



CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS

**An exploration of cannabis and hemp
topics from multiple perspectives: medical,
historical, social equity, ecological and more.**

Featuring:
Cannabis Beverages

Interview with a Canna-Mom

**Community Education, Expungement & Reentry Resources,
and more!**

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GROWING FOR GOOD with Green Thumb

Cannabis Equity Illinois Coalition: fighting to end the war on drugs, and for justice and equity in legalized cannabis.

Who is the Coalition:

The Cannabis Equity Illinois Coalition is a grassroots nonprofit formed in Chicago in 2019, dedicated to ensuring that the legalization of cannabis in Illinois repairs and reinvests in the communities most impacted by the war on drugs, and that the cannabis industry prioritizes people over profits! You can learn more about our work at CannabisEquityIL.org and @CannaEquityIL on all social media.

Community Programs:

Expungement:

- The Coalition hosts RAP Sheet Assistance Days every other month in Chicago, supporting community members start the record-clearing process for free.
- Email ceicexpungement@gmail.com for support with record clearing!
- We're also a partner with New Leaf Illinois, where anyone with a cannabis record in Illinois can receive free record-clearing support by visiting: newleafillinois.org/s/

Resource fairs:

- We host quarterly resource fairs with different community partners, where we provide access to wraparound resources to ensure community members have everything they need, including housing resources, employment opportunities, food assistance, IDs, and much more! These resource events are in both English and Spanish.



Calls to Action:

4/22 fundraiser:

- We're hosting a three-year anniversary celebration with our partners at Hush Chicago!
- This event will celebrate the Coalition members who've worked so hard over the last three years to make this organization a reality.
- We hope you can join us to celebrate three years of organizing!
- Check out hushchicago.com/420 for details and tickets.

Join a meeting or invite us to speak:

- We host weekly Coalition meetings, where you can learn more about the work and plug in with our programs!
- We welcome you to invite our members to speak to your organization. Reach out to CannabisEquityIL@gmail.com for meeting links and to invite us to speak.

Donate:

- The Coalition is a grassroots nonprofit that exists because of community fundraising. To support our work, please visit: cannabisequityil.org/donate/



Community Programs:

Community education:

- The Coalition hosts community programs to educate the public about their legal rights and how cannabis affects them, the benefits of medical cannabis, how to advocate for change through community organizing, and much more.
- These programs are in both English and Spanish, and are hosted both in person and online, so we reach as many people as possible.

Youth education:

- We are hiring young people to develop and host bilingual educational programs for their peers on topics important to them. Topics include learning their legal rights and how to protect them, and how they can create change through community organizing!
- By developing a youth leadership committee, we will create the next generation of leaders to bring change to Illinois.

Policy advocacy:

- We lead a community-driven policy advocacy program, where community members identify issues important to them, research them, and learn how to advocate for their passage.



This is a paid sponsored content article from Green Thumb Industries.

To find out more about the Cannabis Equity Illinois Coalition, visit cannabisequityil.org or @CannaEquityIL on all social media.



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DRINK YOUR HIGH: Cannabis Beverages vs Traditional Edibles

Whether you're trying cannabis for the first time or are an avid consumer, edibles are seen as an approachable method of consumption. They are clearly dosed and straightforward to use—no additional papers, fire, or gear required. There are options for everyone—vegan, gluten-free, sugar-free—as well as a wide variety of flavors and textures. The only downside is the lengthy onset time.

This is because of the time it takes for the edible to be digested. Traditional edibles are digested in the stomach and intestines, then THC is metabolized in the liver, and effects will be felt anywhere from 45 minutes to three hours after initially consuming them. This lengthy onset can be confused for the product not working, which can lead to people taking more than the needed dose and having a less than enjoyable experience.

Those who enjoy the controlled dosing of edibles but are looking for a quicker onset may enjoy cannabis-infused beverages. Cannabis beverages have a general onset time of 30 minutes or less. This quick onset is due to the liquid form. With cannabis beverages, the cannabinoids, like CBD and THC, are absorbed into the bloodstream through the mouth and stomach. This means you don't have to wait for the drink to be digested to start feeling the effects.

Cannabis drinks, like Tonic and Tonic Fizz from PTS, use a process called liposomal encapsulation. This is the process of infusing water droplets with cannabinoids at a microscopic level. Cannabinoids are not traditionally water-soluble, so this process is crucial to accurate dosing and the flavor of cannabis drinks.

There are a variety of cannabis beverages available in Illinois. Tonic, the first cannabis-infused beverage in Illinois, offers 100mg of THC in a 12-ounce fruit-flavored drink. The Tonic brand has expanded to include Tonic Fizz, a cannabis-infused seltzer with 25mg THC per can, and Tonic Frost, THC- and CBD-infused popsicles.

Just like traditional edibles, it is best to start with a low dose of a cannabis beverage. Even though the onset is faster with drinkable products, it is recommended that you wait at least 30 minutes before consuming a second dose. Stop by your favorite Chicago dispensary to try out this unique cannabis experience today!

READY TO TRY A CANNABIS BEVERAGE? Mix up a Tonic Canna-Mule!



½ oz. Tonic Citrus Lime 1:1
(½ oz. of Tonic = 4.2mg THC/CBD)

½ oz. fresh lime juice

3 slices of ginger

1 lime slice

Ginger beer or ginger ale

In a glass, mix ½ oz of Tonic Citrus Lime 1:1 with ½ oz of fresh lime juice. Add ice and fill the glass with ginger beer.

Garnish with ginger slices and a slice of lime. Enjoy responsibly!



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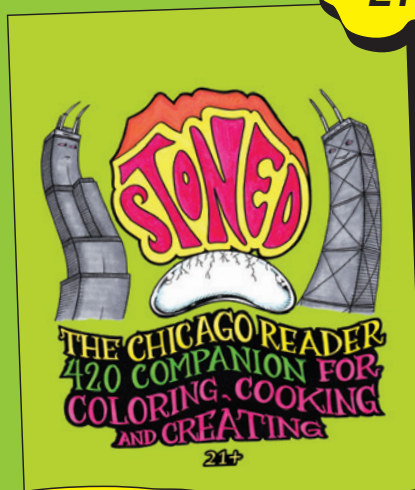


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THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Kelley O'Hern: An Interview with Nature's Grace's Canna-Mom



Kelley O'Hern
(third from left) with her family.

How has becoming the owner of one of Illinois's first cannabis cultivations contributed to your family's agricultural legacy?

My husband's family has farmed in Fulton and McDonough County for six generations. This in itself is the legacy and something to be proud of. It has been generations of hard work and family effort that made it happen. When our family applied for a cannabis cultivation center, it seemed like it could be a natural fit to where our family could grow, and an extension of our farm and community footprint. Our hopes were that Nature's Grace and O'Hern Stock Farms could work together to help continue our agricultural legacy. We as a family are good stewards of the land and NGW is an extension of this sentiment.

This is a family affair! Please tell us a little about your family.

This is indeed a family affair, with myself, my husband Larry Joe, and our four sons all playing a part in the cannabis company. Our oldest son, Patrick, does the market branding and outreach for NGW. Our second son, Tim, is head of operations and legal matters for NGW. Our younger sons Dan and Matt are not involved in the day-to-day operations at the cannabis farm, although their experience and leadership is utilized. With myself as CEO and my husband as CFO, we co-lead Nature's Grace. I especially appreciate Larry Joe for his knowledge and experience in farming. It is what has driven our family and helped our brand's success.

As one of the only family-owned-and-operated cultivation

centers in Illinois, do you feel added pressure to perform well in the Illinois marketplace?

The short answer is yes. When we started this, we felt we had to prove to ourselves and especially to our local area that this was a real business, not a fly-by-night that was going to hurt the community. We like to operate traditionally as we have in the many years within the agricultural world of operations. As such, it is important that we do healthily engage in the pressures we face in this new market and create a positive impact through our company's practices and values.

Is having a cannabis cultivation center more stressful than running a typical farm? What are the stressors?

We always feel pressure to perform well. With hard work and determination, we strive to be the best we can be at whatever we are growing. Farming in general has a lot of regulations that must be followed, and running a cannabis cultivation is no different. We prioritize our business's organizational structure and for it to be in line with the standards we are supposed to abide by. The cannabis industry is still very new, and so this entire process has been a learning experience that we're grateful to endeavor.

A big thank you to Kelley for taking the time to talk cannabis with us and explore Nature's Grace's growing legacy in the Illinois market.

The rest of Kelley's interview may be found online at chicagoreader.com/ngwspark

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