

2021

**VICENTE
SEDERBERG**
LLP

IMPACT REPORT



INTRODUCTION

For twelve years, Vicente Sederberg LLP (VS) has counseled thousands of clients in the cannabis industry. Born from the movement to decriminalize and legalize cannabis in Colorado, VS has never lost its sense of purpose to provide impact and positively contribute to the communities that we touch.

In this inaugural 2021 Impact Report, we reflect on our work over the past year, celebrate our commitment to community, and look forward to a future of positive, meaningful, and measurable impact.



KEY IMPACT DEPARTMENT HIRES

In 2021, Vicente Sederberg fully committed to building scalable programs to address community impact, diversity, equity & inclusion (DEI), and sustainability with a couple of key hires.

In April 2021, the firm recruited [Marc Ross](#), a cannabis industry veteran with nearly 30 years of experience as an environmental attorney and environmental, social, & governance (ESG) professional, to be Head of [Impact & ESG](#). In addition to counseling external clients, he is tasked with creating internal programs around employee and community engagement, as well as sustainability initiatives to address the growing workforce and geographical footprint of Vicente Sederberg.

VS alumna [Kim Napoli](#) and former senior director of corporate social responsibility and diversity programs at Parallel was recruited as Director of DEI in July 2021. In addition to her client-facing work, Kim is working hand-in-hand with VS Director of HR Taji Jordan and the DEI committee to drive the DEI strategy for the firm. This new strategy includes increased recruitment of diverse candidates, establishing benchmarks around supplier diversity, and creating employee resources groups (which are directly related to inclusion).

As leaders of the Impact & ESG practice, Marc and Kim serve on the DEI and Pro Bono Committees and implemented the new Community Engagement and Sustainability Committees. In addition, they took on new leadership roles within the US Cannabis Council and maintain impactful leadership roles with other public and non-profit organizations.

PRO BONO & LOW-BONO WORK

With a commitment to the legal profession's longstanding tradition of providing free and low-cost legal services to those least able to afford them, VS's pro bono activities generally fall into nine focus areas that reflect our core values of compassion, justice, diversity, liberty, and social responsibility.

From repairing drug war damage through expungements/record sealings and helping to set up cannabis social equity candidates for success in a complicated industry, to developing industry associations, providing guidance to community-based non-profit organizations, and fighting for clients and the industry through impact litigation, VS attorneys and staff delivered over one thousand hours of free and discounted legal assistance to dozens of organizations and needy individuals in 2021.

In fact, 63 VS employees donated over 1,300 hours of pro bono assistance to 27 companies and individuals. Similarly, over the course of the year, 23 VS attorneys and staff reduced their hourly rates on six matters totaling over 260 hours.

63
EMPLOYEES

1300
HOURS

27
CLIENTS



Expungements & Record Sealing

A significant part of the firm's pro bono work involved petitioning state agencies for the expungement and/or record sealing of previously convicted individuals. Under the leadership of VS attorney Jason Adelstone and in partnership with Colorado's [The Color of Cannabis](#), a number of individuals were identified for expungement/record-sealing eligibility.



VS has successfully sealed every motion we have filed.

Many of these sealings were related to convictions that occurred over 20 years ago. Convictions that were keeping our clients from job advancement and/or career opportunities.

One woman we helped, a grandmother, had a marijuana possession conviction that kept her from realizing her dream of working as a real estate agent. Since the order of sealing was granted, she began working for a real estate firm and hopes to get her license once she learns the ropes.

Another individual we helped is in the process of applying for his residency card. The client was born in Mexico but has lived in the U.S. for over 20 years. He was told that his conviction for possessing marijuana would require him to move back to Mexico for at least two years—unless he could get that record sealed. His entire family lives in the U.S., so moving back to Mexico was a scary and unthinkable option.

Thankfully, we got his record sealed, which will hopefully help him avoid relocating to Mexico. Since state sealing does not guarantee that the federal records will also be sealed, we can only hope he will not face that prospect.

A different individual stated, *"Expungement of my records has changed my life tremendously. I was never able to get a decent job. Since expungement, I landed a job as a leasing specialist. I will be coming up on a year in July. Without the expungement, this would not be possible. The expungement also allowed me to advocate for my daughter as she has medical issues and I have to care for my grandchildren to prevent them from going to social services. I just wanted to say how thankful I am and how blessed I am to be able to have gotten my record expunged. I'm sure it's only up from here. I now plan on staying with my job for two years so that I can become a homeowner and provide a better life for my family as well as my grandchildren. I couldn't have done it without you. Blessings to your company and I hope that you will continue to bless other people as you did me. Thank you!"*

Record Sealing By the Numbers

33

**Intakes of
Record Sealing Clients**

10

**Petitions for
Record Sealing
Filed***

10

**Successful Expungements/
Sealed Records***

*including motions to vacate and motions to seal

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION IMPACT

Throughout 2021, the VS Team actively assisted with the work undertaken by national and regional non-profit organizations.

Cannabis Voter Project (CVP)

The [Cannabis Voter Project](#) informs, registers and turns out voters interested in cannabis policy. Launched by civic engagement organization HeadCount.org in 2018, the Cannabis Voter Project believes it's essential for the cannabis community to be an active and informed voting bloc. VS attorneys Christian Sederberg and Marc Ross served on the organization's Advisory Board, resulting in a significant impact in 2021.



The CVP launched the [Cannabis in Common](#) campaign in 2021 to generate support for the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act (CAOA). In partnership with the US Cannabis Council, and amplified with multi-media marketing pieces starring Seth Rogan and Sarah Silverman, the campaign:

- ❖ Had 47,470 visitors to [cannabisincommon.org](#) since launching
- ❖ Resulted in 14,152 people taking action, for a total of 43,667 emails sent to members of Congress (most people send 3 emails when they take action)
- ❖ Had a conversion rate of 30%, meaning 3 out of 10 people who visited CannabisInCommon.Org ended up taking action
- ❖ Saw more than 10,000 people act in the first 48 hours

Colorado Independent Venue Association

Provided pro bono legal assistance to [Colorado Independent Venue Association](#) in filing their 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status application with the IRS.

Multi-Disciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS)

Working with [MAPS](#), VS provided pro bono harm reduction training to city of Denver first responders related to the prior and current psilocybin bills.

Microdosing Collective

Assisted with the formation of a new non-profit advocacy organization, [Microdosing Collective](#), to promote the healthy utilization of entheogens via microdosing.

National Hispanic Cannabis Council (NHCC)

Provided leadership, vision, and pro bono legal and marketing assistance to form the [NHCC](#), a national non-profit organization with a mission to educate the U.S. Hispanic community on the health, wellness and economic aspects of cannabis to empower their support and participation in the industry.



Several VS attorneys have contributed to the early success of NHCC, including NHCC Co-Founder Brian Vicente, who serves as the Board President, Jennifer Cabrera, and Jerrico Perez. In addition, VS attorneys advised the organization on a regional chapter structure and provided experts for informational webinars.

Thanks in part to VS leadership in NHCC, the organization accomplished the following in 2021:

- ❖ Developed an HR platform to post employment opportunities for Hispanics interested in cannabis career opportunities
- ❖ Created a Paid Member HUB to contain economic empowerment tools for U.S. Hispanic cannabis owners and those interested in entering the cannabis industry
- ❖ Developed a methodology to collect, organize and repackage cannabis medical research onto the NHCC website
- ❖ Implemented a monthly series of educational seminars on health and wellness and cannabis legal issues and implications, in which VS attorneys participated
- ❖ Deployed the 2021 "[State of the Hispanic Cannabis Industry](#)" report to better understand Hispanic entrepreneurs' attitudes and relationships towards cannabis
- ❖ Developed a partnership to collect, organize and update all state/local cannabis laws/regulations and licenses for the Member HUB
- ❖ Developed a process to identify state/local cannabis policymakers to begin to influence for more Hispanic social equity licenses
- ❖ Became the trusted advisor on Hispanics and cannabis to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumers' team and Congressional Hispanic Caucus—partnering with them on the passage of the CAO

New Approach

Assisted New Approach PAC, a 527 non-profit organization, with the drafting of Colorado state ballot measures known as the [Natural Medicine Health Act](#), to provide Coloradans with safe access to psychedelic therapies.

Religion of No Religion

Provided legal assistance to form a new non-profit Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNR) church of no religion.

U.S. Cannabis Council (USCC)

The [United States Cannabis Council](#) is the broadest and most diverse collection of organizations, businesses, and individuals ever to assemble to legalize cannabis in the United States. As a first of its kind strategic alliance, the USCC combines the collective resources of many of the largest cannabis companies, prominent advocacy organizations and hundreds of thousands of individuals to speak in one voice for ending federal prohibition and creating an equitable and values-driven cannabis industry with social, financial, and environmental benefits shared by all. As one of the founding members of the USCC, VS plays a significant role in the organization:

- ❖ Christian Sederberg serves on multiple USCC committees and served as the organization's Board President until mid-2021, when he migrated into the role of Chair Emeritus
- ❖ Marc Ross serves as the Vice-Chair to the USCC ESG Stewardship Committee
- ❖ Kim Napoli serves as the Co-Chair to the USCC Diversity & Inclusion Committee and participates in the organization's DEI Task Force



Virginia Minority Cannabis Coalition

VS attorneys provided pro bono legal assistance to form the [VA Minority Cannabis Coalition](#), a 501(c)(4) with a mission to empower Black and Brown communities to become shareholders in the cannabis industry.



IMPACT INVESTING

VS assisted in raising funds for psychedelic tech company [Maya Health](#). Maya Health is a Colorado Public Benefit Corporation with a mission to empower providers with technology they need to map care journeys.

IMPACT LITIGATION

Under the leadership of VS attorney Shane Pennington, the firm engaged in a number of strategic litigation matters designed to create impactful results across the cannabis, hemp, and psychedelics landscape.

In 2021, the following was achieved:

- ❖ **Texas Smokable Hemp Litigation:** After a full trial on the merits, we convinced a Texas trial court to declare a state law and agency rule banning smokable hemp products unconstitutional. We defended that victory before a Texas intermediate appellate court. The case is currently pending before the [Texas Supreme Court](#)
- ❖ **Federal Right to Try Litigation:** Pro bono challenge to the DEA's refusal to accommodate [state and federal right to try laws](#) to permit a Washington-based palliative care physician to obtain psilocybin to treat terminally-ill cancer patients. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit dismissed the petition after finding the DEA's decision didn't constitute "final agency action"

Our team has since submitted two petitions to the DEA which, if granted, would permit our client to access psilocybin for therapeutic use with his patients. 1) a petition requesting an administrative waiver of the Controlled Substances Act's registration requirements, and 2) a petition to reschedule psilocybin to schedule II based on a finding that psilocybin has a "currently accepted medical use with severe restrictions." Both petitions remain pending before the DEA

- ❖ **The DEA Grower's Program Rule Challenge:** A petition for review of the [DEA rulemaking establishing new standards](#) to govern the licensing of marijuana growers necessary to facilitate urgently needed scientific research into marijuana's medical uses. Shane argued the case before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit earlier this year. The case remains pending before the First Circuit
- ❖ **Hemp Industries Association v. DEA:** A petition for review of the [DEA interim final rule implementing the 2018 Farm Bill](#). Shane will argue the case before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on April 19, 2022



SOCIAL EQUITY & SOCIAL IMPACT CLIENTS

VS attorneys and staff provided pro and low bono assistance to a number of social equity clients in 2021, including:

- ❖ Provided legal assistance to [Growing Talent](#), a social equity cannabis tech company, to navigate legal hurdles in deploying services to enable multiple delivery locations in California
- ❖ Fiscally sponsored, oversaw the activities of, and assisted with intellectual property issues of the [Cannabis Impact Fund](#), a vehicle that enables cannabis companies to deploy resources to racial justice, environmental sustainability and community engagement organizations
- ❖ Assisted Finest Trees LLC in applying for and obtaining Social Equity Program participant certification from the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission
- ❖ Provided legal assistance to [Rolling Relief](#), a Black-owned and social equity-certified adult-use cannabis delivery company in Massachusetts
- ❖ Assisted social impact brand [40 Tons](#) in establishing partnerships with preeminent quality operators, in addition to intellectual property licensing agreements
- ❖ Counseled Denver dispensary clients regarding productive partnerships with social equity transporters for delivery opportunities
- ❖ Coordinated closely with the City of Aurora on new social equity delivery requirements
- ❖ Held extensive discussions with the City of Denver regarding social equity requirements for new licensees and delivery permit holders
- ❖ Conducted numerous intake consultations and engaged with various social equity licensees in Colorado to assist them in forming and licensing new businesses



DEPARTMENT & PRACTICE GROUP IMPACT

Entheogens & Emerging Therapies

VS attorneys drafted a [successful ballot measure](#) in Detroit to decriminalize psychedelics.

Hemp & Cannabinoids

In addition to providing wide-ranging and effective counsel to the hemp industry, VS's hemp practice created positive regional and national impact through some of the matters on which they worked:

- ❖ VS hemp attorneys represent the plaintiffs in the HIA & RE Botanicals, Inc. v DEA case. Oral arguments commence in mid-April. [Watch this briefing](#) for an explanation of the case and its impact on the industry
- ❖ Worked collaboratively with VS Strategies, hemp, cannabis and other relevant stakeholders to develop sound policy surrounding Delta-8 and intoxicating hemp products to ensure consumer safety and the success and stability of the hemp and cannabis industries
- ❖ Collaborated with Revive Hemp, Alquist 3D printing, and Governor Polis's office to 1) develop a plan for building homes in Colorado with sustainable 3D printing technology, 2) develop a plan for incorporating hempcrete into building materials once building codes are approved, and 3) to support the production of hempcrete in Colorado
- ❖ Continued to serve as policy and legal contributors to leading industry organizations, such as National Industrial Hemp Council and California Cannabis Council. Commented through industry organizations on federal hemp and Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) legislation
- ❖ Structured and facilitated a strategic partnership between Texas client Mason Berry and leading agricultural university Texas A&M to study cannabis genetics via the hemp plant and to address hot hemp, study terpenes/minor cannabinoids, optimize cannabis breeding technology, and research various types of hemp genetics and hemp products



Corporate & Business

Provided assistance to a social equity licensee on a deferred and discounted basis in connection with a financing.



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As noted, in mid-2021 VS hired Kim Napoli as the firm's first Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Since the hiring of new Director of Human Resources, Taji Jordan, Kim has been working with him to evaluate current DEI practices, conduct a DEI survey of all employees, and develop a proposed DEI Plan for 2022. In addition, the following was achieved in 2021:

- ❖ A firm-wide 4-day DEI training (and report) by Dr. Genene Duran
- ❖ Organization of the Vicente Sederberg Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee chaired by the Director of Diversity Equity and Inclusion
- ❖ In December of 2021, the DEI Committee commissioned a DEI Survey of the VS workforce to launch in Q1 of 2022
- ❖ Approved a Pay Equity Analysis to be executed in 2022
- ❖ Onboarded a vendor analysis platform to allow us to track vendor/supplier diversity

Human Resources

During the COVID-19 pandemic, VS leadership maintained office health and safety protocols to minimize outbreaks amongst VS employees. Protocols included flexible work-from-home, travel minimization, meeting limitations, vaccination and masking requirements. As a result, the health and safety of VS employees was generally maintained. No VS employees became seriously ill with COVID-19 so as to require hospitalization.

In addition, due to COVID-19, a new sick policy was instituted in which nonexempt employees were offered Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave to take time off and care for themselves or loved ones if they fell ill with COVID-19. Once that federally-offered time off expired, VS created a policy to offer COVID-19 sick time, and it is still available for nonexempt employees to get vaccinated, recover, take time off when ill, etc.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

In 2021, Vicente Sederberg LLP made over \$70,000 in donations to the following charitable, civic, and professional organizations, including:

- ❖ Black Cannabis Equity Initiative
- ❖ Cannabis Certification Council
- ❖ Cannabis Trade Federation
- ❖ Cascadia Now!
- ❖ Chacruna Institute for Psychedelic Plant Medicines
- ❖ Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
- ❖ Core Empowerment LLC
- ❖ Marijuana Policy Project
- ❖ National Cannabis Industry Association
- ❖ One Colorado Education Fund
- ❖ US Cannabis Council
- ❖ University of Colorado Foundation

COMMITTEES

VS DEI Committee

VS's DEI Committee is a cross-functional team with a mission to create, nurture, and leverage a diverse and equitable culture where our staff, associates, clients, and communities are included, valued, and respected. 2021 was a year of evaluation of current practices and setting priorities for execution over the next 12-24 months. The committee has prioritized surveys of the firm's diversity and commitment to inclusion, diversity in recruitment and implementing "blind" hiring practices, diversifying suppliers and partners, the launch of Employee Resource Groups, a review of marketing materials, and unconscious bias training.

VS Green Team

The VS Green Team is the firm's internal, cross-practice, cross-functional team with a mission to build a sustainable and equitable community while reducing the firm's environmental impact. Look for more from this exciting new volunteer effort in 2022 as we benchmark our current environmental sustainability efforts and drive education and outreach to continuously lessen the environmental impact from our firm and our individual practices.

VS Community Engagement Committee

VS's Community Engagement Committee is a cross-functional team with a mission to engage VS employees, clients, and other organizations to positively impact the communities in which we have a presence. As was the case with the DEI Committee and Green Team, this new committee spent 2021 organizing, recruiting, and setting goals for the next year. Plans for 2022 include organized employee and community engagement events, fund drives for urgent causes that leverage VS employee generosity, firm matching dollars, creative partnerships to maximize impact, and creating incentives for employees to "grow their impact." In addition, the committee is implementing new procedures to better capture and track total firm impact, outputs, and outcomes.



VS Pro Bono Committee

In 2021, VS's Pro Bono Committee implemented new procedures for the intake and evaluation of potential clients for discounted and free legal and business counseling. The committee also regularly discusses particular matters for which pro and low bono services were requested and is working on ways to more efficiently track and communicate the firm's pro bono activities.

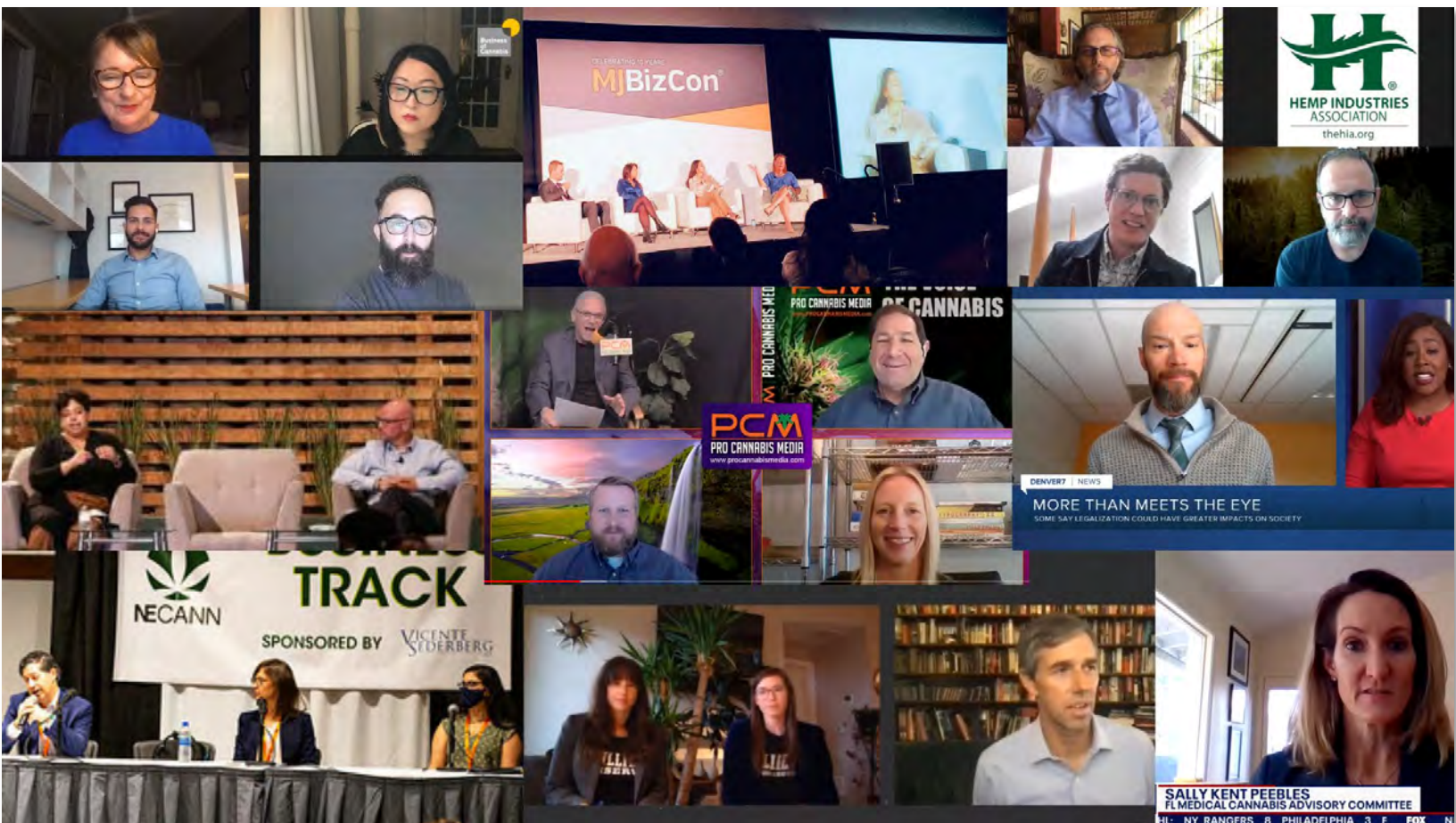
VS Wellness Team

The VS Wellness Team is a cross-functional team with a mission to benefit the physical and mental well-being of all VS employees. The committee hosts bi-weekly virtual meditation and office yoga sessions, as well as monthly group bonding activities and the dissemination of monthly wellness tips.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

VS Professionals in Action

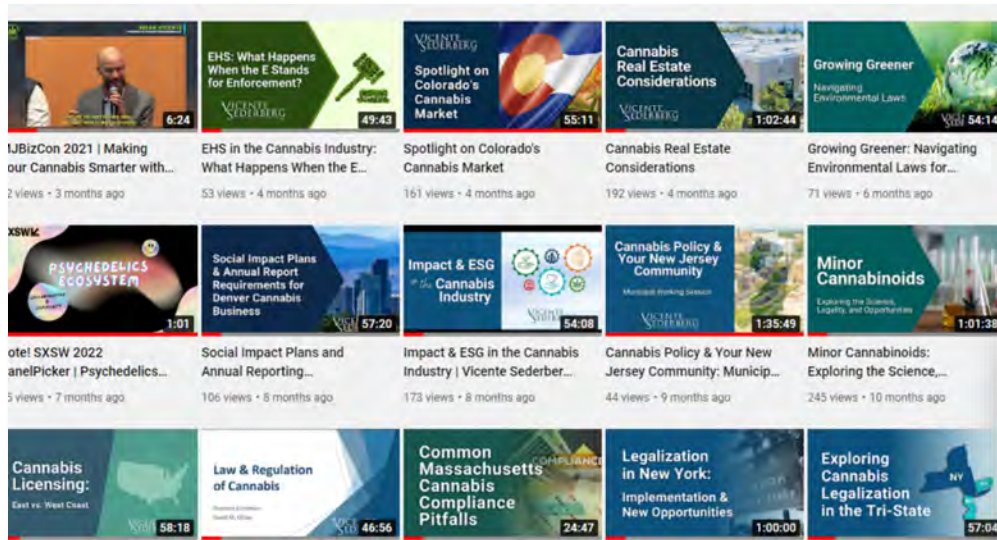
In 2021, over 25 VS professionals spoke at more than 77 conferences, symposiums, and third-party webinars, dropping knowledge and bringing impact to thousands of attendees.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CONTINUED

In addition to external events, in 2021, the VS Team accomplished the following thought leadership efforts:

- ❖ Authored or contributed to 54 [VS Insights](#)
- ❖ Participated in 14 VS-hosted [webinars](#)
- ❖ Quoted or mentioned in 514 [media articles](#)



Coloradans convicted of marijuana possession could easily get their record sealed under new bill

Vicente Sederberg: Not Your Average Law Firm

Marijuana cultivator-manufacturer looking to open in Wareham gets ZBA OK

COVID-19 Relief Vape Laws May Be Disrupting Hemp Shipping

DC Judge Says Challenge To DEA Hemp Rule In Wrong Court

Which Countries Will Likely Legalize Cannabis In 2022 And Why Isn't The US Among Them?

N.J. minority cannabis entrepreneurs get boost for state's biggest industry event in June.

How One Weed Company Is Skirting Marijuana Rules to Sell THC Products in All 50 States

Marijuana is federally illegal. But what if you could get high off hemp?

A LIFE IN A DAY: Emily Hackman: Cannabis Business Licensing Specialist

How cannabis companies can improve environmental and social impact

A LIFE IN A DAY: Sebastian Casalenuovo: Vicente Sederberg

Prospects for adult-use cannabis legalization loom large in Connecticut

Is 2021 the recovery year for hemp CBD?



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