt most acutely by communities of color, low-income people, people with unstable housing, those with co-occurring mental health issues, and other groups already dealing with marginalization.

At the intersection of the pandemic and the overdose crisis, the senselessness and cruelty of the war on drugs have never been starker, and DPA's obligation to the people we serve has never been more profound.

That's why we are fighting for a comprehensive shift in priorities. Resources currently invested in policing and criminalization must instead be spent on effective education, health and harm reduction services, and treatment programs.

We want people who use drugs to have easy access to the help and the compassion that they deserve.

Expanding Access to Treatment and Harm Reduction

DPA is countering overdoses and other drug-related harms by supporting broad access to medications for addiction treatment (MAT), a critical overdose prevention measure by which people receive access to the gold standard of opioid addiction treatment – methadone and buprenorphine.

We have been developing cutting-edge policy proposals, educating legislators, and building support to remove senseless barriers to MAT access, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We saw policies that we had long advocated for – such

We want people who use drugs to have easy access to help, and the compassion that they deserve.

as expanding telehealth, increasing methadone take-home doses, and removing barriers to buprenorphine – implemented across the country. We are urging policymakers to make these reforms permanent, and to loosen restrictions even further.

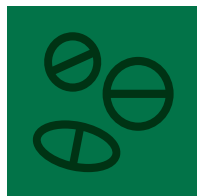
Alongside MAT, access to sterile syringes is one of the most essential components of an evidence-based approach to drug use, yet, in many states, sterile syringe access is far too limited, and people are still arrested for syringe possession. This can result in sharing or reusing of syringes – which in turn leads to increases in HIV and hepatitis C infection.

In California, we successfully campaigned to extend a syringe access program, which allows the possession of syringes for personal use and for pharmacists to provide syringes without a prescription. In New York, we have increased our pressure on Gov. Cuomo to act immediately

to decriminalize syringes, and to stop withholding harm reduction funds in the state.

We engaged with harm reduction providers around the country to gather information on how the pandemic and economic downturn were hurting their services and participants. We then organized the harm reduction community behind a public letter which called for increased funding for syringe services programs. Our advocacy efforts were successful, with Congress agreeing to boost funding for the programs by 30%.

In the nation's capital, the D.C. Council passed the Opioid Overdose Treatment and Prevention Omnibus Amendment Act of 2020. A major piece of this bill, that DPA advocated for, decriminalizes possession of drug paraphernalia for personal use and allows community-based organizations to distribute desperately needed harm reduction supplies which were previously criminalized under D.C.'s strict paraphernalia laws.



Building Power Among Allies to Prevent Overdose and Other Harms During COVID-19

In May, we launched a seven-part COVID-19 and drug policy discussion series to explore the intersection of the pandemic; the overdose epidemic; and the on-going crises in drug war policing, surveillance, and criminalization. These discussions brought together advocates and allies in the justice reform and harm reduction movements to discuss how we can sustain progress made during the pandemic, navigate obstacles, and use the current moment to be more aspirational with our policy agendas.

DPA produced and disseminated a set of COVID-19 drug policy priorities to protect public health, individual rights, and the dignity and well-being of those in our communities who are most harmed by structural inequities.

**COVID-19 and drug
policy discussion
series: by the
numbers**

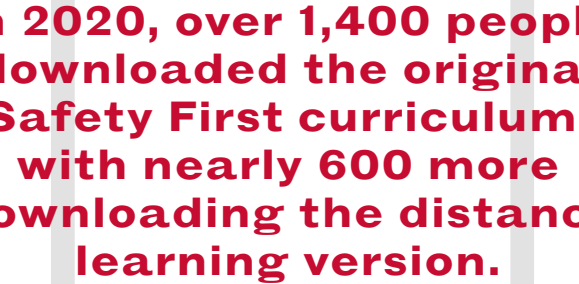
**7 webinars
34 speakers
34 organizations
986 attendees**



Reaching Teens at Home with Reality-Based Drug Education


Young people have faced unique challenges during the pandemic, dealing with many of the same stresses as their parents but without as much experience in emotional resiliency. They or their family members may be turning to alcohol or other drug use to help cope while remote work and school life became a reality.

We adapted our curriculum, Safety First: Real Drug Education for Teens, for distance learning during the pandemic. Safety First is a comprehensive tool for teachers that allows them to have honest conversations about drugs with their students, equipping them with the skills to navigate their risks. The goal of the curriculum is to empower students to make safer and healthier choices about alcohol and other drugs. It helps young people access and evaluate information, which can inform their behavior and understand the impacts of drug policies.

A light gray icon of a laptop computer, shown from a slightly elevated front angle. The screen area is white and contains the text about curriculum downloads.

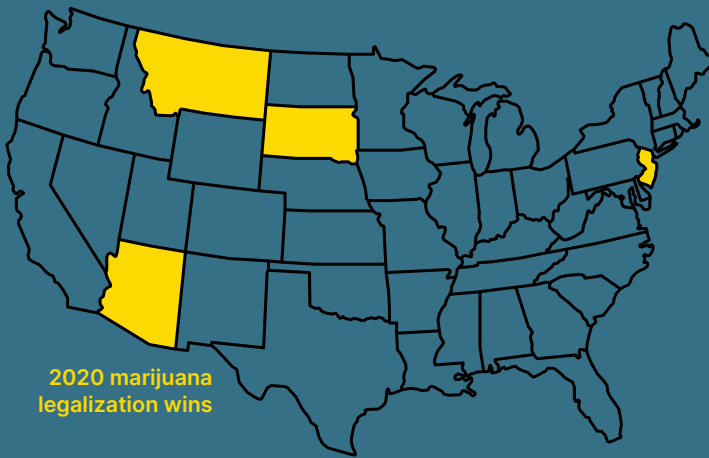
In 2020, over 1,400 people downloaded the original Safety First curriculum, with nearly 600 more downloading the distance learning version.

The newly modified curriculum is Google Classroom-compatible and allows for asynchronous online learning, containing student-directed lessons that help them identify and respond to the harms of alcohol and other drugs as well as how to manage and assess their mental health needs. We are now encouraging educators around the country to incorporate the curriculum into their online teaching, while also seeking to provide personalized support to school districts in New York City, Santa Fe, and San Francisco to train teachers.



AN EQUITABLE APPROACH TO MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

It was one of DPA's most successful years for marijuana reform, with groundbreaking victories at the state and federal level. We made history by getting legislation passed in the U.S. House of Representatives to deschedule marijuana and begin to repair the harms of its prohibition. We helped expand the number of states that have legalized marijuana to 15, and established access to medical marijuana in some of the places hardest hit by the drug war.



Driving Legalization at the State Level*

On Election Day, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota legalized marijuana for adult-use with the support of Drug Policy Action, and we applaud our allies who helped make it happen in Arizona. These victories will go a long way to undoing the harms of marijuana prohibition. In New Jersey, for example, where DPA worked for nearly 20 years, the case for legalization was particularly powerful – police there made more than 32,000 arrests a year for marijuana, the vast majority just for simple possession and disproportionately targeting people of color, at a cost of \$143 million annually.

*Campaigns in MS, MT, NJ, and SD were supported by Drug Policy Action.

On the medical marijuana front, voters in South Dakota passed a measure to create safe, regulated, and legal access for patients. Meanwhile, after a multiyear effort by Drug Policy Action and our partners, Mississippi became the second state in the Deep South to legalize medical marijuana.

With the power of these wins, there is considerable momentum behind DPA's campaigns to legalize marijuana in New York and New Mexico. Having successfully persuaded Gov. Cuomo and Gov. Lujan Grisham to endorse legalization, we are now campaigning to ensure legislative passage in both states in 2021.

Of the four states that legalized in 2020, only one is a traditionally deep blue state. It has become clear that adult-use legalization is now viable in politically conservative regions, and we expect to see the dominos continue to fall in future election cycles and legislative sessions. Moreover, after this election, there are now eight more U.S. Senators whose constituents have spoken on this issue, and politicians would do well to remember that their constituents' support for marijuana likely exceeds support for their reelection.

Federal Progress on Legalization

In December 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act (H.R. 3884). This is the first piece of comprehensive marijuana reform legislation that deschedules marijuana – and the only one centered in reparative justice – to pass either chamber of Congress.

DPA worked tirelessly to move the MORE Act forward since its inception. We worked with House Judiciary Chairman Jerry Nadler and then-Senator Kamala Harris to draft and introduce the legislation, and created the Marijuana Justice Coalition to build widespread support.

The House's passage of the MORE Act was a powerful step forward to address the shameful legacy caused by marijuana prohibition across the country. Getting to this point gives us hope, but the fight is far from over. The legislation as passed is imperfect, as it includes provisions which would potentially exclude people with prior felony marijuana convictions from fully participating in the legal marijuana marketplace. It also includes language that carves out eligibility for resentencing and expungement relief pursuant to the bill, narrowing this

relief to only nonviolent marijuana offenses and excluding individuals labeled as “kingpins” from expungement relief. DPA is committed to working with Congress to remove these exclusionary provisions and pass a bill in both the House and the Senate that more aligns with our principles. We demand more until our communities have the world they deserve.

One in three Americans now live in a state where marijuana is legal for adult use. And yet, after all these years and all our victories, the fact remains that one person is arrested nearly every minute in the United States for marijuana possession.

The criminalization of marijuana remains a cornerstone of the racist war on drugs, allowing law enforcement to disproportionately target people of color – even in states that have already legalized. For example, in Washington state, disparities between arrests of Black and white adults for selling marijuana has more than doubled since legalization.

DPA's work will not be done until no one is ever arrested for marijuana, or any other drug, and until the damages of prohibition are repaired through expungement and reinvestment in communities harmed by racially targeted policing.

A LOOK AT INTERNATIONAL DRUG POLICY

INTERVIEW: PROFESSOR ALEJANDRO MADRAZO

Alejandro Madrazo is a Drug Policy Alliance Board member, and a professor of Constitutional Law and Dean at the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics' (CIDE) Aguascalientes campus in Mexico.

What were some of the most promising international drug policy developments in 2020?

The consolidation of drug policy reform through ballot initiatives in the United States, especially the decriminalization of drug possession in Oregon, have been particularly promising. The fact that all drug policy reform initiatives passed in November, despite taking place during a highly polarized election, speaks of an emerging new consensus – which is very important given the role of the U.S. in global drug policy.

I was also excited to see international NGOs and academics – including Transform in the U.K., and Acción Técnica Social (ATS) in Colombia – produce research and guidance on how to regulate stimulant drugs, such as cocaine. I believe the future of research in this area is of crucial importance.





What are you most concerned by right now in the global drug war?

I am concerned about commercialism in Mexico's marijuana regulation model, which is in the process of being approved. The model keeps the drug war alive by creating a regulatory framework that excludes the people most affected by prohibition, while also concentrating financial benefits in large transnational companies. I also fear that that other countries may choose to replicate Mexico's model.

How should the Biden Administration shift U.S. foreign policy to better address the drug war overseas?

American foreign policy and drug war discourse have enabled horrific human rights violations abroad, and entrenched these behaviors in other countries' security apparatuses. Many allies of the U.S. – including the governments of the Philippines, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia – are killing and brutalizing people in the name of the drug war. The Biden Administration must closely monitor such developments and vocally oppose them when they occur.

How is Mexico's marijuana policy changing?

There have been many changes in Mexico's marijuana policy in recent years, although few have been substantive enough to alter the true nature of prohibition.

In 2015, the Supreme Court declared that marijuana prohibition is unconstitutional. Then, in 2017, Congress legalized marijuana for medical use. In 2020, the Senate approved marijuana regulation for personal use, and that bill is expected to be ratified by the House in Spring 2021.

However, in reality, little has improved for people affected by marijuana prohibition. The militarization of the drug war has deepened, violence has spiked again, and legal marijuana-based medicine remains expensive and its effectiveness has been artificially restricted. Despite the Supreme Court's ruling, legal access to marijuana for personal use is limited only to people privileged enough to pay for a court injunction.

The past few years have shown Mexicans legalizing is not enough – we must legalize *right*.

ADVOCACY GRANTS

**Grants made between
June 1, 2019 – May 31, 2020**

The Drug Policy Alliance's Advocacy Grants Program has been funding grassroots organizations working on drug policy reform since 2005. The program is part of DPA's goal to strengthen and grow the movement for drug policy reform.

Rapid Response Grants

Grand Forks Public Health Department
Texas Harm Reduction Alliance
Utah Harm Reduction Coalition
HandsUpUnited
Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition
Urban Survivors Union
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition
Philadelphia Drug Users' Union
VOCAL-NY
Atlanta Harm Reduction Coalition
Salvation and Social Justice
Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform
Chicago Urban League
Intercambios Puerto Rico

Promoting Policy Change

A New PATH
A New Way of Life Reentry Project
Atlanta Harm Reduction Coalition, Inc.
Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
Black Futurists Group
Brotherhood/Sister Sol, Inc.
California Society of Addiction Medicine
Center for Learning and Living
Chicago Urban League
DanceSafe
Down East AIDS Network
DRCNet Foundation
The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i
Drug Truth Network
Harm Reduction Action Center
Independent Media Institute
Institute of the Black World 21st Century
Intercambios Puerto Rico

Interfaith Movement for Humanity Integrity
Justice Strategies
LatinoJustice
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
Movement for Family Power
New York Academy of Medicine
New York State Harm Reduction Association
North Carolina Harm Reduction
Partnership for Safety and Justice
People's Harm Reduction Alliance
Protect Families First
Public Defender Association
Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference
San Francisco Drug Users Union
The Ordinary People Society
Truth Pharm
VOCAL-NY
William C. Velasquez Institute
Women with a Vision

ADVOCACY GRANTS SPOTLIGHT: MOVEMENT FOR FAMILY POWER

Movement for Family Power (MFP), co-founded by Erin Miles Cloud and Lisa Sangoi, works to end the foster system's policing and punishment of families and to create a world where the dignity and integrity of all families is valued and supported. Drug Policy Alliance has been funding MFP since 2019 – although, as MFP Co-Director Lisa Sangoi explains, her relationship with DPA goes back much further than that.



Keep
Families
Together

Lisa Sangoi
Co-Director,
Movement for
Family Power



History of Partnership

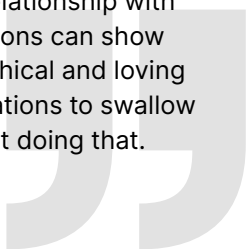
As a young activist and agitator, much of my political grounding about the drug war came from DPA. DPA's Reform Conferences helped me form a political moral compass. I learned that, if you've had substance use problems in your family, it can be very easy to buy into drug war propaganda. The process of being deprogrammed to all of it was a very liberating and informative experience. At Movement for Family Power, we see how the drug war plays out in the foster system and how it targets pregnant people and parents from marginalized communities.

Movement for Family Power was launched in 2018. When we mapped out organizations we wanted to build close relationships with, DPA was at the top of the list. We first worked together in a coalition of organizations to advance a bill in New York State to require medical care providers to seek the informed consent of pregnant people and new mothers before they or their babies are drug tested. DPA was able to provide us with funding and expertise on navigating the legislative terrain.

Our partnership continued when we co-published our 2020 report on the intersection of the child welfare and foster system and the drug war, *Whatever They Do, I'm Her Comfort, I'm Her Protector: How the Foster System Has Become Ground Zero for the US Drug War*. I had the research expertise but didn't have the communications and public relations platform to amplify the report. DPA was able to help broaden our reach.

Supportive Partners in the Movement

Movement for Family Power is a new, small, grassroots organization. The Drug Policy Alliance is a much larger and more established organization. Our relationship with DPA is a good example of how big institutions can show up and fund smaller organizations in an ethical and loving way. There's a tendency for large organizations to swallow up the work of smaller partners. DPA is not doing that.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Listed Board members serve on the Drug Policy Alliance Board, unless noted:

* serves on the Drug Policy Action Board only

** serves on the Drug Policy Alliance and Drug Policy Action Boards

Mary Travis Bassett, MD, MPH

Director, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University

Christine Downton, Treasurer**

Former Vice Chairman & Founding Partner of Pareto Partners

James E. Ferguson, II

Senior Partner, Ferguson, Stein, Chambers Law Offices, Charlotte, North Carolina

Joy Fishman

Harm Reduction Advocate

Jason Flom

President, Lava Records

Derek Hodel, Chair**

Independent Consultant

Susan Kane*

Interim General Counsel, DPA

Pamela Lichty

Founder and past President, Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i

Alejandro Madrazo

Dean, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas,
Aguascalientes, Mexico

Kenneth T. Monteiro*

Former Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel
of The Ford Foundation

Angela Pacheco

Former District Attorney, 1st Judicial District, New Mexico

Josiah Rich, MD

Professor of Medicine and Community Health,
The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Rev. Edwin Sanders, Secretary

Senior Servant, Metropolitan Interdenominational
Church; Coordinator, Religious Leaders for a More
Just and Compassionate Drug Policy

Kemba Smith

Activist and Author

George Soros

Chairman, Soros Fund Management

DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position, June 1 2019–May 31 2020

The Drug Policy Alliance is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$ 4,995,720
Investments	\$ 401,312
Accounts receivable	\$ 2,800
Grants receivable (net)	\$ 2,709,160
Prepaid expenses & other assets	\$ 71,417
Deposits	\$ 104,794
Property, equipment & leasehold improvements (net)	\$ 4,727,584

Total Assets	\$13,012,787
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$ 266,665
Due to Drug Policy Action	\$ 18,805
Accrued compensated absences	\$ 310,128
PPP loan payable	\$ 1,103,700
Mortgage payable	\$ 2,441,829

Total Liabilities	\$4,141,127
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Net Assets

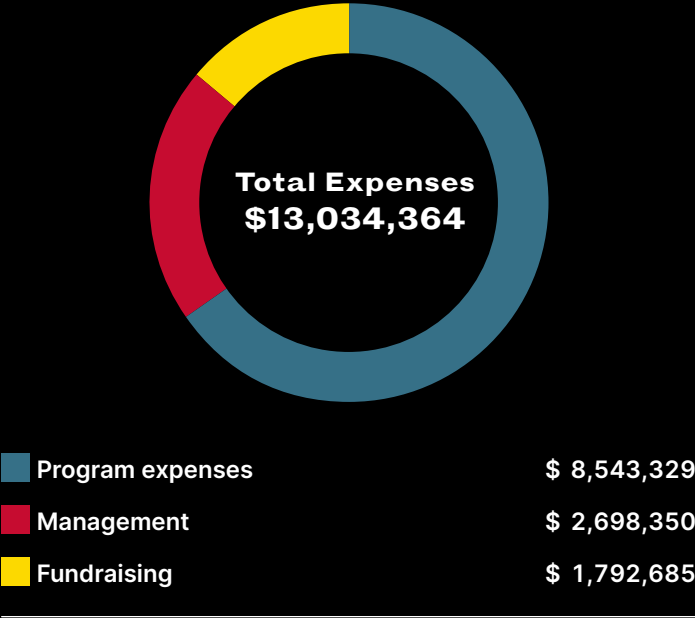
Unrestricted	\$ 5,915,617
Temporarily restricted	\$ 2,956,043

Total Net Assets	\$8,871,660
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$13,012,787
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Statement of Activities 2020

Expenses



Total Expenses **\$13,034,364**

Support & Revenue

Contributions unrestricted	\$ 16,792,070
Contributions temporarily restricted	\$(1,178,393)

Total Income **\$15,613,677**

Change in Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ 3,757,706
Temporarily restricted	\$(1,178,393)

Change in Net Assets

Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 6,292,347
Net assets, end of year	\$ 8,871,660

DRUG POLICY ACTION FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position, June 1 2019–May 31 2020

Drug Policy Action is a 501(c)(4) organization that administers ballot initiative campaigns and supports lobbying efforts.

Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$ 4,212,335
Investments	\$ 5,438,198
Due from Drug Policy Alliance	\$ 18,805
Grants receivable (net)	\$ 4,350,000
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Total Assets	\$14,019,338

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$ 31,987
Other payable	\$ 500,000

Total Liabilities	\$531,987
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Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ 8,507,798
Temporarily restricted	\$ 4,979,553

Total Net Assets	\$13,487,351
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$14,019,338
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Statement of Activities 2020

Expenses



Program expenses	\$ 12,548,195
Management	\$ 37,568
Fundraising	\$ 12,291

Total Expenses **\$12,598,684**

Support & Revenue

Contributions unrestricted	\$ 5,717,822
Contributions temporarily restricted	\$ (2,873,543)

Total Income **\$2,844,279**

Change in Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ (6,880,862)
Temporarily restricted	\$ (2,873,543)

Change in Net Assets

Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 23,241,756
Net assets, end of year	\$ 13,487,351

Drug Policy Alliance Headquarters

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Drug Policy Alliance



Drug Policy Alliance

**We are
the Drug
Policy
Alliance.**