

Confusion and Exclusion: Impacts of the Hazy State of D.C. Marijuana Legalization on People with Criminal Records

*Hosted by the Council for Court Excellence
in partnership with the Office of the DC Auditor
September 15, 7-8:30 pm*

Participant Biographies

Queen Adesuyi, Drug Policy Alliance

Queen Adesuyi is a policy manager at the Drug Policy Alliance's (DPA) National Affairs office in Washington, D.C., where she works to advance several of DPA's legislative priorities on the federal level, including marijuana legalization with a racial justice focus, drug decriminalization, and eliminating collateral consequences for drug use and previous convictions. She also advocates for equity/racial justice in plans for the District of Columbia's emerging marijuana industry, in addition to advancing overdose prevention measures and harm reduction in the District.

While at DPA, Ms. Adesuyi saw through the introduction of the Marijuana Justice Act, Congress' first marijuana reform bill that addressed racial justice and justice reform issues. She helped convene and co-leads the [Marijuana Justice Coalition](#). Under her co-leadership, the Marijuana Justice Coalition has worked on the introduction and the historic passage of the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment & Expungement (MORE) Act by the U.S. House of Representatives in the 116th Congress.

Ms. Adesuyi, a first-generation Nigerian-American who hails from the Morris Heights section of the Bronx, is an alumna from Georgetown University, where she majored in American Studies. Prior to joining DPA, Adesuyi worked with the Georgetown University Prisons and Justice Initiative and the National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens.

Martin Austermuhle, WAMU 88.5 & WAMU.org

Martin Austermuhle is a reporter in WAMU's newsroom. He covers politics, development, education, social issues, and crime, among other things. Austermuhle joined the WAMU staff in April 2013 as a web producer and reporter. Prior to that, he served as editor-in-chief for DCist.com. He has written for the *Washington City Paper*, *Washington Diplomat* and other publications.

Born in Switzerland, Austermuhle lived throughout Latin America before coming to the U.S. to attend Pennsylvania State University. He received a master's degree in Latin American Studies

from Georgetown University. He lives in the Washington neighborhood of Michigan Park with his wife Carolina, a school teacher, and their two daughters.

Corey Barnette, Kinfolk Dispensary & District Growers LLP

Corey Barnette is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of District Growers, LLC, a licensed full service grower and producer of cannabis, cannabis concentrates and cannabis-infused products. Mr. Barnette is also the owner of Metropolitan Wellness Center, a licensed full service dispensary in Washington, D.C. Both District Growers and Metropolitan Wellness were ranked in the top 100 cannabis businesses in the cannabis industry by Cannabis Business Executive Magazine in 2015 and 2016. Having operated dispensaries and cultivation operations since 2008, Mr. Barnette has extensive experience designing, securing, operating and expanding licensed cannabis operations.

Previously, Mr. Barnette served as the Director of the nonprofit San Diego Medical Collective, founded and served as the Director of Chi Holistic Collective, owner and operator of Primary Physicians Research, and Vice President of the Small Enterprise Assistance Funds. Mr. Barnette received an MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and a Bachelors of Science of Mechanical Engineering from Tennessee Technological University. Finally, he is a proud husband to his wife and father to his ten year-old and twelve year-old daughters.

David Grosso, Arent Fox LLP

David Grosso is a partner at Arent Fox LLP. At Arent Fox, Mr. Grosso provides practical guidance to clients in businesses where the federal and District of Columbia governments intersect. Previously, Mr. Grosso served on the D.C. Council as an at-large member, representing residents in all eight wards. Mr. Grosso chaired the Education Committee and sat on several other committees, including Finance & Revenue; Human Services; Health; Transportation and the Environment; Judiciary; Labor and Workforce; Government Operations; and the Committee of the Whole. His efforts resulted in historic progress and fundamentally changed how D.C. schools prepare students to succeed, how District families balance their work and home lives, and how the D.C. government and elections operate more ethically.

Mr. Grosso has also previously served as chief counsel to Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and as CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield's Vice President of Public Policy. He currently serves on the Board of DC SCORES and on the Advisory Committee for the Georgetown Project on State and Local Government Policy and Law.

Emily Gunston, D.C. Office of the Attorney General

Emily Gunston serves as Deputy Attorney General for Legislative Affairs and Policy at the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. She advises the Attorney General and

Chief Deputy Attorney General on a range of policy and legal matters and has primary responsibility for the office's legislative and intergovernmental efforts. Ms. Gunston previously served as Deputy Legal Director at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs where she directed the Committee's criminal legal system reform work. In that role, she developed and led complex civil rights lawsuits and engaged in policy advocacy in the areas of police accountability, prison conditions, parole and compassionate release, and the criminalization of poverty.

Prior to joining the Committee, Ms. Gunston served for nine years in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division where she helped lead the Division's group conducting pattern or practice investigations of police departments. Ms. Gunston led the investigations of the Chicago and Cleveland police departments and the enforcement of the agreement to reform the New Orleans Police Department.

Ms. Gunston began her career as a public defender in Contra Costa County, California, where she tried over 40 cases. She received her law degree from the University of California, Berkeley and her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Crystal Marshall, Community Family Life Services Speakers Bureau

Crystal Marshall is a member of the Community Family Life Services (CFLS) Speakers Bureau. Ms. Marshall is a passionate advocate for women returning from periods of incarceration. As a formerly incarcerated LGBTQ woman, she uses her experience to empower people returning from incarceration and direct community resources to the needs of formerly incarcerated people. Ms. Marshall has previously served as a workforce development specialist at the DC Central Kitchen. Ms. Marshall has also been a guest on the One in Four podcast (S2 E1) and spoken at the More than Conference: Anyone can be an Advocate Workshop and October 2020 CFLS Women Centric Criminal Justice Discussion. She has also testified before D.C. Council and was featured in a Get out the Vote video.

The CFLS Speakers Bureau allows women to speak professionally on their lived experiences. Through the Speakers Bureau, CFLS provides a platform for survivors of trauma such as domestic violence, human trafficking, and incarceration to learn public speaking skills, progress in their healing journey, and become agents of change. Members of the Speakers Bureau, such as Ms. Marshall, communicate their lived experiences to educate lawmakers, service providers, law enforcement, nonprofits, private organizations, and community stakeholders.