

Kevin Reed: A Trailblazer in Cannabis Advocacy

Introduction

Kevin Reed is the Founder and President of The Green Cross (TGC), one of San Francisco's first medical cannabis dispensaries. He is well known in the community as a cannabis activist and leader. Since establishing The Green Cross in 2004, Reed has become a prominent voice for patient rights and sensible cannabis regulations.

Kevin Reed: From Patient to Advocate

Alabama native Kevin Reed is the President of The Green Cross. He moved to San Francisco from Mobile, Alabama, in 1999 after the passage of Proposition 215. A car accident left him with serious chronic hip and back pain, and after arriving in San Francisco, he soon discovered the health benefits of cannabis for treating his chronic pain.

At the time, purchasing medical cannabis from local dispensaries was extremely expensive, so Reed began growing cannabis for himself at home. Soon after, he had an unpleasant encounter with local law enforcement that led him to mistrust the system. This experience inspired his lifelong cannabis activism, and since 2004, he has fought for the rights of patients and cannabis users throughout San Francisco and California.

In 2005–2006, Reed partnered with other medical cannabis dispensary operators, patients, and advocates to push for stronger cannabis legislation in San Francisco. He later served on San Francisco's Medical Cannabis Task Force (2010–2012) and Cannabis State Legalization Task Force (2016–2018), where he continued lobbying for affordability and access while advocating for better local laws before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

The Green Cross: History and Mission

The Green Cross (TGC) is a licensed, award-winning cannabis retailer located at 4218 Mission Street, San Francisco, California. TGC has built a reputation as a trusted, community-focused cannabis dispensary dedicated to safe, legal, and affordable access to cannabis.

Our History

- **Founded in 2004:** Opened its first location in Noe Valley, gaining immediate recognition for its professional, member-centric operation style.
- **"Members First" Philosophy:** TGC established the "members first" mantra, which has since been widely adopted across the cannabis industry.

- **Innovative Delivery Model:** In 2006, TGC temporarily transformed into a delivery-only service to continue serving members while navigating regulatory challenges.
- **Current Location:** On June 15, 2013, TGC opened its permanent storefront in the Excelsior District, after a six-year search for an ideal location.
- **Licensed Retailer:** As of January 6, 2018, TGC holds both local and state licenses to sell cannabis for medical and adult use.
- **Over Two Decades of Service:** Today, after over 21 years, TGC continues to offer a wide range of cannabis products with friendly service and competitive pricing.

Our Values

TGC's mission is to provide members with high-quality cannabis at affordable prices while fostering a safe, welcoming, and community-driven environment. The dispensary is dedicated to:

- Ensuring comfort and accessibility for members, with professional and courteous staff.
- Offering compassionate care services beyond traditional dispensary operations.
- Advocating for social equity, including fair wages and opportunities for local residents.
- Supporting the SF Cannabis Equity Program, which aids individuals impacted by the War on Drugs.
- Enhancing neighborhood safety, with dedicated security, parking solutions, and active participation in local improvement efforts.
- Philanthropy: Since the passage of adult-use cannabis in 2016, TGC has donated over \$650,000 to local non-profits and advocacy organizations.

Founding a Welcoming Cannabis Dispensary

From the outset, Kevin Reed envisioned a different kind of cannabis dispensary—one that was friendly, professional, and set a new standard. A former video store manager, Reed wanted to create a dispensary that was as stylish and customer friendly as any retail environment. He even said he “wanted to bring a little southern hospitality to the cannabis club,” reflecting his Alabama roots (San Francisco Magazine, 2005).

In Reed's view, The Green Cross *“has the privilege of being the first. We want to set an example, to set a higher standard — not just for clubs in the city but also around the nation,”* he said in 2005 when discussing the dispensary's mission. By emphasizing customer service and a welcoming atmosphere, Reed cultivated a space where, as he put it, *“We have a great time here”* while still maintaining a professional medical focus (The New York Times, 2005).

The Legal Case That Led to The Green Cross

Before The Green Cross even opened, Reed faced legal trouble that ultimately led to a key agreement allowing him to sell cannabis to medical patients with a doctor's note. The Kamala Harris District Attorney's Office, which had just come into power, offered Reed a deal: plead guilty for a \$100 fine and informal probation, with everything erased if he stayed out of trouble. This moment is what inspired him to open The Green Cross.

The Green Cross: Achievements and Contributions

TGC has been at the **forefront of industry innovation**, achieving key milestones:

- **First Land-Use Permit:** Pioneered the **first-ever dispensary land-use permit** in San Francisco.
- **Medical Cannabis Permitting:** Successfully navigated city regulations to become **one of the first licensed delivery-only dispensaries**.
- **Historical Sales:** Conducted the **first-ever legal recreational cannabis sale** in San Francisco on day one of legalization.
- **San Francisco's Longest-Running Licensed Dispensary:** Over **two decades of continuous operation**, setting the standard for compliance, safety, and quality.
- **Award-Winning In-House Brand: IncrediMeds**, known for its **high-quality cannabis edibles and topicals**.
- **Community Investment:** Active participation in the **SF Cannabis Equity Program** and over **\$650,000 donated** to local non-profits.

Legacy and Ongoing Impact

Throughout his journey, Kevin Reed's dedication to helping others has remained clear. Reflecting on his work, he once remarked, *"It's so rewarding to know that you're helping people."* This simple statement encapsulates Reed's legacy as a compassionate advocate.

From a single club in 2004 to a model dispensary renowned for activism, safety, and service, Kevin Reed's influence is evident in the safer, more patient-focused cannabis industry that exists today.

Thank you for being part of The Green Cross's 21-year legacy of excellence, innovation, and community impact!