

The Rise of Women in Cannabis

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In what may seem like a male-dominated industry, the legal cannabis market has attracted many female entrepreneurs and participants who are making a big difference. Encouraged by states' support for and focus on minority participation, women are taking advantage of opportunities in the developing and maturing legal cannabis space.

In fact, women hold nearly 27% of leadership roles in regulated cannabis compared to the 21% they hold in traditional businesses. Since women make about 80% of the health and wellness decision for traditional American households, women are well poised to create and sell cannabis products, especially those pertaining to luxury or skin-care such as topicals, lotions, candles, balms, and scents.

The high-growth cannabis industry is a rather level playing field providing equal opportunities for men and women, young and old. To that end, three like-minded women – Jane West, Jazmine Hupp, and Julie Batkiewicz – started a Women Grow, an organization designed to educate, connect, and inspire women in cannabis, in Denver, Colorado in 2014.

Since then, Women Grow has had over 50,000 women and some men attend their monthly Signature Networking Events and Leadership Summit across the country and in Canada. With a presence in dozens of cities and markets across the United States, Women Grow has helped and empowered hundreds of women to become CEOs, advocates, and successful business owners in the cannabis arena.

“Women Grow’s focus is the dissemination of information and support of women in

cannabis through quality education and networking,” according Kay Garcia, CEO of Women Grow. Women Grow hosts networking events throughout the country for women interested in getting involved with cannabis.

“We try to make our events as inviting and comfortable as possible for new participants who are oftentimes unsure of what to expect, nervous, and do not know anyone in the room” says Garcia, who pointed out that the networking meetings almost always include ice breakers and an identification of who, in addition to the speakers and panelists, is in the room.

“We find that a lot of women come to our meetings with many misconceptions, myths, and misinformation about cannabis, starting a cannabis business, and the amount of capital needed to break into the space” commented Garcia.

“People get hung up on opening a dispensary or a grow operation,” says Garcia, “and do not realize the vast opportunities that exist in all various facets of the business from equipment sales to community relations to software development.”

Asked what the most sought after skills in the industry are, Garcia responded that “technical skills can be taught to anyone, but what the industry needs most are people with empathy and patience because businesses have to be patient focused in order to succeed.”

To find out more about upcoming Women Grow events and how to get involved go to <https://womengrow.com/events/>. Kay Garcia can be reached at support@womengrow.com.

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