

# BIPOCANN, Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition, Nolef Turns and Columbia Care Join Forces to Drive Social Equity Opportunities in Virginia Cannabis Industry

*Local Cannabis Organizations Unite to Educate, Support and Provide Access to Cannabis-Related Services and Opportunities for BIPOC Communities*

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [Columbia Care Inc.](#) (NEO: CCHW) (CSE: CCHW) (OTCQX: CCHWF) (FSE: 3LP) (“Columbia Care” or the “Company”), announced today it is partnering with three organizations – [BIPOCANN](#), [Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition](#) (VMCC) and [Nolef Turns](#) – to offer social equity-driven resources for the developing cannabis community in Virginia.

This group of partners is dedicated to ensuring that Virginia’s BIPOC community has viable, competitive opportunities in the market, and supports three elements critical to effective social equity initiatives — justice reform, entrepreneurship and mentorship, and equitable representation. Columbia Care will be providing financial and educational resources to reach as many individuals across the Commonwealth as possible.

- **Justice reform:** Nolef Turns provides direct services to justice-involved individuals; advocacy that raises awareness of the need for resentencing, ending the war on drugs, probation and parole reform; and an expedited path to automatic expungements. Learn more about their [program offerings](#).
- **Entrepreneurship and mentorship:** VMCC is committed to providing training and economic opportunities for individuals, especially those impacted by cannabis arrests, interested in pursuing a career in cannabis. Learn more about their [upcoming boot camps](#) for aspiring social equity entrepreneurs.
- **Equitable BIPOC representation:** BIPOCANN is working to make the cannabis industry more accessible and profitable for BIPOC and other under-represented populations through their growing membership network designed to connect cannabis industry companies to diverse businesses and suppliers. Learn more about their [network and upcoming webinars](#).

“The emerging Virginia cannabis market presents a new, unique, and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for historically marginalized communities to build economic wealth through entrepreneurship and business ownership,” said Ernest Toney, founder of BIPOCANN. “I am excited to partner with Columbia Care to make the industry more accessible for the next wave of minority cannabis business leaders in Virginia, and look forward to BIPOCANN being a vehicle for change in my native state.”

“This type of social equity work is not just about getting a job, it’s about leveling up lives,” said Paul McLean, founder of VMCC. “This is an opportunity for the Commonwealth to create a cannabis ecosystem that is built around economic inclusion. With this network of partners, we are accelerating work that I thought would take years and implementing it in just months.”

“We are a grassroots group and our work is heart to heart. It was significant to get involved in the cannabis conversation to ensure people who have been disproportionately impacted by the failed war on drugs are at the center of the end of prohibition,” said Sheba Williams, founder of Nolef Turns. “We want to make sure this legal process actually benefits the people who need it. This partnership will have a lasting impression on our work. We’ll be able to reach more people who have been impacted by criminal legal systems and want to learn more about expungement and cannabis.”

“Undoing the harms of prohibition requires more than laws--it takes community, outreach and resources,” said Ngjiste Abebe, Vice President of Public Policy at Columbia Care. “As the market leader in Virginia, we want to see a thriving cannabis economy in which everyone can take part, especially those who have been disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. While Virginians wait for adult use laws to be finalized, partnerships like this can help prepare impacted communities to benefit from economic opportunities that have been explicitly created for them. We look forward to working with these partners and local officials to support an expanded, more diverse, more impactful cannabis community in Virginia.”

### **About BIPOCANN**

BIPOCANN is a small business that works to shape a more accessible and profitable cannabis industry for BIPOC entrepreneurs, business owners, and professionals in the legal markets of the Americas. The business bridges industry gaps in BIPOC representation through education, consulting, and a growing membership network that connects cannabis industry companies to diverse vendors and suppliers. For more information on BIPOCANN, please visit [www.bipocann.com](http://www.bipocann.com).

### **About Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition (VMCC)**

The Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition (VMCC), headquartered in Newport News, is a pioneering 501(c)4 nonprofit organization founded in 2021 that empowers Black and Brown communities to become shareholders in the cannabis industry. The company promotes economic empowerment through equitable ownership, employment, and purposeful reallocation of tax revenue in all sectors of Virginia's regulated cannabis industry. The Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition is now offering cannabis industry, educational boot camps for entrepreneurs most impacted by the war on drugs. For more information, visit <http://vmccequity.org>.

### **About Nolef Turns**

Nolef Turns is on a mission to reduce recidivism by helping those with court and justice involvement successfully thrive post-conviction. Our vision is to be a leader in decreasing the prison population by supporting and empowering those who are most affected by crime, trauma, and incarceration. Our work thrives on dignity and respect for others. To truly address the past harms of the failed war on drugs and to achieve true social equity, it is our

duty to center people first in cannabis conversations. To learn more about our services, to get involved in advocacy and to support our work, please visit [www.noleftturns.org](http://www.noleftturns.org).

## **About Columbia Care**

Columbia Care is one of the largest and most experienced cultivators, manufacturers and providers of cannabis products and related services, with licenses in 18 U.S. jurisdictions and the EU. Columbia Care operates 130 facilities including 99 dispensaries and 31 cultivation and manufacturing facilities, including those under development. Columbia Care is one of the original providers of medical cannabis in the U.S. and now delivers industry-leading products and services to both the medical and adult-use markets. In 2021, the company launched Cannabist, its new retail brand, creating a national dispensary network that leverages proprietary technology platforms. The company offers products spanning flower, edibles, oils and tablets, and manufactures popular brands including Seed & Strain, Triple Seven, gLeaf, Classix, Press, Amber and Platinum Label CBD. For more information on Columbia Care, please visit [www.col-care.com](http://www.col-care.com).

## **Caution Concerning Forward-Looking Statements**

This press release contains certain statements that constitute forward-looking information within the meaning of applicable securities laws and reflect the Company's current expectations regarding future events. The Company has made assumptions with regard to its ability to execute on brand and product initiatives, which although considered reasonable by the Company, may prove to be incorrect and are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results, performance or achievements of the Company to be materially different from those expressed or implied by any forward-looking information. Securityholders should review the risk factors discussed under "Risk Factors" in Columbia Care's Annual Information Form dated March 31, 2021, filed with the applicable Canadian securities regulatory authorities on SEDAR at [www.sedar.com](http://www.sedar.com) and described from time to time in documents filed by the Company with Canadian securities regulatory authorities.

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