

Kassandra Frederique,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE

Kassandra Frederique is the executive director of the Drug Policy Alliance, a national nonprofit that works to end the war on drugs—which has disproportionately harmed Black, Latinx, Indigenous, immigrant, and LGBTQ communities—and build alternatives grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights.

During her time at DPA, Frederique has built and led innovative campaigns around policing, the overdose crisis, and marijuana legalization—each with a consistent racial justice focus. Her advocacy, and all of the Drug Policy Alliance’s work, lies at the intersection of health, equity, autonomy, and justice. She has mobilized cities to rethink their approach to drug policy from the ground up, and has helped bring the dialogue around safer consumption spaces to the national level through strategic organizing and partner development. Among other victories, Frederique was the architect of the campaign that cut the number of New York City marijuana arrests by more than 99% since 2010, curtailing the city’s infamous reign as the marijuana arrest capital of the country.

Throughout her work, Frederique has been a powerful advocate for working closely with people who have been directly impacted by the war on drugs, and she has built strong alliances with partners in New York and beyond. She has been instrumental in grounding the national drug policy conversation around reparative justice and restitution for communities harmed by the war on drugs. Additionally, Frederique is actively working with the In Our Names Network and other efforts across the country to resist drug war-fueled state violence.

She has been featured in the *New York Times*, MSNBC, *USA Today*, National Public Radio, and the Netflix documentary *Grass is Greener*. She has received numerous awards, including the Activist Award from SEIU32BJ, New York City Council Women of Distinction, VOCAL New York’s Joe Bostic Advocacy Award, National Advocates for Pregnant Women Emerging Leader award, and was recognized on both *Essence Magazine’s* Woke 100 and *The Root’s* ROOT100. A *New Yorker*, Frederique holds a M.S. in Social Work from Columbia University and a B.S. in Industrial Labor Relations at Cornell University.