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As the only marijuana policy organization fighting Big Marijuana with a paid staff in Washington, we are your voice - and we take that very seriously.

Teamwork. Responsibility. Courage. Knowledge. These are the words that come to our head when thinking about what SAM has offered in 2018. Working together with dozens of organizations around the country, SAM is leading the way by recommending smart policies that do not legalize drugs.

For the second year in a row, Colorado is the #1 state in the nation for teens who tried pot for the first time. Marijuana use is rising 100% faster in legalized states versus non-legalized ones, and more people think pot is harmless.

The pot industry continues to sell THC-laced drinks, candies, and other items aimed at kids. For them, it is all about the money. For us, it is about the future of this country. And that is why in 2018, SAM and our partners defeated legalization in every state - but one - where it was introduced, and stopped a banking amendment in Congress that would have opened up the pot industry to the US financial system. Members of Congress were using SAM talking points during that debate, and SAM organized with different groups to urge their Member of Congress to speak. It started a cascade that exposed clear divisions and prevented a positive voice vote. SAM then took the fight to the Senate with the same result. The industry spent six figures to secure a positive voice vote in both House and Senate. They got neither. It showed that a true bipartisan consensus on marijuana still exists.
SAM's profile rose both nationally and internationally, thanks to the support of our donors and supporters.
Our success has been the result of generous donations from those who have personal experience with addiction combined with broad-based coalitions that work both behind-the-scenes and in the news in almost every state.

We also expanded our state operations. Knowing the challenges we will face in 2019 - a huge push for legalization in the Midwest, and a major push for legalization in Congress - SAM and SAM Action have been getting ready for the work ahead by bringing on board several well-known state leaders to guide our work.

Confirming our worst fears, Altria, the Big Tobacco giant, invested $1.8B into a marijuana company this year. We've never had more motivation to do what we do. We won't ever stop fighting for you.

We continue to demand marijuana laws grounded in 21st century science, not outdated ideology or industry-funded pseudoscience. As always, our esteemed scientific advisory board - comprised of top researchers from Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and elsewhere - informs all of our technical work.

Kevin A. Sabet, PhD
President & CEO
SAM & SAM Action

Jon Talcot
Chairman
SAM
With our help, all states but one chose smart marijuana policies in 2018

Despite being massively out-funded by pro-marijuana businesses and lobbyists, only one state, Michigan, legalized marijuana out of almost a dozen attempts.

In North Dakota, SAM Action teamed up with local activists to defeat a legalization measure there by 20 points. In Maryland, Delaware, Connecticut, Vermont, and other states, legalization measures did not advance past committees.

Michigan, though it legalized marijuana, came with an unprecedented alliance between SAM Action and the Detroit Branch NAACP (largest in the country).

On the federal level, we worked with top Congressional leaders to block over 20 amendments from getting through, preventing the marijuana industry from gaining access to a flood of institutional investors.
SAM Co-Founder, Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy, speaking at the largest press event in SAM’s history on April 20th, 2018, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. In the background are Dr. Roneet Lev, now a White House drug policy official, and Judge Arthur Burnett, the first African-American magistrate judge in history.

SAM reached the public at unprecedented levels in 2018

#1 Year in Fundraising
3,800 Mentions This Year
61% Grassroots Engagement
250% Small Donations
18 Op-eds Placed This Year

WALL STREET JOURNAL
THE HILL
CHICAGO TRIBUNE
DETROIT NEWS
CNN’S BUSINESS

Left: SAM Director of State Affairs, Abu Edwards (right), organizing with local Detroit, MI residents.
Educating the Public, Press, and Politicians on Smart Marijuana Policy

SAM influenced policy at the state and national level, and was featured by the top press and media.

A few of SAM's many accomplishments this year:

- SAM opened new offices in California, New York, and Illinois
- Formed new affiliates in Illinois, Michigan, North Dakota, New Jersey, Minnesota, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and in Canada
- Hired new staff in several states
- Helped write legislation in New Jersey and North Dakota
- Developed model state and national policies
- Put forth model federal policy on drugged driving enforcement with project Driving High Means DUI
- Conducted billboard and other media campaigns in more than half a dozen states
- Implemented new tools to help affiliates and supporters be heard by their legislators

Right: SAM Co-Founder and Former Congressman Patrick J. Kennedy joining SAM staff and NJ-RAMP, SAM’s Affiliate in New Jersey, for testimony in Trenton, NJ.
Publications With Impact

TOP TEN MARIJUANA MYTHS DEBUNKED

1. CLAIM: “MARIJUANA IS HARMLESS AND NONADDICTIVE.”

FACT: ACCORDING TO EVERY MAJOR MEDICAL GROUP AND SCIENTIFIC REVIEW, TODAY’S HIGHLY POTENT MARIJUANA IS HARMFUL AND CAN BE ADDICTIVE.

Our work, reviewed by our science advisory board, is cited regularly by major government agencies and experts.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION IN FOUR U.S. STATES AND D.C.

SEPARETING MARIJUANA FACT FROM FICTION IN NEW YORK RESPONSE TO THE “ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF REGULATED MARIJUANA IN NEW YORK STATE”

AUGUST 2018

Average Past Month Use of Marijuana Among 12 and Older

National  Legalized States  Non-Legalized States

2015-16  8.6  9.2  13.6

2016-17  9.2  15.5

14%  7%

*Percent change represented as the calculated delta between years [(New-Old)/Old]

NSDUH State Estimates, 2016-17
Above: Dr. Kevin Sabet speaking at press conference with Detroit Branch NAACP leadership in Detroit, MI.

Below: Dr. Kevin Sabet and Dana Stevens, (right) Director of Local Affairs, speaking at Heritage Foundation with AAA and founder of We Save Lives and MADD.

Above: SAM Board member Ben Cort speaking with media in Monroe, MI.

Below: Head of SAM affiliate in North Dakota, Kristie Spooner (middle), leading our volunteers in Fargo, ND.
2018 was a year of rapid growth. In 2019, we won't stop pushing the limits of what is possible for public health.

Below: SAM Outreach Associate Will Jones in a SAM-produced music video (top performing video for SAM in 2018).
SAM's New Initiatives for 2018

2018 was indeed a landmark year. SAM brought the movement forward in new and innovative ways, keeping in mind what is needed for success in 2019.

For the first time ever, SAM opened offices across the country, in New York, California, and Illinois, in addition to current headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.

Now, more than ever, is the time to unite the movement to stop marijuana commercialization and the inception of the next Big Tobacco. This year, SAM conducted symposiums at its New York and Virginia offices to further amplify our voices.

SAM also launched an affiliate, Healthy and Productive Illinois, and Midwest regional offices in Chicago, IL.

Our commitment to science has never been stronger. In 2018, we added new staff to enhance and broaden our ability to deliver much-needed research into the hands of policymakers and the public.

In 2019, SAM will unveil a regional model of education and advocacy, providing more on the ground support and technical assistance to the communities who need it most.

Right: SAM Illinois State Director Lavon Pettis at rally against legalization of marijuana in Chicago, IL.
And This...

HIGH TIMES

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Home » Health » MMJ

Former Big Pharma OxyContin CEO Now Selling Medical Cannabis

Published 11 years ago on November 29, 2008 by Patrick Meehan

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Mexico Supreme Court ruling pushes forward national legalization
SAM Honorary Board
Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy
General Barry McCaffrey (Ret.)
David Frum

SAM Board of Directors
Jon Talcott, Chair
Ian Colhoun
Mike Bloom
Ben Cort
David George
Steve Millette

SAM Science Advisory Board
Hoover Adger, MD, Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Adolescent Medicine, Johns Hopkins University

Judge Arthur Burnett, National Executive Director, National African American Drug Policy Coalition

Eden Evins, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

Sion Harris, PhD, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research, Children’s Hospital Boston

Marilyn Huestis, PhD, Former Head of Toxicology, NIDA & Adjunct Professor, University of Maryland

Yifrah Kaminer, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry & Pediatrics, University of Connecticut

Sharon Levy, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School

Kimber Richter, MD, PhD, Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, University of Kansas

Paula Riggs, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Colorado at Denver

Christine Miller, PhD—Retired Neuroscientist, MillerBio and Johns Hopkins University

Christian Thurstone, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Colorado

Krishna Upadhya, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Kathryn Wells, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Colorado at Denver

Aaron Weiner, PhD, Director of Addiction Services, Linden Oaks Behavioral Healthcenter in Illinois