

Ending the Drug War, Shaping the Future

Drug Policy Alliance
2019 Annual Report



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The work described herein includes that of the Drug Policy Alliance, a 501 (c)(3) organization, and Drug Policy Action, a 501 (c)(4) organization. References to "DPA" refer to the work of both organizations.



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.



DPA's supporters agree that the war on drugs is among the most disastrous policies the United States has pursued. Together we work to ensure that our nation no longer arrests, incarcerates, punishes, and otherwise harms hundreds of millions of people around the world in the name of its drug war.

Our Priorities

- Eliminating criminal penalties for possession of drugs for personal use and ending the vast array of other punishments – in both criminal and civil systems – people face for involvement with drugs.
- Building alternative approaches to drug use that further people's wellbeing and health, by providing support to those who need it and adopting practices that reduce the harms – such as death from overdose – associated with both drug use and drug prohibition.
- Ending marijuana prohibition and creating sensible regulations for adult use that protect health and public safety.
- Advancing racial justice through all our reforms and repairing the harms of decades of unequal and excessive enforcement of drug laws against communities of color and other oppressed people.

How We Work

DPA advances cutting-edge drug policy reforms in the jurisdictions that present the greatest opportunities for victory and impact, and incremental reforms in places hit hard by the war on drugs.

We build and run advocacy campaigns. We craft policy proposals, draft legislation, educate policymakers, mobilize our membership, drive institutional change, build power among grassroots activists, generate media coverage, lobby elected officials, and litigate when necessary.

While most of our efforts focus on changing public policies, we also help grow and diversify the drug policy reform movement and use communications to shift the narrative about drugs and the people who use them.

Our Impact

Drug policy reform is among the most successful social justice and freedom movements in recent decades, largely because of DPA's leadership.

We have played a pivotal role in transforming the national conversation about drug policy in the United States, and in a very short period of time moved the issue from the fringes of American politics into the mainstream, most prominently with marijuana legalization.

Since our inception, we have won multitudes of legislative reforms in dozens of states and have played a key role in more than 20 successful ballot initiative campaigns.

We have helped enact reforms that legalized marijuana for medicinal and adult use, repealed mandatory minimum

sentencing and other excessive penalties (such as the Rockefeller Drug Laws in New York), rolled back civil asset forfeiture practices, expanded access to syringes and overdose prevention measures, expunged criminal convictions, reinvested in Black and Brown communities harmed by the drug war, and so much more.

As a result of our advocacy and movement-building efforts, there are tens of thousands fewer people incarcerated, and hundreds of thousands who were not arrested or did not go to jail or prison in the first place, or who spent less time behind bars. Millions more now have access to health services, saving countless lives over the years. Today we have a vibrant and growing movement for reform across multiple intersecting fields.

Letter from the Board Chair and Executive Director

Now or Never

Ending the War on Drugs While Building the Future

The criminalization of drug possession for personal use is the foundation on which the U.S. drug war stands. Simple possession is by far the single most arrested offense in the United States, with 1.4 million arrests in 2018, entangling more people in the criminal legal system than any other offense.

At the same time, drug overdose is now the leading cause of death for people under the age of 50, creating a crisis in communities across the country, with more than 68,000 dead in 2018 alone.

This is no coincidence. These lost lives are the inevitable outcome of decades of the war on drugs, and its policies and practices that put punishment ahead of compassion and drive drug use underground.

Nor is it a coincidence that criminalization disproportionately impacts Black and Brown people, who are three times more likely to be arrested for drug possession than white people,

despite using drugs at the same rates. The war on drugs has served as an excuse for over-policing communities of color, even while it has done nothing to meaningfully achieve its stated aims of reducing the supply or use of drugs.

People who are struggling with problematic drug use need help and services, if they so choose – not handcuffs and prisons. All people, whether they use drugs or not, deserve to be treated with respect for their dignity and autonomy. The drug war must end, and given the horrifying impact of the twin crises of mass criminalization and overdose, it must end now.

Thanks to donor support, DPA is hastening the end of the drug war and starting to shape a future in which drug policy is grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights.

Right now, the centerpiece of that work involves advancing a groundbreaking 2020 ballot initiative in Oregon. The Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act would significantly expand drug treatment and health services infrastructure in Oregon using excess tax revenue from marijuana legalization, and it would eliminate criminal penalties for the possession of all drugs for personal use. The idea behind the initiative is straightforward: instead of arresting and punishing people for

drug possession, Oregon would take a truly health-based approach to drug use. The campaign has been building for well over a year and is on track to launch in early 2020. This effort builds on our successful 2014 collaboration to reform marijuana laws in that state.

We have been working toward decriminalizing possession and making it a mainstream political issue for years. Our work is now paying off. Late last year, for the first time ever on a presidential debate stage, front-running candidates spoke about the need to decriminalize the personal possession of all drugs – not just marijuana. The validation of all-drug decriminalization in such a high-profile political moment demonstrates how far – and fast – we have moved.

Beyond our cutting-edge work on decriminalizing possession, over the last year we have had multiple first-time victories.

In November, the U.S. House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee approved the MORE Act – the first comprehensive marijuana legalization bill to be approved by a congressional committee. The MORE Act would de-schedule marijuana at the federal level, expunge past criminal records, and begin to repair the harms of prohibition in the communities where it has been most viciously enforced. DPA worked closely with the bill's sponsors to shape the legislation and build bipartisan support.

In another first, in June, the House passed a bipartisan amendment to the appropriations bill that would prevent the Department of Justice from interfering in states that have legalized marijuana for adult use. Not only that, the amendment passed by a landslide 276-165 vote – the result of many years of relentless advocacy by our national affairs team in Washington, D.C.

These lost lives are the inevitable outcome of decades of the war on drugs, and its policies and practices that put punishment ahead of compassion and drive drug use underground.

DPA's federal policy efforts have not been limited to marijuana and Congress. When the Justice Department filed suit to block a local Philadelphia organization from establishing a supervised consumption site – a critical harm reduction measure in a city that has been devastated by overdose deaths – DPA mounted a major friend-of-the-court effort, coordinating legal briefs signed by more than 100 organizations. In October, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania ruled for the first time that establishing such a site would not violate the Controlled Substances Act. This victory is a powerful rebuke to the federal overreach – and if upheld, will help prevent overdose deaths and save lives.

In the same month, we rolled out Safety First, a first-of-its-kind harm reduction-based drug education curriculum aimed at providing high school students with honest, accurate, and balanced information about drugs and drug policy. The program provides teens with essential information to keep them and their friends safe.

While it is critical to continue breaking new ground, we must also help other parts of the country play catch-up. The places with the most challenging political environments often have the worst drug policies – with the most damaging consequences for the people living there.

That is why we are expanding our efforts into the hardest-hit states.

In Florida, we played a pivotal role in the 2019 passage of a bill to authorize syringe exchange programs statewide. The bill was approved unanimously by the Senate, near-unanimously by the House, and signed into law by the Republican governor, Ron DeSantis. We worked in close partnership with the IDEA Exchange, a syringe exchange in Miami for which we had previously helped secure authorization, and which has had a remarkable impact in combatting the spread of HIV/AIDS and even preventing overdose deaths.

In Mississippi, we are supporting a 2020 ballot initiative campaign to legalize medical marijuana. The measure has officially qualified for the November ballot. If it passes, it will be a remarkable step forward in one of the U.S. regions that have been hardest hit by the drug war, and may open the door for other reforms in the Deep South.

And in Missouri, we hosted more than 1,300 people for the 2019 International Drug Policy Reform Conference, in part to bolster exciting movement toward drug policy reform that we are starting to see around St. Louis and throughout the state.

These victories – and many more this past year, detailed in this report – add up to an impressive slate of wins for our movement.

But let us not forget that this work is about more than policy change. We are fighting for values and ideals essential to a just society.

Together we can build a future where people are treated with respect and compassion, where health and wellbeing are priorities, and where people are no longer punished in the name of the drug war.

**Thank you for making
this work possible.**



**Maria McFarland
Sánchez-Moreno**

Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maria McFarland'.

Derek Hodel

Board Chair

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

Ending the Criminalization of Drug Possession for Personal Use

Drug possession for personal use is the single most arrested offense in the United States. There were almost 1.7 million arrests for drug law violations in the U.S. in 2018, of which over 1.4 million were for simple possession offenses only.

Hundreds of thousands of people endure incarceration for drug possession and other low-level drug offenses, and face multiple consequences from those convictions, including barriers to employment, housing, and education.

The criminalization of drug possession drives drug use underground and discourages people from seeking drug treatment and other services, which in turn fuels rates of addiction and overdose. It also increases prison, jail, and law enforcement costs. The ripple effects harm entire communities, disproportionately impacting people of color. Black and Brown people in the U.S. are three times as likely as white people to be arrested for drug possession for personal use, despite using drugs at a similar rate.

Decriminalizing the possession of drugs for personal use prioritizes health and safety over punishment, reduces the stigma around drug use, encourages people to seek support, and saves money and resources.

In close partnership, DPA and local allies in Oregon are working on a groundbreaking ballot initiative that is based on best policies from around the country and the world, and tailored specifically to Oregon. If passed, this initiative will establish a more humane, equitable, and effective approach to drugs.

DPA has stepped up its advocacy for drug decriminalization in recent years. In 2017, we published a report offering a roadmap for how to decriminalize drug use and possession in the U.S., informed by a comprehensive review of domestic and international policy and literature. In 2018, we led a delegation of 70 U.S. advocates representing more than 35 advocacy and community organizations to Portugal, which decriminalized drug possession in 2001; the delegation overwhelmingly felt that it was transformative to learn about a national drug policy firmly founded on respecting the dignity and well-being of people who use drugs.

The Oregon ballot initiative marks the beginning of our strategy to build power and momentum to advance innovative approaches across the country. Victory would show the rest of the country that a new approach to drugs is feasible, safe, and smart.

Countering the Drug War's Harms Beyond the Criminal Legal System

In addition to possible incarceration, arrests for drug law violations create barriers to accessing housing, education, and employment that systematically oppress entire populations.

But the drug war also punishes people who have never been arrested, in insidious ways that shape multiple systems. We are now finalizing a major report on the ways in which drug use is used as a justification for punishing people, particularly in Black and Brown communities, in many cases even absent an arrest.

As part of our effort to eliminate some of these harms, DPA helped found the Unlock Higher Ed Coalition, a national group of organizations fighting to increase educational access for people with criminal convictions and centers people directly impacted by these educational barriers in advocacy efforts. The coalition is advancing legislation that would 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, as well as restore Pell Grants for incarcerated students.

Another great example of this type of work is in New York City, where, following years of advocacy by DPA and our allies, the NYC Council passed two vital resolutions in 2019: one that prevents children from being taken from their families based on their guardians' marijuana possession or use, and another that establishes fair regulations for hospitals on drug testing people who are pregnant or giving birth – including informing patients of their rights before any discussion of drug use or drug testing.

Challenging Harsh Sentencing

In December, DPA released a groundbreaking report making the case for rethinking the way the United States responds to the “drug dealer.” Beyond being merely ineffective, the harsh criminalization of supply-side drug market activity actually makes drug use more dangerous, increasing overdose deaths and leading to more violence in communities.

We are also countering policy proposals that seek to escalate the war on drugs. The administration of President Donald Trump is seizing the overdose crisis to stoke fear and xenophobia, and to propose a range of destructive policies – including increased mandatory minimums and harsh sentencing, deportations, and even the death penalty for drug offenses. DPA is spearheading the Washington, D.C. advocacy community's push against the government's increasingly regressive approach.

Responding to the Devastating Overdose Crisis

There were more than 68,000 overdose deaths in the United States in 2018.

To combat this crisis, DPA is leading the charge to introduce evidence-based, health-centered policies that reduce the harms associated with both problematic drug use and drug prohibition. The reforms that we are championing will save lives.

Opening Supervised Consumption Sites

Over the past year, we have ramped up our campaign to establish supervised consumption sites, also called overdose prevention centers. These sites are a low-threshold intervention that allow people to use pre-obtained drugs in safer environments, with sterile equipment and drug checking supplies, and in the presence of trained staff or peers who can prevent a fatal overdose and help connect participants to services. Nobody has ever died in any of the hundreds of supervised consumption sites currently operating around the world, and thousands have been saved from overdose, HIV and hepatitis infection, and other blood-borne illnesses.

The current administration has vehemently opposed supervised consumption sites and, in early 2019, the Department of Justice sued Safehouse, a community-based organization attempting to open such a site in Philadelphia. However, after DPA helped coordinate the submission of over a dozen amicus briefs in support of Safehouse, the federal judge on the case ruled that the proposed site would not violate federal law. This was a breakthrough in the pursuit of harm reduction access, and a rebuke of the Trump administration's ideological agenda of stigma and punishment. We have drafted and helped introduce bills in nine states that would authorize supervised consumption sites and have made significant progress in California and New York. We are also developing a strategy at the national level to prevent federal interference with states' establishment of these facilities.

Expanding Access to Treatment for Incarcerated People

Incarceration has a devastating impact on the overdose crisis. Research suggests that people recently incarcerated without access to evidence-based treatment may be at a 40-times greater risk of dying from an opioid overdose upon release.

DPA is fighting for incarcerated people to have access to the two medications that are the gold standard of opioid use disorder treatment – methadone and buprenorphine. Without access to these medications, many incarcerated people are inhumanely forced into withdrawal, and have a higher risk for overdose. DPA believes that access to this treatment is an essential right and that it must be universal.

In June, following a successful lobbying campaign organized by DPA, the New York legislature passed a groundbreaking bill that would have ensured all people under Medicaid qualified to receive medications to treat opioid addiction. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, however, vetoed it. We are now demanding that every prison and jail in the state provide access to these crucial medications; a bill that would require this has already passed the state Senate.

Widening Access to Life-Saving Syringe Programs

Syringe access programs are proven to significantly reduce

rates of overdose deaths and preventable diseases like HIV and hepatitis C. They also connect participants to treatment and healthcare services. Shamefully, many states still prohibit these life-saving programs.

In June, Florida became the 22nd jurisdiction in the country to authorize syringe access programs across the state. This was the result of a major campaign mounted by DPA and our partner, IDEA Exchange, a successful syringe access program in Miami whose naloxone distribution efforts helped cut opioid overdose deaths in Miami by one-third in 2018 (in fact, DPA worked to get Florida to authorize IDEA Exchange in 2016). With more syringe access programs opening across Florida, more lives will be saved in coming years.

Redirecting Resources to Public Health

While we pursue state and federal divestment from criminalization efforts, we are fighting for these resources to be reallocated to approaches that undo the harms of drug prohibition. DPA worked with Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) on an amendment to reduce funding for the Drug Enforcement Administration and reallocate the money to a public health program. The amendment successfully passed the House of Representatives, and Ocasio-Cortez gave a shout-out to DPA on the House floor for our work on the issue.

Interview: Hansel Tookes M.D., M.P.H., Harm Reductionist

Harm reductionist Hansel Tookes M.D., M.P.H., with support from DPA, led the campaign to pass the Infectious Disease Elimination Act in Florida, which authorizes syringe exchange programs across the state.



How do you explain harm reduction to people who aren't familiar with the term?

Harm reduction is about meeting people where they are – whether they use drugs, experience homelessness, or live with HIV – to give them the tools to help themselves and their community. I didn't save any of the thousands of lives that have been saved in South Florida. That was people in the community saving each other's lives.

Why is it critical to focus on harm reduction in the South?

Most new HIV infections in our country take place in the South, but we're denying the majority of the region basic public health measures. We know providing sterile syringes can decrease the HIV rate by 80 percent, so if we withhold this service from vulnerable people, it says we do not value their lives.

What other benefits have you seen from the program's expansion?

For decades, there was no mechanism for people experiencing homelessness and who use drugs to get into any sort of care in Miami. Now they can access sterile syringes and naloxone, see a doctor, and receive HIV testing. They are treated with dignity and respect by people who want to work with them.

What do you see as the value that DPA added to the whole process?

DPA was instrumental in complex political maneuvering in Tallahassee – helping with the overall strategy and with drafting the bill language. DPA also invested in lobbying power in the capital and helped us strategize and troubleshoot to keep the bill advancing.

Safety First: A Reality-Based Approach to Teens and Drugs

14 | It is essential for young people to have access to accurate, evidence-based drug education resources. That is why DPA has launched Safety First – a first-of-its-kind harm reduction-based drug education curriculum aimed at providing high school students with honest, accurate, and balanced information about drugs and drug policy.

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.

Unlike failed abstinence-only programs like D.A.R.E., Safety First is based on the philosophy of harm reduction. While the curriculum foregrounds abstinence as the safest possible choice for young people to make regarding substance use, Safety First goes beyond that – by providing teens with essential information to keep themselves and their friends safe if and when they do encounter alcohol or other drugs.

DPA piloted the Safety First curriculum across six schools in California and New York, and received strong positive feedback from both students and teachers in subsequent evaluations. Now that we have refined and launched the curriculum, we intend to partner with public schools to roll out the program.

Interview: Joseph Rubin, Health Teacher

Joseph Rubin taught the Safety First curriculum as part of its pilot program in the San Francisco Unified School District.

How do you feel about the drug education curricula that you've taught in the past?

The guidance previously offered to us has basically been an abstinence-only approach. It was suggesting you don't need to teach people any facts about drugs as long as you tell them not to use drugs.

How do the old materials you were using compare to using Safety First in your classroom?

Safety First is mind-expanding. As a non-drug user, I don't have much knowledge about drugs, but Safety First gave me all kinds of guidance to share with students that made them feel empowered, that made them feel like they could not only help themselves but help other people. I really loved the fact that we look at our young people not as problems to be solved, but as potential heroes.



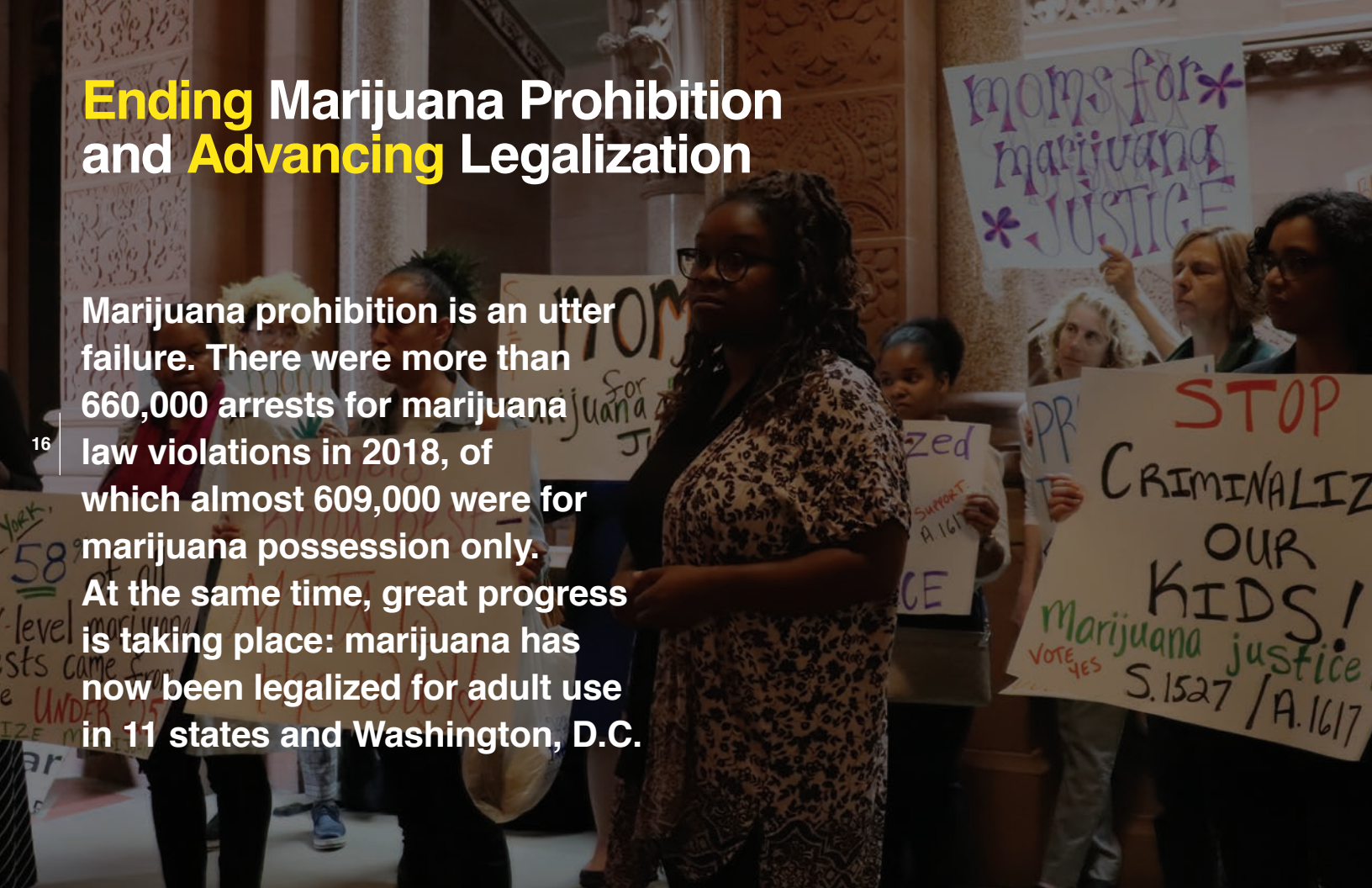
Often in the past, students would be afraid to come forward and talk about issues with either their own or family drug use, but Safety First was nonjudgmental and really opened the conversation. It made us able to process these issues together.

Do you feel like adults are ready to change the way that we educate young people about drugs and drug use?

Ready or not, we have to be there for the students. There's a crisis in this country. There are people dying of overdoses and misinformation is not helping. We need to be able to have that conversation. And if it's painful, it's painful. I don't care – we have to do it. As a health teacher, I believe that it's the things that you don't talk about that have the potential to harm you. If you can talk about it, you take power over it.

Ending Marijuana Prohibition and Advancing Legalization

Marijuana prohibition is an utter failure. There were more than 660,000 arrests for marijuana law violations in 2018, of which almost 609,000 were for marijuana possession only. At the same time, great progress is taking place: marijuana has now been legalized for adult use in 11 states and Washington, D.C.



DPA is at the forefront of the movement to legalize marijuana nationwide. We are currently leading legalization campaigns in New York and New Mexico, with bills that include a range of provisions to repair the harms of decades of prohibition and unequal enforcement.

Only two years ago, Gov. Andrew Cuomo was firmly against marijuana legalization. DPA's multiyear campaign played a pivotal role in moving him into the support column and making legalization a key issue in the 2019 legislative session. In June, after a major surge in our campaign that brought the issue back from the dead, we came within days, if not hours, of victory.

While we did not achieve our ultimate goal – creating a responsible legal market for adult use and righting the wrongs of the decades of unequal enforcement – we made sure that the

critical incremental reform that was passed codified record expungement for the first time in the state's history, which will impact upward of 500,000 New Yorkers arrested for low-level marijuana possession. We also moved groundbreaking legislation through the New York City Council to ban marijuana drug testing in the job hiring process and remove marijuana as a reason to revoke probation – local laws that will have national reverberations.

DPA also made significant progress in New Mexico. The state's House of Representatives approved a bill that would have legalized marijuana for adult use, but it stalled in the Senate. But, with a resounding majority, the legislature went on to pass a bill that decriminalized the first-time possession of up to half an ounce of marijuana, and all drug paraphernalia. After the session, New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham

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established the Legalization Task Force and appointed DPA's NM State Director to it. In October, the Task Force published recommendations, including expunging marijuana possession convictions, allowing people with previous drug convictions to participate in the marijuana industry, and dedicating revenue to helping communities and small businesses access capital needed to start and grow businesses.

In Mississippi, DPA is supporting a 2020 ballot initiative to legalize access to medical marijuana, an important step forward in a region where people still receive harsh sentences for simple marijuana possession. In November, activists had collected enough signatures to qualify the initiative to appear on the 2020 ballot.

Influencing Federal Legislation

In November, the House Judiciary Committee voted to approve the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act (MORE Act). The Act would both deschedule marijuana and take critical steps towards repairing harms caused by marijuana prohibition, including:

- Preventing the government from denying an individual federal benefits, student financial aid, or security clearances needed to obtain government jobs because of marijuana use.
- Providing an opportunity for those convicted under marijuana laws to petition for resentencing and expungement.
- Protecting noncitizens that are at risk of deportation or citizenship denial based on a simple marijuana infraction or use.

In addition, the MORE Act establishes an Opportunity Trust Fund that would provide monies toward reparative and social good measures, including:

- Providing grants to communities negatively impacted by the drug war for the development of record expungement processes, employment programs, reentry guidance, youth resources, and more.
- Creating more access to substance misuse treatment.
- Encouraging socially and economically disadvantaged people to enter the marijuana industry.
- Incentivizing states to establish equitable licensing programs that benefit communities most impacted by prohibition.

The MORE Act is the first piece of comprehensive marijuana legislation to ever make it out of a congressional committee, and is set to be the first to ever receive a floor vote.

We also made history this year when the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the Blumenauer-McClintock-Norton amendment, which would have prevented the Department of Justice from interfering in states that have legalized marijuana for adult use. This had been decades in the making, with DPA leading the charge, and was the first time marijuana legalization had been affirmed in Congress. While the amendment was not approved by the Senate, we are now working on several other bills in Congress to end prohibition in a just and equitable way. Until the federal prohibition on marijuana falls, we are committed to blocking federal interference with state's marijuana policies.

For decades, low-income communities and people of color have borne the brunt of over-enforcement of failed marijuana laws and the life-long collateral consequences that follow a marijuana arrest.

Queen Adesuyi: Building a Coalition for MORE

Queen Adesuyi, Policy Manager in DPA's Office of National Affairs, has worked to build the Marijuana Justice Coalition, a broad coalition of 13 national groups that have joined forces to advocate for federal marijuana reform through a racial justice lens.



The coalition has its origins in the fall of 2018, and includes the ACLU, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Center for American Progress, Human Rights Watch, and others, alongside DPA.

"A new Congress created viable opportunities to pass marijuana legislation," Queen said. "But we needed to broaden our allies in this space to see meaningful reforms."

A conviction for simple marijuana possession can cause lifelong barriers to employment, housing, federal financial aid, nutritional assistance, voting, and even a valid driver's license in some states. It can also create harsh immigration-related consequences for non-citizens. Black and Brown people are disproportionately impacted, being four times more likely to be arrested for possession of marijuana than white people despite equal rates of consumption.

“The war on marijuana has actually been a war on the poor, a war on the homeless, on veterans, on noncitizens, on children, on seniors. It’s been a war on public health,” Queen stated.

“The engine that is marijuana prohibition affects individuals and communities so comprehensively. It seriously complicates stability and access to resources for the most vulnerable amongst us, even if you don’t know it. We needed a coalition of advocates working across economic, social, and criminal justice issues at the table to reflect this reality.”

In July, the Marijuana Justice Coalition released a set of shared principles to guide the fight for reform. They called on Congress to deschedule marijuana, create criminal justice reform provisions like expungement and resentencing, eliminate barriers in access to public benefits, and end other collateral consequences related to an individual’s marijuana use or previous arrest or conviction. They also called for an end to drug testing for public benefits or as a reason for separating children from their families, and to ensure that marijuana tax revenue be directed to communities most impacted by the war on drugs. The House Judiciary Committee went on to hold a historic hearing on the impact of marijuana laws on racial justice, and the need for reform. DPA worked with officials to ensure the hearing took place, and assisted witnesses in preparing their testimonies.

Later that month, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler (D-NY) and Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA) introduced the bipartisan MORE Act, along with various cosponsors, including Representative Matt Gaetz (R-FL). This goes even further than previous bills and echoes the set of principles for federal marijuana reform that DPA and other members of the Marijuana Justice Coalition developed, focused on racial justice and reinvesting in the communities most harmed by prohibition.

“We’ve been able to shape the bill since its inception,” Queen continued. “We are proud of the ways that our commitment to marijuana justice have manifested in the historic movement of a bill that both ends federal marijuana prohibition and reverses its most egregious consequences.”

“For decades, low-income communities and people of color have borne the brunt of over-enforcement of failed marijuana laws and the life-long collateral consequences that follow a marijuana arrest,” said Queen.

“While we won’t be able to repair that destruction overnight, the MORE Act ends prohibition in a fair and just way that begins to give back to those most affected.”

Opposing the Global Drug War, Championing Reform Abroad

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For decades, the United States has poured billions of dollars into policies designed to stem the supply of drugs from abroad, including through eradicating crops, interdicting drug shipments, and arming and training foreign military and police forces. The consequences have been devastating, with security forces criminalizing and killing countless people in the name of the drug war, even as the illegal drug trade – made possible by prohibition – fuels violence, corruption, and despair in multiple countries around the world.

Today, the United States is doubling down on the global drug war:

- President Trump has praised the governments of the Philippines, where President Rodrigo Duterte has overseen a brutal drug war campaign that has resulted in more than 12,000 extrajudicial killings, and Brazil, where police killings of alleged offenders are skyrocketing under President Jair Bolsonaro.
- The Colombian government has expressed interest in restarting the aerial spraying of coca crops – with chemicals that the World Health Organization categorized as carcinogens – following pressure from the Trump administration.
- President Trump has called for an intensification of the drug war in Mexico – despite over 200,000 people being killed in the country's drug war since 2006. These harsh drug policies contribute to regional instability and a refugee crisis as people

flee drug war-related violence – often to find that U.S. officials perversely label them drug traffickers.

As the leading organization in the United States working to end the war on drugs, we play a pivotal role in educating U.S. policymakers and the public about the harms of these approaches, and pressing for alternatives.

At the same time, we are highlighting effective models from abroad, including Portugal and other countries that have decriminalized possession of drugs for personal use. One example is in Vancouver, Canada – the site of North America's first supervised consumption site – where the city council is calling on the government and health professionals to allow for a safe supply of opioid drugs to reduce deaths from unregulated drug use. This call has been endorsed by the Vancouver Police Department, including Inspector Bill Spearn, whom DPA honored for his work at the International Drug Policy Reform Conference.

Where useful, we are continuing to provide advice and support to reform efforts beyond US borders, and are monitoring progress in Mexico, where legislators are exploring models of marijuana regulation that could be introduced as soon as April 2020.

DPA Hosts the World's Largest Convening of Drug Policy Reformers

In November 2019, DPA hosted the biennial International Drug Policy Reform Conference, the premier gathering of the reform movement, in St. Louis, Missouri. The event attracted nearly 1,300 people representing 50 countries, all eager to listen, learn, and strategize about local, state, national, and international drug policy issues.

24 | We chose to host the conference in St. Louis in part because Missouri is one of the states that the overdose crisis has hit worst. There were an estimated 1,635 overdose deaths in the state in 2018, an increase of around 16% from the previous year. The Greater St. Louis metropolitan area has also become a focal point of racial injustice and excessive policing – particularly after the fatal shooting of Michael Brown by a Ferguson police officer, and the protests that followed. We were thrilled to work with three extraordinary St. Louis-based organizations – Ava's Grace Scholarship Program, Hands Up United, and the Missouri Network for Opiate Reform and Recovery – to not only strategically engage the community in and around St. Louis with the Reform Conference, but to also further the impact of our work at a local and regional level.

We were delighted to honor several stalwarts of drug policy reform for their exceptional accomplishments in our movement. Recipients included Deon Haywood, human rights defender and executive director of Women With a Vision in New Orleans; Marsha Rosenbaum, DPA's California director emerita and founder of the Safety First drug education program; and the Nightcrawlers, a group of courageous nightshift journalists covering the Philippines war on drugs. To further highlight support for those working to expose the devastation caused by the drug war in the Philippines, a conference gathering took place under cultural collective RESBAK's iconic "Stop the Killings" banner in a united show of support.

The Reform Conference was a huge success. Our movement is stronger than ever because of the 1,300 reformers who joined us in St. Louis. We look forward to building upon the innovative ideas discussed over the three days of the conference – about supervised consumption sites, all-drug decriminalization, models of regulation, people who sell drugs, tobacco harm reduction, and vaping – and to continue our work to end the war on drugs with fresh energy.

Advocacy Grants

DPA's Advocacy Grants Program builds the national movement for drug policy reform and advances policy change at the local, state, and national levels by strategically funding smaller, geographically limited, or single-issue projects. Funded annually at a level of roughly \$1.2 million, the program raises awareness and promotes policy change through two vehicles: the Special Opportunities Program and the Promoting Policy Change Program.

Special Opportunities Program

A New Way of Life Reentry Project
Capitol Area Reentry Program
Chicago Recovery Alliance
Council for Court Excellence
Global Exchange
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership
New York Harm Reduction Educators
Orange County Needle Exchange Program
Project Inform
Rice University's Baker Institute for
Public Policy
Salvation and Social Justice
San Francisco Drug Users Union
Southern Colorado Harm Reduction
Association
Suncoast Harm Reduction Project
The Black Futurists Group
The Center for HIV Law & Policy

The Influence Foundation, Inc.
Urban Survivors Union
Women Make Movies

Promoting Policy Change Program

A New PATH
A New Way of Life Reentry Project
Atlanta Harm Reduction Coalition
Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
Brotherhood/Sister Sol, Inc.
California Society of Addiction Medicine
Center for Learning and Living
Chicago Urban League
Colorado Criminal Justice Coalition
Down East AIDS Network
DRCNet Foundation
The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i
Drug Truth Network
Harm Reduction Action Center
Independent Media Institute Alternet

Institute of the Black World 21st Century
Intercambios Puerto Rico
Interfaith Movement for Humanity Integrity
Justice Strategies
LatinoJustice
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
New York Academy of Medicine
New York Harm Reduction Educators
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:
The Prodigal Child Project
Truth Pharm
VOCAL-NY
William C. Velasquez Institute

Advocacy Grants Spotlight: Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity

Through our Grants and Partnerships program, we have invested enormously in supporting grassroots activists across the United States, in ways that have lasting impact. For example, we were among the first funders to support the leadership of formerly incarcerated people, who in turn are now on the front lines of the fight for criminal justice and drug policy reform and ending felony disenfranchisement.

Longtime DPA partner Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity works at the intersection of spirituality and social justice, to mobilize congregations to take a stand on issues like immigration and mass incarceration. Through the Promoting Policy Change grants programs, DPA has provided more than \$60,000 since 2017 in support of the organization's work to engage people of faith, including those formerly incarcerated, to develop their own leadership to stand up against the racism and discrimination that permeate the drug war.



Rev. Deborah Lee, Executive Director of Interfaith, and Rev. Larry Foy, an organizer for their Justice Not Jails program, share the significance of their partnership with DPA:

Partners in a Movement

Our relationship with DPA is deeper than funding. It's a conversation. DPA provides us with resources and expertise to build our capacity and helps us network with organizations doing similar work across the country. We are also included in their planning and strategy for campaigns like Prop 47 and other policy campaigns. It's helpful to be a part of a larger movement and know that our wisdom and experience are being valued.

Building Capacity for Social Change

DPA's support for capacity building has been especially important. The faith-based community is an integral part of the movement to address the harms that have been done through the criminalization of drug use, and of people of color overall. With DPA's help, we have built a strong local organizing base and developed long-term community support to advocate for reforms to the criminal legal system, such as bail reform and the realignment of law enforcement priorities to reinvest in effective re-entry programs.

Significant Victories and More to Come

Our Justice Not Jails project seeks to dismantle the system of mass incarceration and criminalization in Los Angeles County, home to the world's largest jail system. Justice Not Jails could have been a flash in a pan, but DPA enabled us to create space to think larger and longer term about what the LA County criminal justice system should look like. Since then we have successfully prevented any new jail construction in LA County. We are now focusing on Measure R, which would grant a civilian oversight committee subpoena power to investigate criminal justice complaints and create non-carceral solutions to address mental health and homelessness.



Rev. Deborah Lee



Rev. Larry Foy

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Drug Policy Alliance Financials

Statement of Financial Position, June 1 2018–May 31 2019

Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$ 94,894
Investments	\$ 383,181
Accounts receivable	\$ 17,472
Grants receivable (net)	\$ 3,629,846
Prepaid expenses & other assets	\$ 86,172
Deposits	\$ 111,700
Property, equipment & leasehold improvements (net)	\$ 4,947,801

Total Assets	\$9,271,066
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$ 146,437
Accrued compensated absences	\$ 295,294
Mortgage payable	\$ 2,536,988

Total Liabilities	\$2,978,719
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Net Assets

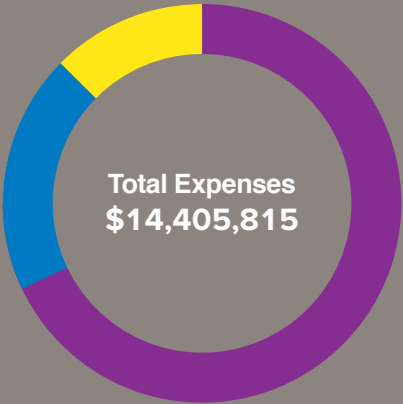
Unrestricted	\$ 2,157,911
Temporarily restricted	\$ 4,134,436

Total Net Assets	\$6,292,347
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$9,271,066
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Statement of Activities 2019

Expenses



Program expenses	\$ 9,786,179
Management	\$ 2,813,723
Fundraising	\$ 1,805,913

Total Expenses **\$14,405,815**

Support & Revenue

Contributions unrestricted	\$ 13,965,242
Contributions temporarily restricted	\$ (715,556)

Total Income **\$ 13,249,686**

Change in Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ 12,104,191
Temporarily restricted	\$ (647,153)

Change in Net Assets

Net assets, beginning of year	\$ (5,164,691)
Net assets, end of year	\$ 6,292,347

Drug Policy **Action** Financials

Statement of Financial Position, June 1 2018–May 31 2019

Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$ 8,844,800
Investments	\$ 6,661,332
Grants receivable (net)	\$ 7,753,096

Total Assets	\$23,259,228
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$ 17,472
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Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ 15,388,660
Temporarily restricted	\$ 7,853,096

Total Net Assets	\$23,241,756
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$23,259,228
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Several Drug Policy Alliance and Drug Policy Action donors have made multi-year pledges to these organizations. These unfulfilled pledges are projected future revenue that will be received within one to nine years and does not constitute an endowment. These donor commitments reflect a strong current and future financial outlook for the Drug Policy Alliance and Drug Policy Action.

Statement of Activities 2019

Expenses



Program expenses	\$ 6,736,880
Management	\$ 240,083
Fundraising	\$ 2,311

Total Expenses \$6,979,274

Support & Revenue

Contributions unrestricted	\$ 4,269,254
Contributions temporarily restricted	\$ (2,245,399)

Total Income \$2,023,855

Change in Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$ (2,710,020)
Temporarily restricted	\$ (2,245,399)

Change in Net Assets

Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 28,197,175
Net assets, end of year	\$ 23,241,756



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Drug Policy Alliance



Drug Policy Alliance

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Alliance.