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**GRASSLANDS**  
A JOURNALISM-MINDED AGENCY

## **On-the-Rise PR Agency Honored as Grasslands Founder & CEO Ricardo Baca Named Marketer of the Year by AdCann**

**Veteran Journalist and Agency Entrepreneur Lauded for His Vision and Drive to Elevate Brands, Navigate Industry Hurdles and Stand Out From the Crowd**

**DENVER—Jan. 30, 2019**—As the cannabis industry rapidly expands across North America, many brands are building a national presence, but it's a thorny path that requires unconventional, creative approaches to public relations and marketing. Marketing authority AdCann recently recognized the leaders in this niche, naming Grasslands Founder and CEO [Ricardo Baca](#) Marketer of the Year in the [2018 AdCann Advertising Awards](#).

"As a lifelong journalist who covered this era of historic legalization for years, I value and respect the important work of public relations and marketing in this conversation," Mr. Baca said. "My past two years building Grasslands into a dynamic, full-service agency that supports businesses in all aspects of marketing and communications have been extremely challenging, but I wouldn't trade it for anything. And I'm so psyched about where we're headed as this company continues to grow."



The inaugural AdCann Advertising Awards sought to honor the worthy, celebrate the phenomenal and educate the community. The Toronto-based organization selected North America's top brands, campaigns and executives who are innovators in cannabis communications.

Marketing and advertising in the cannabis industry is unique from any other sector due to the layers of regulations and restrictions in mainstream advertising platforms, including social media. The agencies that support cannabis-related companies must be creative and flexible in solving for these challenges and connecting with consumers.

"Ricardo has paved the way for creative cannabis professionals across the globe," said Colin Bambury, Founder of AdCann. "He is truly an admirable journalist and one of the top thought leaders in the cannabis space. His work has been an inspiration to us at AdCann and we are so proud that he has been voted people's choice for Marketer Of The Year."

Prior to launching Grasslands, Mr. Baca founded and served as the original Editor-in-Chief for groundbreaking news site *The Cannabist*, a vertical of Colorado's largest news organization, *The Denver Post*. Mr. Baca understands the crucial role media plays in any industry, and after spending more than two decades as a reporter, editor and critic, he saw a need to help businesses navigate the complexities of communicating with the media and the mainstream public.

"The continued expansion of cannabis legalization in North America, along with America's long-overdue hemp revival, are putting industry PR needs front and center," Mr. Baca said. "I am so appreciative of my strategic, hardworking team at Grasslands and could not have achieved this honor without them."

The experienced staff at Grasslands: A Journalism-Minded Agency provides an array of services, including strategic media outreach; PR and marketing support; crisis management; thought leadership development that covers writing and speaking engagements; website content creation; social media; and event production.

Grasslands represents established brands and startups in many sectors such as finance, retail, manufacturing, cannabinoid R&D, policy reform and more. Clients from the past year include [BioTrackTHC](#), [Boulder Botanical & Bioscience Laboratory](#), [CannAmerica Brands](#), [Cliintel Capital Management Group](#), [Compassionate Cultivation](#), [ebbu](#), [General Cannabis Corp.](#), [Gofire](#), [Mary Jane's Medicinals](#), the [National Cannabis Industry Association](#), [Resource Innovation Institute](#); [STO Responsible](#), [Wana Brands](#) and [Willie's Remedy](#), among others.

"Advertising and marketing in the cannabis space is different than any other industry in the world," Mr. Bambury added. "Strict regulations on a federal and state level, restrictions on promotion from traditional advertising and new media companies, and overcoming the stigma of a plant that has been wrongly demonized for so many years is forcing cannabis brands and the agencies that work with them to develop novel marketing solutions. We truly believe that cannabis companies will be teaching many other industries how to market in 2040. It is our goal at AdCann to showcase and document this progression for all those interested."

Along with being an entrepreneur, Mr. Baca is an accomplished thought leader in the cannabis space. He's considered to be the world's first cannabis editor for a mainstream news outlet; presented at a TEDx event; was the primary subject of the documentary *Rolling Papers*; and was featured as one of the Brookings Institution's 12 Key People to Watch in Marijuana Policy, *Fortune's* Seven Most Powerful People in America's Marijuana Industry, *Time's* 140 best Twitter feeds and *Sensi's* 24 Cannabis Pioneers Who Matter.

Mr. Baca has provided insight on drug policy and the cannabis industry for *The New York Times*, *Poynter*, *The View*, *The Colbert Report*, *This Week With George Stephanopoulos*, *Buzzfeed*, NPR's *All Things Considered* and *Wait Wait Don't Tell Me*, *The Guardian*, *Esquire*, *Fast Company*, *International Business Times*, Al Jazeera, the BBC and CBC, among others.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Emily Trigg, Grasslands, at 318-564-8195 or [em@mygrasslands.com](mailto:em@mygrasslands.com).

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#### **About Grasslands: A Journalism-Minded Agency**

Grasslands is a full-service boutique agency working with clients in highly regulated industries. A nimble 10-person firm with offices in Denver and Los Angeles, Grasslands specializes in best-in-class Public Relations, Content Marketing, Social Media, Thought Leadership work, Newsletter Campaigns, Book Development and Event Execution for businesses and executives. Founder and CEO Ricardo Baca, a 20-year newspaper veteran, has built a seasoned team with more than six decades of top-level journalism experience at outlets including *Men's Health*, *The Denver Post*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Seventeen*, *The Daily Beast* and *Wonkette*—and PR experience with clients including IKEA North America, Farmers Insurance Group, K12 Inc., REI, Dupage Medical Group, Fisher-Price and Emeril Lagasse (*bam!*). Grasslands has a deep bench of experience supporting clients through product launches, acquisitions and IPOs, crisis management and capital funding initiatives. For more information, please visit [MyGrasslands.com](http://MyGrasslands.com). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

#### **About AdCann**

Based in Toronto, AdCann is an authority on cannabis advertising. The firm features and analyzes the best marijuana-related marketing campaigns, branding, products, people and news. For more information, please visit [AdCann.ca](http://AdCann.ca).