

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Cannabis Industry



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MJBizDaily/Emerald photo

Cover illustration by Digital Storm/stock.adobe.com

# AUTHORS

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Chris is an award-winning journalist and editor based in Los Angeles. As technology editor of the Orange County Business Journal, he profiled some of the most influential executives and companies in the world.

Before moving to California, he served as a reporter at the Phoenix Business Journal. His newspaper career began in Chicago, where he covered everything from wrongful convictions to the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

He earned a master's degree from Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass

Communication, where he also served as an adjunct professor.

## ANDREW LONG, DATA ANALYST

Andrew is a data journalist based in Mesa, Arizona. He previously worked as a news artist at the Arizona Republic, where he developed informational graphics for the newspaper's front-page team.

During that time, he was an adjunct professor at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

In 2012, Andrew co-founded the Arizona Center for Investigative Reporting.

# INTRODUCTION

**T**hroughout my career, I've held leadership roles in several organizations committed to advancing DEI in the cannabis industry, including my role on the board of the Minority Cannabis Business Association.

These experiences have given me firsthand insights into the challenges and opportunities that lie within our industry.

My background in finance has equipped me with a deep understanding of the financial hurdles that minority and women entrepreneurs face.

I've seen the disparities, and I've also witnessed the immense potential that can be unlocked when we are inclusive.

As the CEO of an adult-use cannabis store, Simply Pure Trenton, and the host of The Cannabis Diversity Report podcast, I've had the privilege of interacting with a myriad of individuals from



diverse backgrounds. Each story underscores the importance of creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

To the diverse entrepreneurs reading this report: While the numbers and data might highlight challenges, remember that your passion, resilience and determination are your most potent assets.

The road to success is paved with obstacles, but it's your unwavering focus on your goals that will see you through. Even if the odds seem stacked against you, your unique perspective and drive can

make all the difference. Stay committed, stay inspired and know that your journey, no matter how challenging, has the power to inspire and pave the way for others.

This report is a testament to our collective efforts to champion DEI in cannabis. It reflects our successes, challenges and, most importantly, the path forward.

As we continue to grow and evolve, it's crucial that we prioritize diversity, not just because it's the right thing to do but also because it's integral to the sustainable growth of our industry.

Let's work together to create an industry that is truly representative of the diverse communities we serve.

## **Tahir Johnson**

CEO, Simply Pure Trenton

Board Member, Minority  
Business Association

# STATE OF DIVERSITY IN CANNABIS

By Andrew Long

**I**t's hard to measure the lasting impact of the recent turmoil in the cannabis industry.

Inflation, layoffs, consolidation, falling prices—each will change the industry in ways we won't know until well after they have happened.

We do know, however, that women and people of color working in the cannabis industry face greater challenges than their white, male counterparts.

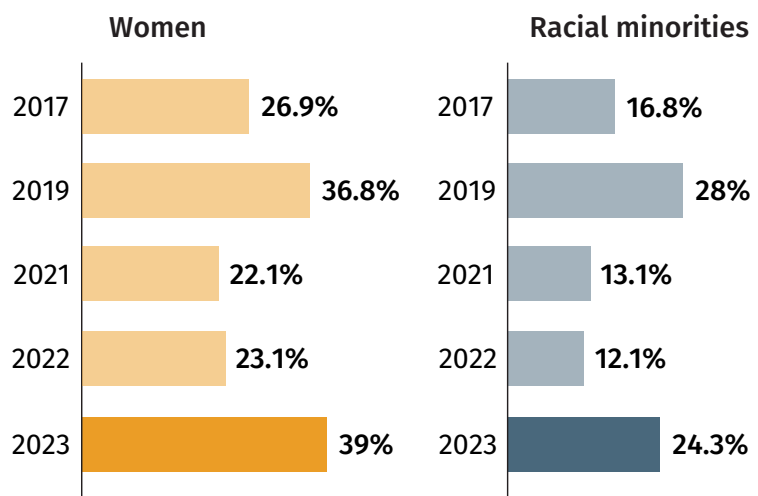
Understanding how these groups respond to change is one of the reasons *MJBizDaily* continues to survey the industry on diversity trends.

The data in this year's report, our fifth, shows a promising trend.

The percentage of women and members of minority groups holding executive positions in the cannabis industry has returned to

## Minority executives resume growth

The percentage of women and nonwhite cannabis executives grew to numbers not seen since before the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: *MJBizDaily* survey

pre-pandemic levels.

In 2019, we estimated that more than 36% of cannabis executives were women and 28% were from minority communities.

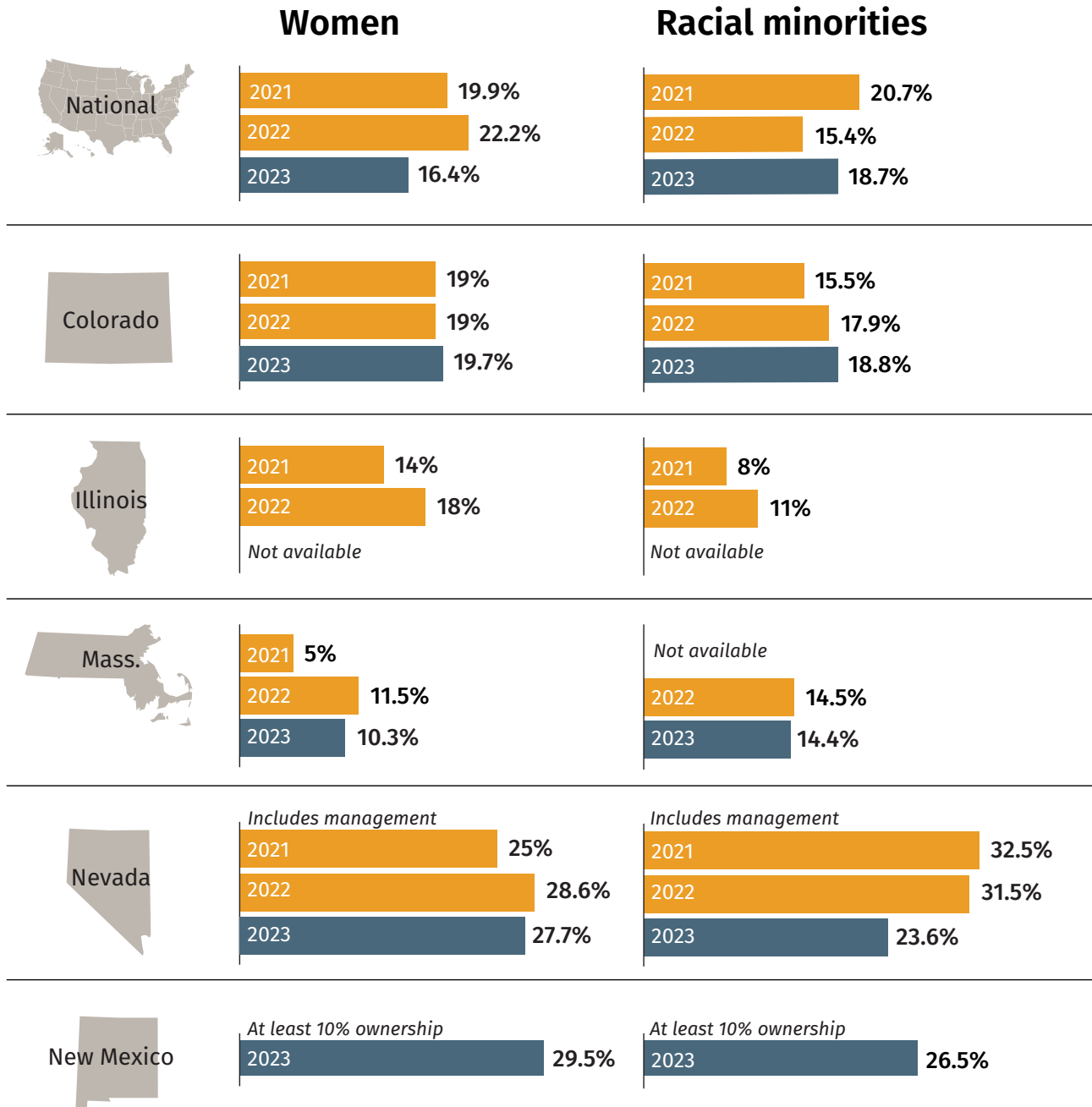
Whether by choice or not, people from both groups exited cannabis-leadership positions in 2020, after the COVID-19 pandemic upended the world economy.

By 2021, women were estimated to account for only 22% of executive positions in the cannabis industry, while people from minority groups represented just 13%. That didn't change much in 2022.

This year diversity returned to the C-suite.

Based on *MJBizDaily* survey data, women

# Cannabis ownership by group



Source: State cannabis agencies, MJBizDaily survey

account for 39% of cannabis executives and racial minorities 24%. While growing diversity

in leadership bodes well for both women and people of color, cannabis-business ownership was mixed.

Nonwhite ownership of cannabis businesses this year grew to almost 19%, up from 15% in 2022,

according to *MJBizDaily* survey data.

That is more in line with 2021, when people from minority communities were estimated to own more than 20% of cannabis businesses.

That said, female ownership of cannabis companies slid to 16% this year from an average of 21% the past two years.

The exact forces behind the shifts in leadership and ownership will take time to understand.

A post-pandemic return to normality could be the cause. Or is it just a reflection of a struggling economy? Or maybe a mix of both?

Either way, ownership is always evolving.

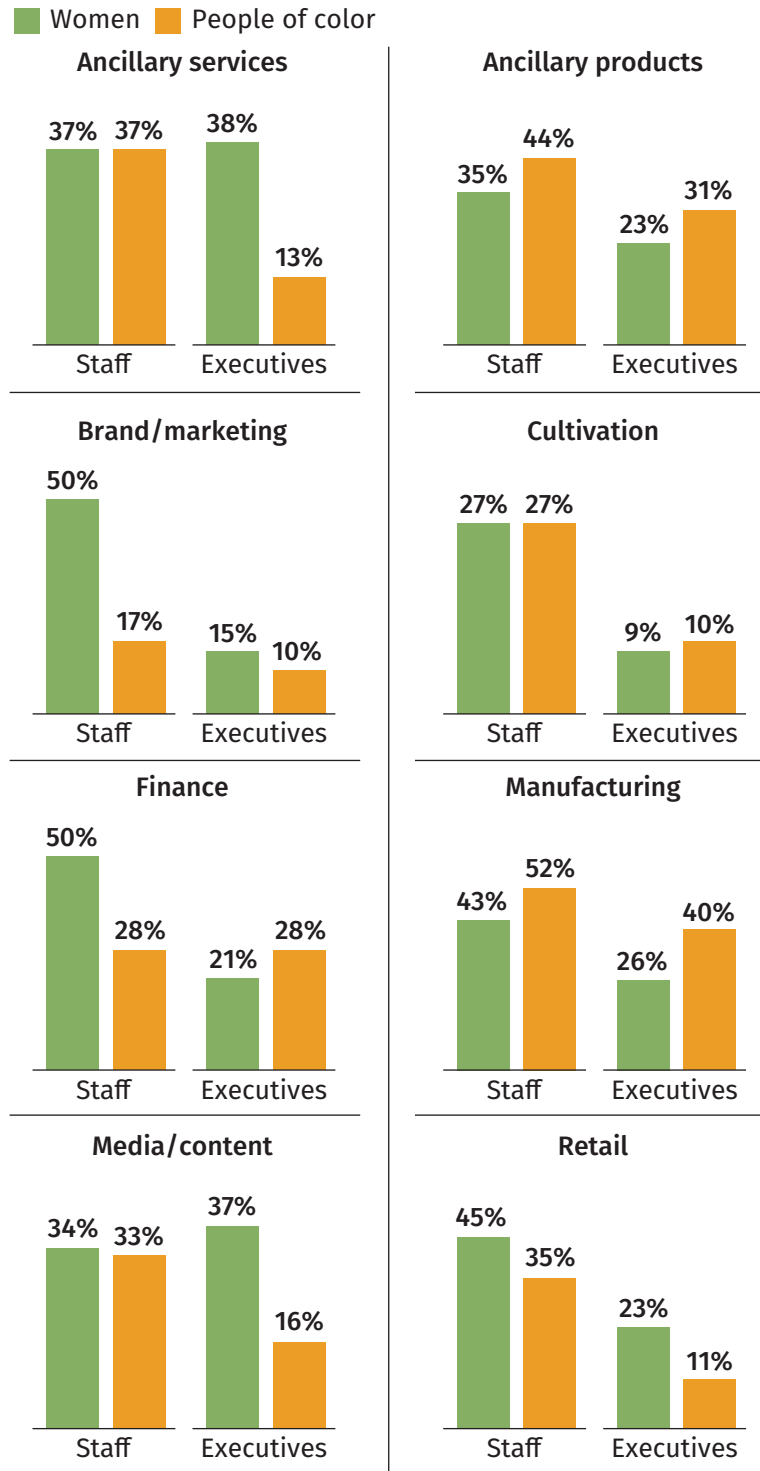
For example, are early entrants leaving the cannabis industry and being replaced by a new and very different group of owners?

Are there enough new opportunities for women and people of color?

The data can point us in the right direction, but the causes will be found in the stories of the participants.

## Estimated employment by sector

The percentage of women and racial minorities employed in cannabis varies depending on the sector of the industry.



NOTE: Small sample sizes create a larger margin of error.

Source: *MJBizDaily* survey

Here's a look at two states that monitor cannabis diversity, albeit it in different ways.

## COLORADO

At the state level, demographic data on cannabis businesses remains frustratingly limited.

Few states survey or track diversity in their programs, making it harder to understand the issues of diversity at that level.

Colorado is again the exception.

The state has been releasing employee and ownership license demographics since 2021.

As of July, the latest numbers available, 18.8% of cannabis license owners in Colorado described themselves as something other than Caucasian, or white.

That is an increase of almost 4 percentage points since the state began tracking.

Growth is often good, but the disparity between employees and owners is

worth pointing out.

The percentage of nonwhite employees in Colorado cannabis is almost double that of business owners.

Of the more than 30,000 registered employees working in Colorado's cannabis industry, 35% describe themselves as something other than white.

This matches the latest census numbers, as the state is roughly 65% white.

Yet, 81% of cannabis business owners are white.

Another way to look at this is through Colorado's Hispanic population.

According to the U.S. Census, Colorado is 23% Hispanic, while Colorado's Marijuana Enforcement Division reports that 18% of registered cannabis employees are Hispanic/Latino, though only 9% are owners.

## NEW MEXICO

A lack of demographic data and how the data is defined can make it hard to compare states.

According to New Mexico data, women account for 29.5% of that state's cannabis business owners, while members of minority groups represent about 24%.

If these numbers seem high compared to other states, it stems from the way the state counts ownership.

Any person with at least a 10% ownership stake in a cannabis business license in New Mexico is included, whereas other states count only the majority owners.

Another example is Nevada, which includes management within its ownership numbers.

In 2023, women ownership/management in Nevada was almost 28%, while racial minorities owned/managed close to 24%.

Regardless of how it is counted, any data on cannabis diversity is better than none.

Time will tell if the positive gains in leadership will have a meaningful impact on the industry.

# METHODOLOGY

MJBizDaily gathered data for this report through an anonymous, industrywide, online survey of cannabis business owners and professionals.

This is the fifth year the report has been published, with previous editions released in 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2022.

This year’s survey took place Aug. 8–Oct. 2 and included roughly 25 questions related to diversity and gender in the cannabis industry.

Qualified responses were collected from 220 self-identified marijuana industry owners and professionals across a variety of sectors.

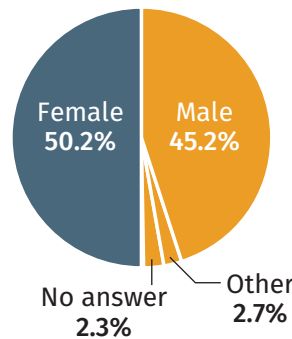
These figures represent responses from individuals who are operating in a regulated capacity in the U.S. cannabis industry.

Demographic data also was collected from state cannabis programs in Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada and New Mexico.

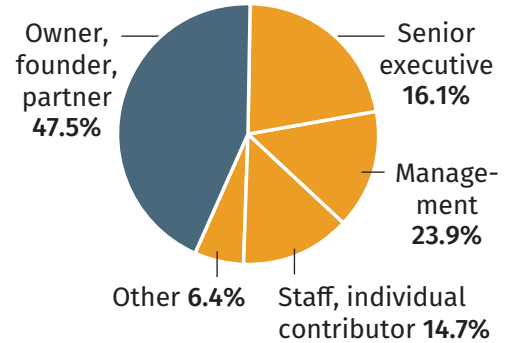
## Survey demographics

MJBizDaily collected responses from an anonymous online survey. Almost half the responses were from respondents who self-identified as cannabis business owners.

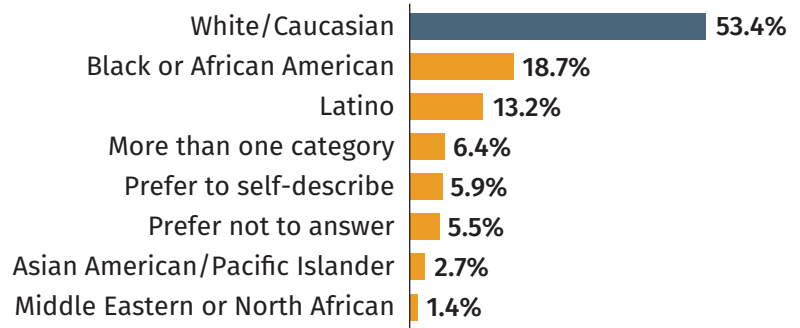
### Gender



### Ownership



### Race



### Top sectors

Retail/dispensary/e-commerce	15.1%
Other	14.1%
Cultivation	12.8%
Branding/marketing/public relations	10.1%
Ancillary service provider	7.8%
Manufacturing/extraction (plant products)	6.9%
Media/content creator/social media	6.4%
Ancillary products	5.9%
Finance/capital/investment	3.2%
Government/lobbying	2.7%
Science/research	2.7%
Technology/software/data	2.3%
Distribution/transportation	1.8%
Association/nonprofit/education	1.8%

Source: MJBizDaily survey



# CANNABIS SOCIAL EQUITY IN 2023

By Chris Casacchia

Arizona, Illinois and Michigan were among a handful of states over the past year where Black entrepreneurs opened stores in key markets.

In March, Nuggets Dispensary became the first Black-owned business with a social equity retail license to open in Detroit, four years after the city approved recreational cannabis sales.

Later that month, High Profile Cannabis Shop, a majority-Black-owned, adult-use cannabis store, also opened its doors in the Motor City.

Despite state and local jurisdictions earmarking more licenses for social equity applicants, success stories within this industry segment remain elusive.

But there are exceptions,



Illustration by Digital Storm/stock.adobe.com



Owner Annu Khot, right, and budtender Mike Taisch attend the opening of Sociale in September. Photo by Filza Naim.

including Annu Khot of Illinois and Alicia Deals of Arizona.

In September, Khot opened Sociale Dispensary in the Chicago suburb of Park Ridge.

Its designation as the suburb's only operational cannabis retailer, as well as its proximity to O'Hare International Airport and other public transportation hubs, has led to strong sales in the early going.

"It's exceeded our expectations," said Khot, who immigrated to the U.S. from India in 2008.

The entrepreneur

qualified as a social equity applicant because more than half of her 25-30 employees come from communities disproportionately affected by marijuana arrests and incarceration.

Khot's experience in business, real estate and fundraising helped secure a prime store location and capital, two of the biggest hurdles for social equity operators nationwide.

Khot raised \$3 million from friends, family and private investors to open Sociale's first location and is planning another

funding round to expand storefronts.

Despite the early success, missteps occurred along the way, including challenges of securing and purchasing property for the dispensary.

"It was a very steep learning curve," Khot said.

"We definitely made a lot of mistakes, but we learned from them, and I think when we open our second dispensary, we're going to be so much better."

In several ways she has already defied the odds.

In Illinois, only 18% of retail outlets were

majority-owned by women in 2022, and about 11% were majority-owned by nonwhite operators, according to an annual industry report from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

Of the 185 social equity retail licenses Illinois issued in July 2022, 37 are open for business and another dozen or so are in the pipeline, according to research from Ananda Strategy, a Los Angeles-based consultancy.

“While the pace of store openings has been slow, it is important to note that over the past three to four months, the pace at which these social equity stores in Illinois have opened has increased considerably,” said Hirsh Jain, Ananda Strategy’s founder.

## FINDING A WAY

In June, Deals became the first Black social equity lottery winner to own and open a cannabis store in Arizona.

“It was more than



In June, Alicia Deals became the first Black social equity lottery winner to open a cannabis retail store in Arizona. Photo by Carl Schultz/Schultz Digital.

survival of the fittest,” said the entrepreneur, who partnered with California cannabis brand Cookies to open her store in Tempe.

“I was fortunate enough to partner with some big guys that didn’t want to take advantage of me.”

According to internal research, cross-referenced with industry sources and databases, *MJBizDaily* in February reported that fewer than 20 of the nation’s 10,000 or so medical

marijuana dispensaries and adult-use stores were Black-owned – a major underrepresentation in an industry with social equity touted as a tenant.

That number has increased modestly since then, according to industry insiders as well as reporting by *MJBizDaily* and other news outlets.

Deals, who left nursing school to pursue an opportunity in the cannabis industry, is busy working on another passion project.

She wants to establish a law firm that specializes in expunging cannabis records and helping free those with marijuana offenses from incarceration.

The issues hit home for the Phoenix native.

Her father is in prison serving year 12 of an 18-year sentence for marijuana-related charges.

“I plan to be a force for change. I’m here to bridge the gap between those who have duly suffered and those who have benefited from cannabis.”

## A DIFFICULT JOURNEY

Madison Shockley’s tortuous route to opening a cannabis store in Los Angeles took five years, months of litigation and more than \$1 million in investments.

His store, Off the Charts, held a grand opening in early August at its 3,400-square-foot space in South L.A.

When he secured the property, he thought it would take three months to get through building and



Sociale Dispensary opened in September under Illinois’ cannabis social equity program. Photo by Filza Naim.

safety approvals.

“It took almost three years,” said Shockley, whose lawsuit challenging the Los Angeles lottery and licensing process resulted in the issuance of 100 more retail licenses, including his own.

His arduous journey has inspired dozens of other social equity applicants in L.A. and elsewhere.

“It’s been crazy because I’ve been getting a lot of calls from my fellow social equity entrepreneurs,”

he said.

“A lot of them have let me know this is a moment for all of us.”

While L.A.’s Department of Cannabis Regulation has issued more than 400 social equity businesses licenses, including more than 80 for retail—among the highest totals in the country—getting those licensees up and running has been extremely difficult.

Only a handful of social equity retailers such as Off the Charts are operational today, as capital shortages and securing approved real estate remain perennial challenges.

## TESTS

Maryland and Missouri both launched recreational sales this year with zero social equity license holders, instead giving existing medical marijuana operators the first crack at participating in the new adult-use markets.

Each state, however, has earmarked a certain number of licenses for social equity applicants in

upcoming licensing rounds.

Maryland regulators in September released guidelines for social equity applicant eligibility and information for an online-verification portal to assist prospective applicants.

The first round of licensing for standard and micro cannabis growers, processors and retailers will be exclusive to social equity applicants.

Under Maryland law, the first batch of new adult-use licenses must be awarded before Jan. 1, 2024.

In late July, Missouri opened its application window for the state's first lottery for microbusiness licenses.

Applicants do not have to be Missouri residents, although majority owners must meet at least one eligibility criteria such as having a disability connected to military service, having been convicted of a nonviolent marijuana offense or residing in a qualifying ZIP code.

The validity of numerous qualifying ZIP codes provided by the Missouri State Highway Patrol—including those encompassing government buildings, post office boxes and affluent suburbs—have been criticized and questioned by social equity advocates, including the local and state chapters of the NAACP.

The microbusiness licenses were designed to allow “marginalized or under-represented individuals to participate in the legal marijuana market,” according to an April news release issued by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), the state's cannabis regulator.

The DHSS plans to award the first 48 of 144 total microbusiness licenses in early October.

Three lottery rounds will be spread over 18 months.

## THE NY EXPERIMENT

Unlike Missouri and Maryland, New York



Photo by Michael/stock.adobe.com

regulators went all in on social equity—and the results have fallen far short of expectations nearly one year after the state launched recreational sales in December 2022, industry insiders contend.

Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary (CAURD) license holders and applicants, New York's version of social equity, have taken on multiple challenges from the start, despite lofty promises from the state's top politicians.

New York planned to establish a \$200 million social equity fund administered through the Dormitory Authority of New York to help fund startup costs, find rental properties for entrepreneurs and establish “turnkey dispensaries.”

The fund finally secured an investor in late June, while the latter two goals haven't fully materialized.

Lawsuits challenging local residency requirements for licensing and the state's overall licensing process—particularly reserving the first 150 adult-use retail licenses for social equity applicants—have delayed license issuance, processing and approvals for months.

And a policy shift in September by the state's Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) effectively wiped out the first-mover advantage that CAURD licensees and applicants hoped to enjoy.

The OCM voted to allow the state's medical marijuana operators to apply for adult-use retail licenses, effectively opening the gates for vertically integrated multistate operators to enter the largest potential market on the East Coast, likely by year-end.

The CAURD program has been a devastating disappointment, said Jayson Tantalo, a social equity applicant hoping to secure a license for Flower City dispensary in Rochester.

The city is located in the state's Finger Lakes region, an area that was shut out of initial licensing rounds until late May after regulators settled a major lawsuit that prevented permits issued in the largely rural area.

"The program seemed like a dream come true, as the state promised to provide us with a turnkey dispensary and even allocate a suitable location if we qualified," said Tantalo, who helped establish the New York CAURD Coalition for licensees and applicants.

"However, it quickly became apparent that this was nothing more than a massive bait-and-switch scheme."

As of press time, fewer than two-dozen regulated cannabis retailers are open in the state, but as many as 2,000 unlicensed sellers are operating in New York City alone.

## **SOCIAL EQUITY IN WA**

In May, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee signed a law requiring the state to issue up to 52 cannabis retail licenses under its newly developed social equity program, but the timeline is a long one.

The licenses will be issued between 2024 and mid-2032.

The Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB) could increase that number, but that would require legislative approval.

The LCB planned to issue about 46 retail licenses this year to social equity applicants harmed by the government's war on drugs.

# MJBIZ EQUITY SCHOLARSHIPS

## 35 EXECUTIVES OF MINORITY-OWNED CANNABIS BUSINESSES SELECTED TO ATTEND MJBIZCON IN 2023

MJBiz established its social equity scholarship program last year to offer access to MJBizCon, where recipients can make valuable connections, gain insights and find solution providers. More than 30 minority owners received scholarships to attend the 2022 show in Las Vegas.

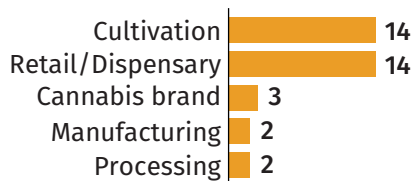
To be selected for MJBizCon 2023, applicants had to be an executive with a minority-owned business in one of these plant-touching categories: cultivation, extraction/processing, retail, manufacturing or brands.

Students could be considered if they were actively enrolled in a cannabis-related field/program at an accredited university or college.

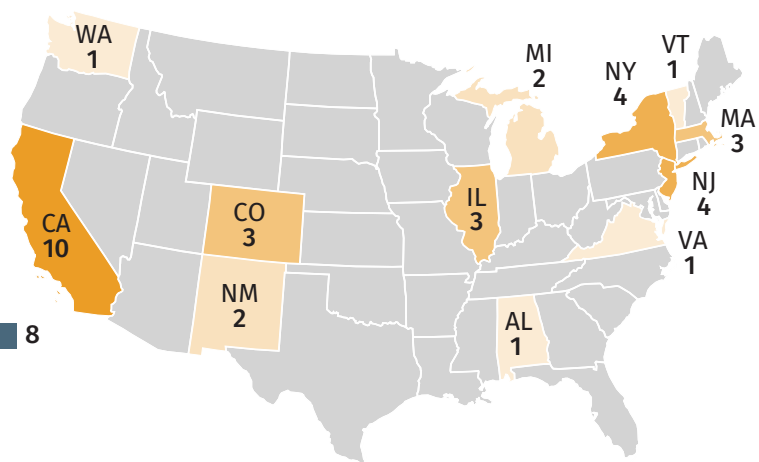
## Scholarship recipients for 2023

The winners to date for the 2023 MJBizCon scholarship program come from all over the U.S., have a range of experience and work in several different sectors within cannabis.

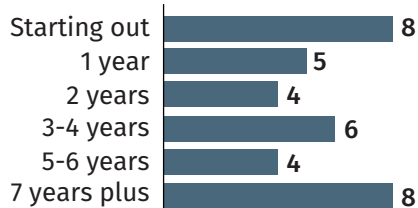
### Sector



### States represented



### Experience



As of publication

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2023

**T**his year, MJBiz partnered with BIPOCANN, Minorities for Medical Marijuana, Minority Cannabis Business Association, Women Grow and Social Equity and Empowerment Network to promote the scholarship and donation fund. As of October, 35 social equity scholarships were awarded.

Funding for the program came from MJBiz and by attendees and exhibitors of MJBizCon through the MJBizCon Social Equity Scholarship Fund. The recipients receive a full conference pass to MJBizCon and access to the Achieving Equity and Women Empowerment networking events.

Name	State	Sector
Alaameen Abdool	Colorado	Retail/Dispensary
Prashante Bailey	California	Manufacturing
Ross Bradshaw	Massachusetts	Retail/Dispensary
Kevin Bush	California	Cultivation
Shayla Cabrera	New Jersey	Cultivation
Craig Davila	New Jersey	Retail/Dispensary
Emile Fagerstrom	California	Cultivation
Sara Farnsworth	Vermont	Cultivation
Joshua Fonseca	California	Cultivation
Carl Giannone	Massachusetts	Cultivation
Duane Harden	Massachusetts	Retail/Dispensary
Kenyatta Harris	New Mexico	Retail/Dispensary
Tiphane Helm	Virginia	Retail/Dispensary
Ann Jackson	California	Cannabis Brand
Vaughn Jefferson	New York	Retail/Dispensary
Bryanth Jimenez	New Mexico	Cultivation
Jaguara LaDay	California	Retail/Dispensary
Brandy Lucero	Colorado	Retail/Dispensary

Name	State	Sector
Rebecca Marroquin	Colorado	Retail/Dispensary
Joel Mbungu	Michigan	Cannabis Brand
Antoine Mordican	Alabama	Cultivation
David Najera	California	Cultivation
David Nicolas	New Jersey	Cultivation
Alberto Ortiz	New York	Retail/Dispensary
David Parker	Michigan	Cultivation
Pari Patel	New York	Cultivation
Alex Pia	New York	Retail/Dispensary
Taronda Ransom	New Jersey	Retail/Dispensary
Brendan Royal	California	Retail/Dispensary
Melissa Royster	Illinois	Cultivation
L. Anton Seals Jr.	Illinois	Processing
Margaret Sharkey	California	Cultivation
Rhoda Sholes	California	Manufacturing
Shareef Watkins	Washington	Cannabis Brand
Tracy Watkins	Illinois	Processing



# CANNABIS DEI RESOURCES

## ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING DIVERSITY IN CANNABIS

The organizations listed provide DEI support, training, mentoring, networking and other resources for those in cannabis.

### ASIAN CANNABIS ROUNDTABLE

[asiancannabisroundtable.org](https://asiancannabisroundtable.org)

The Asian Cannabis Roundtable (ACR) advocates for the best interests of people of Asian descent working in the cannabis sector and its supporting industries. Toward this goal, the ACR engages in education, networking and public-policy advocacy; the group also provides support and resources to ACR members and communities. The ACR recognizes and welcomes the diversity of Asians nationally, internationally and across all diasporas.

### BALANCED VETERANS NETWORK

[balancedveterans.org](https://balancedveterans.org)

The Balanced Veterans Network is a nonprofit organization providing education to help empower veterans to use alternative therapies to combat issues plaguing veterans. Suicide, addiction and homelessness are just a few of the issues that BVN addresses.

### BIPOCANN

[biopocann.com](https://biopocann.com)

BIPOCann was founded in 2020 with a mission to increase BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) visibility and to advance representation and economic equity in the regulated cannabis industry. BIPOCann is passionate about uplifting cannabis entrepreneurs and professionals, while creating amplification platforms for members to be seen, heard and valued.

### BLACK CANNABUSINESS

[blackcannabusiness.com](https://blackcannabusiness.com)

Black Cannabusiness was created to accelerate the participation of Black and brown entrepreneurs, founders and professionals doing business in the cannabis industry—and those who aspire to lead. The platform is an ecosystem of the business tools, resources and experiences needed to research, start, grow and cultivate a cannabis business.

### BLUNT BRUNCH

[bluntbrunch.com](https://bluntbrunch.com)

Blunt Brunch is an event series fostering collaboration and community among women in the cannabis industry. The group aims to create a positive, authentic and empowering atmosphere where

women executives and business leaders can gather to exchange ideas, network and find support.

### **BLOC: BOSS LADIES OF CANNABIS**

[bossladiesofcannabis.com](https://bossladiesofcannabis.com)

BLOC: Boss Ladies of Cannabis is an online database of women leaders in the industry. The list helps provide visibility for experts, leaders and job candidates.

### **CANNABIS MARKETING ASSOCIATION**

[thecannabismarketingassociation.com](https://thecannabismarketingassociation.com)

The Cannabis Marketing Association was founded in 2016 in response to challenges that communications professionals were experiencing while industry marketers were unable to use traditional marketing tactics and technology such as paid advertising, social media or digital outlets.

### **CANNABIS NURSES OF COLOR**

[cannabisnursesofcolor.com](https://cannabisnursesofcolor.com)

Cannabis Nurses of Color (CNOC) is a safe place for advocacy, education and training for nurses of color in the industry. CNOC is a collective of knowledge and resources with an emphasis on the issues affecting our communities, the generational harms that have created barriers to access and the issues as they relate to people of color working in the cannabis space.

### **EQUITY TRADE NETWORK**

[equitytradenetwork.org](https://equitytradenetwork.org)

Equity Trade Network-certified brands are businesses owned and operated by Black, brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ, veteran or system-impacted people. To qualify, brand leaders are asked to demonstrate how their business models and networks support the greater goals of racial equity and diversity in the industry and beyond.

### **ILLINOIS WOMEN IN CANNABIS**

[ilwomenincannabis.org](https://ilwomenincannabis.org)

Illinois Women in Cannabis (IWC) was created to serve, support and advance women connected to the state's regulated industry. IWC hosts multiple networking and educational opportunities for women, men and organizations annually. The nonprofit is comprised of members with skills as diverse as advertising, marketing, law, finance, accounting, patient care, agriculture, horticulture, retail and more.

### **JAINE**

[wearejaine.com](https://wearejaine.com)

Jaine is focused on supporting, honoring, and educating women in an emerging cannabis industry by building alliances to foster a united voice.

## JUSTÜS FOUNDATION

[justus.foundation](https://justus.foundation)

The Justüs Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring and facilitating the entry of legacy (pre-legalization) cannabis operators to the legal market. The organization was founded in response to two related trends: the exclusion of legacy cannabis operators from the legal industry and the persistence of a dual market after legalization, which results in a delay in consumer migration to the regulated cannabis market.

## LAST PRISONER PROJECT

[lastprisonerproject.org](https://lastprisonerproject.org)

The Last Prisoner Project was founded in 2019 out of the belief that no one should remain incarcerated or suffering the collateral consequences of offenses that are now legal. The organization is a group of justice-impacted individuals, policy and education experts and leaders in the worlds of criminal justice and drug-policy reform to work to end the fundamental injustice that is America's policy of cannabis prohibition and the war on drugs.

## LATIN AMERICAN CANNABIS ALLIANCE

[alcann.org](https://alcann.org)

The Latin American Cannabis Alliance is a

nonprofit made up of Mexican nonprofits that seek to promote fair and inclusive regulation for all uses of cannabis. Each of the associations in this alliance has participated in political management and advancing the legislative process for proposed cannabis bills. Members are constantly working with national and international media outlets as well as implementing high-impact educational programs.

## MASS CULTIVATED

[masscultivated.com](https://masscultivated.com)

This Massachusetts-based public-private partnership provides fellows with a robust cooperative educational program, legal services, workforce-preparedness training and cannabis fellowships with livable wages and benefits.

## MINORITIES FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA

[minorities4medicalmarijuana.org](https://minorities4medicalmarijuana.org)

Minorities for Medical Marijuana (M4MM) is committed to cultivating a culturally inclusive environment where diversity of thought, experience and opportunities are valued, respected, appreciated and celebrated. M4MM serves as a resource to the community by providing information, referrals, advocacy, coordination and education regarding cannabis legislation, events, activities, initiatives and discussions.

## **MINORITY CANNABIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

[minoritycannabis.org](https://minoritycannabis.org)

The Minority Cannabis Business Association (MCBA) is the largest national trade group dedicated to serving the needs of minority cannabis businesses and communities. The MCBA represents minority and allied cannabis businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs and supporters who share a vision of an equitable, just and responsible cannabis industry.

## **NATIONAL CANNABIS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

[thecannabisindustry.org](https://thecannabisindustry.org)

The National Cannabis Industry Association is the oldest and largest trade group serving the industry. Its membership consists of hundreds of small businesses and tens of thousands of cannabis professionals working together to lift up the industry.

## **NATIONAL DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CANNABIS ALLIANCE**

[thendica.org](https://thendica.org)

The NDICA mission is to create an ethical and equitable cannabis industry to reduce barriers contributing to the lack of representation of those most impacted by the war on drugs, including people of color and other marginalized

community members. By bringing together government agencies, industry leaders, practitioners and intellectuals through forums, expungement clinics, trainings, think tanks and a thriving online community, the group provides the necessary technical expertise and resources to succeed in the cannabis and non-cannabis industries.

## **NUPROJECT**

[nuproject.org](https://nuproject.org)

NuProject works to build generational wealth via the legal cannabis industry for the communities most harmed by marijuana criminalization—Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities. NuProject helps diverse entrepreneurs grow their cannabis businesses by providing funding, financial coaching and network connections.

## **PROFESSIONAL CANNABIS EDUCATION NETWORK**

[professionalcannabiseducationnetwork.com](https://professionalcannabiseducationnetwork.com)

The Professional Cannabis Education Network is helping change the stigma of cannabis culture by providing education and networking opportunities to those interested in or already working in the cannabis industry. The organization strives to create a less-biased community and a more informed consumer, as well as increase access to economic development

career and entrepreneurial opportunities specifically for but not limited to communities of color.

### **SOCIAL EQUITY EMPOWERMENT NETWORK (SEEN)**

[equityempower.org](https://equityempower.org)

The Social Equity Empowerment Network is a business and trade association of entrepreneurs, professionals and enthusiasts interested in attaining equity and economic empowerment by way of ownership. They advocate for equity in emerging industries and markets by providing valuable resources and creating connectivity that contributes to the creation of a more diverse ecosystem.

### **SUPERNOVA WOMEN**

[supernovawomen.com](https://supernovawomen.com)

Supernova Women is a nonprofit organization founded in 2015 by Black and brown women. The organization works to empower Black and brown people to become self-sufficient shareholders in the cannabis and natural-plant medicine space through education, advocacy and network-building.

### **THC STAFFING GROUP**

[thcstaffinggroup.com](https://thcstaffinggroup.com)

THC Staffing's mission is to build a diverse and inclusive cannabis industry,

across all ages and regardless of citizenship or primary language, by prioritizing employment and ownership for communities most impacted by the war on drugs—particularly women, people of color, LGBTQIA+, formerly incarcerated individuals and people with disabilities.

### **THE COLOR OF CANNABIS**

[thecolorofcannabisco.org](https://thecolorofcannabisco.org)

The Color of Cannabis was founded out of the need to have more representation of minorities in the industry. The organization believes that advocating for people of color to participate in the regulated cannabis market is work that cannot be neglected. The regulated cannabis industry presents an opportunity for minorities to build generational wealth, and the community must be educated on the opportunities.

### **TOKEATIVITY**

[tokeativity.com](https://tokeativity.com)

Tokeativity is a global community of consumers and business owners who believe in cannabis normalization, equity and empowerment of a modern consumption culture. The organization connects through creative, social and political, intersectional feminist-forward activities and marketing campaigns that work to create radical, positive change.

**TREEHOUSE GLOBAL VENTURES**[treehouseglobalventures.com](https://treehouseglobalventures.com)

Treehouse Global Ventures is a private equity fund that was formed by three women investor/influencers, each with 10-plus years of investing experience in the cannabis space and more than 40 years of collective investing experience in traditional industries. The fund seeks socially conscious capital and social-impact investments as well as women-and-minority led companies that have a brand with a solid stake in the ground.

**WOMEN GROW**[womengrow.com](https://womengrow.com)

Women Grow was created to connect, educate, empower and inspire the next generation of cannabis leaders by creating programs, community and events for aspiring and current business executives. Founded in 2014 in Denver and now headquartered on the East Coast, Women Grow serves as a catalyst for women to influence and succeed in the cannabis industry as the end of marijuana prohibition occurs on a global scale.