



AWH Appoints Danielle Drummond Vice President of Social Equity

November 10, 2021

Seasoned Social Justice Champion to Oversee, Expand Company-Wide Commitment & Responsibility to Equity, Diversity & Restorative Justice - Starting with New York

NEW YORK, Nov. 10, 2021 /CNW/ - **Ascend Wellness Holdings, Inc.** ("AWH" or the "Company") (CSE: AAWH.U) (OTCQX: AAWH), a multi-state, vertically integrated cannabis operator, today announced the hiring of Danielle Drummond to serve as Vice President of Social Equity, a newly created position in which she will develop and lead community partnerships and restorative justice initiatives across the Company's existing five-state footprint and spearhead its entrance into the New York market.



Drummond has more than 15 years of experience in combatting racial bias and helping establish culturally responsive practices in the fields of education, criminal justice, and community development. Before joining AWH, she served as Deputy Chief of Community Engagement at the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in Boston, MA.

One of Drummond's first tasks in her new role will be to work in partnership with AWH New York's recently appointed President, T. Andrew Brown, in solidifying the Company's commitment to being an equity leader in the burgeoning Empire State adult-use market, creating programs and partnerships that advance its commitment to maximizing access and benefits for members of communities that have been disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition.

"One of the main reasons I joined AWH was its dedication to addressing the damage inflicted on lower-income communities of color by the War on Drugs," said Brown. "New York's cannabis law includes some of the nation's strongest equity provisions, and I am dedicated to ensuring that this Company leads the way in not merely fulfilling but surpassing those requirements. Danielle's deep knowledge and this experience in this space will be critical as we move forward toward accomplishing that goal, and I welcome her to the team."

Drummond and Brown will quickly move to implement a number of key initiatives in New York, partnering with local organizations and community leaders to build a strong foundation on which AWH will grow as it seeks to enter the state's adult-use market. These will include:

- **Expungement Clinics:** AWH will seek to collaborate with nonprofits and legal organizations across the state to sponsor and coordinate expungement clinics in the greater Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, Utica, and New York City regions to help realize a critical aspect of the state's Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA).
- **Incubation Nonprofit:** In recognition that true social equity is, at its core, about business *ownership*, not simply employment opportunities, AWH will launch a nonprofit organization focused on incubating and supporting individuals who qualify as social equity applicants throughout the New York adult-use cannabis licensing process.
- **New York-Specific Diversity Hiring Plan:** AWH recognizes that workforce diversity is key to the integrity of its community commitment. Using its success in other states as a guide, AWH will create a New York-specific plan to promote the hiring, retention, and professional development of Black, Latinx, and Asian individuals, as well as women, veterans, people with disabilities and of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

"Throughout my professional career, I have focused on working with communities in a manner that honors their knowledge, resources, and resilience and creating solutions that are designed to meet their specific needs," Drummond said. "I am excited to bring this experience to AWH and assist in fulfilling its social equity goals. This is a critical undertaking and one that we must get right. We cannot erase the considerable wrongs of cannabis prohibition, but we can – and we will – ensure that those who most deserve to benefit from its legalization are able to do so."

About AWH

AWH is a vertically integrated operator with assets in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Massachusetts, and New Jersey. AWH owns and operates state-of-the-art cultivation facilities, growing award winning strains and producing a curated selection of products. AWH produces and distributes Ozone

branded products. For more information, visit www.awholdings.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This news release includes forward-looking information and statements, which may include, but are not limited to, information and statements regarding the plans, intentions, expectations, estimates, and beliefs of the Company. Words such as "expects", "continue", "will", "anticipates" and "intends" or similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based on the Company's current projections and expectations about future events and financial trends, and on certain assumptions and analysis made by the Company in light of experience and perception of historical trends, current conditions and expected future developments and other factors management believes are appropriate.

Forward-looking information and statements involve and are subject to assumptions and known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors which may cause actual events, results, performance, or achievements of the Company to be materially different from future events, results, performance, and achievements expressed or implied by forward-looking information and statements herein. Such factors include, among others: the risks and uncertainties identified in the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2021, and in the Company's other reports and filings with the applicable Canadian securities regulators and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Although the Company believes that any forward-looking information and statements herein are reasonable, in light of the use of assumptions and the significant risks and uncertainties inherent in such information and statements, there can be no assurance that any such forward-looking information and statements will prove to be accurate, and accordingly readers are advised to rely on their own evaluation of such risks and uncertainties and should not place undue reliance upon such forward-looking information and statements. Any forward-looking information and statements herein are made as of the date hereof, and except as required by applicable laws, the Company assumes no obligation and disclaims any intention to update or revise any forward-looking information and statements herein or to update the reasons that actual events or results could or do differ from those projected in any forward looking information and statements herein, whether as a result of new information, future events or results, or otherwise, except as required by applicable laws.

The CSE has not reviewed, approved, or disapproved the content of this news release.

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