

Drug Policy Alliance
www.drugpolicy.org

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**Leading Drug Policy Reformers to be Honored at Landmark International
Drug Policy Reform Conference in Los Angeles on Saturday, November 5**

**Awardees Recognized for Groundbreaking Work Promoting Sensible
Alternatives to the Drug War**

Leading advocates for alternatives to the war on drugs will be honored at an awards ceremony on Saturday, Nov. 5, 2011 at the International Drug Policy Reform Conference in Los Angeles. The conference is being organized by the Drug Policy Alliance, the nation's leading organization promoting alternatives to the drug war, and is co-sponsored by dozens of other reform organizations. For a complete list, visit: www.reformconference.org.

"Every political movement for freedom and justice has its heroes, yet only a select few ever win the recognition they deserve," said Ethan Nadelmann, executive director of the Drug Policy Alliance. "These awards honor those who have made extraordinary commitments, both publicly and behind the scenes, to advancing more sensible and humane ways of dealing with drugs in our society."

Below are the distinguished award recipients:

The **Edward M. Brecher Award for Achievement in the Field of Media**, which honors those in the media who question official drug war propaganda, goes to the *Huffington Post*. Since the Huffington Post's inception, Arianna Huffington and her Huff Post team have consistently -- and passionately -- called attention to the costs, consequences and alternatives to the war on drugs. With cutting-edge coverage, the Huffington Post has reported in-depth on issues ranging from marijuana legalization efforts in California to the crippling prohibition-related violence in Mexico to the negative racial impacts of the war on drugs.

In the six-and-a-half years since it launched, the Huffington Post has reinvented the ways in which news, information and entertainment are delivered, consumed, and engaged. In the process, it has become a must-read site, attracting 35 million unique visitors a month (more than *The New York Times*), and surpassed one billion page views for the month of October. Dozens of leading drug policy reformers are regular contributors.

Dr. Evan Wood and Dr. Thomas Kerr will share the **Alfred R. Lindesmith Award for Achievement in the Field of Scholarship**, which recognizes scholars, like Alfred Lindesmith, whose personal courage and quality of published research constitute a source of rational inspiration for all who labor in drug policy scholarship.

Dr. Kerr is co-director of the Urban Health Research Initiative at the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, associate professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, and a Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Scholar. Dr. Kerr has published over 300 scientific papers in international peer-reviewed journals. A key focus of Dr. Kerr's work has been the scientific evaluation of Insite, North America's first supervised injection facility. His research has shown that such facilities are effective in reducing new HIV infections and overdose deaths.

Dr. Wood is co-director of the Urban Health Research Initiative at the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS and the founder of the International Centre for Science in Drug Policy. He is an internal medicine physician and epidemiologist with a long history of involvement in the healthcare issues facing drug addicted patients, particularly injection drug users living with HIV/AIDS. Wood has also contributed to the leadership of several HIV prevention research efforts, and recently has helped spearhead an initiative in Canada called Stop the Violence BC aiming to promote cannabis regulation as a strategy to reduce organized crime concerns related to British Columbia's large illegal cannabis industry. His work on the Vienna Declaration – issued at the 2010 AIDS conference – secured the signatures of a host of scientific researchers and policy leaders, including seven Nobel Laureates, calling for a health-based approach to drug policy.

The Robert C. Randall Award for Achievement in the Field of Citizen Action which honors citizens who make democracy work in the difficult area of drug law and policy reform, goes to **Dale Gieringer and Dorsey E. Nunn.**

Gieringer has been the state director of California NORML (National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) since 1987 and is the author of the *Marijuana Medical Handbook*. He is also vice-chairman of the national NORML board of directors. He has published research on the economic benefits of legalization, medical marijuana usage, the history of marijuana and drug prohibition, potency testing, marijuana and driving safety, and drug urinalysis. He was one of the original co-authors of California's medical marijuana initiative, Prop. 215, the proponent of Oakland's Measure Z cannabis initiative in 2004, a sponsor of California's pathbreaking legalization bill, AB 390, and a consultant on numerous other cannabis reform campaigns.

Nunn is the executive director of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children and for more than 25 years has advocated for the civil rights and empowerment of people who are incarcerated, at risk for incarceration or affected by a family member's incarceration. He has played a pivotal role at the intersection of drug policy reform and advocacy for those who have been or who are incarcerated, including making substantial contributions to the campaigns to pass Proposition 36 (the nation's largest treatment-instead-of-incarceration program, 2000) and Proposition 5 (which would have further reduced incarceration for drug offenses, 2008). Nunn has helped to lead many social justice organizations, including Critical Resistance and the California Coalition for Women Prisoners, and played a central role in establishing Free at Last, a residential drug treatment program for women and children and a drop in center for people suffering from addiction in East Palo Alto – and one of that city's top employers. In 2003, he co-founded All of

Women Prisoners, and played a central role in establishing Free at Last, a residential drug treatment program for women and children and a drop in center for people suffering from addiction in East Palo Alto – and one of that city’s top employers. In 2003, he co-founded All of Us or None, which has emerged as a national leader in organizing formerly incarcerated people and their families. He has received numerous awards including the “Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition” from Nancy Pelosi.

Dr. Julie Holland is the recipient of the **Norman E. Zinberg Award for Achievement in the Field of Medicine**, which recognizes medical and treatment experts who perform rigorous scientific research and who have the courage to report their findings even though they may be at odds with current dogma. Holland is a psychiatrist and psychopharmacologist with a private practice in New York City. She is the author of *Weekends at Bellevue: Nine Years on the Night Shift at the Psych ER*, a regular guest on the *Today* show, and editor of two non-profit books to fund clinical research – *Ecstasy: The Complete Guide* and *The Pot Book: A Complete Guide to Cannabis*. She is currently the medical monitor for two MAPS-sponsored studies evaluating the safety and efficacy of cannabis and MDMA-assisted therapy for the treatment of PTSD.

The H.B. Spear Award for Achievement in the Field of Control and Enforcement is given to those involved in law enforcement who have demonstrated a balanced regard for the needs of enforcement and human compassion. This year’s recipient, **Ronald E. Hampton**, served 24 years as a Washington, D.C. Community Police officer and is the immediate past Executive Director of the National Black Police Association. Mr. Hampton has provided important leadership among law enforcement officers advocating for drug policy reform. He led the NBPA to endorse California’s Prop. 19, Regulate, Control & Tax Cannabis Act, to help end the disproportionate arrest and incarceration of African Americans caught with marijuana. He has been supportive of medical marijuana implementation efforts in the nation’s capital. Mr. Hampton has led a coalition of advocates working at the federal level to end racial profiling by setting better data collection and training standards for law enforcement, and was also a key voice in support of the elimination of the federal crack/powder sentencing disparity.

Nanna W. Gottfredsen is this year’s recipient of the **Justice Gerald Le Dain Award for Achievement in the Field of Law**. This award is given to those involved in law who have worked within official institutions when extremist pressures dominate government policies. Gottfredsen is a lawyer from Denmark, whose master’s thesis led to the first public heroin hearing in the Danish Parliament in 1998. In 1999 she founded the Street Lawyers, an outreach and advocacy organization serving drug users and street-based sex workers to reduce the harms of both drug use and drug prohibition. As the leading drug policy reform organization in Denmark for the past twelve years, the Street Lawyers have advocated for harm reduction programs, campaigned against the criminalization of sex work, and more generally worked toward reforming the widespread use of the criminal law in handling complex phenomena such as drug use and sex work. The Street Lawyers played a pivotal role in establishing Denmark’s heroin-assisted treatment program and the country’s first supervised injection facility.

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established in 1995 as an independent public library of information about psychoactive drugs. The site hosts more than 58,000 documents and serves nearly 2.5 million unique visitors each month – far more traffic than any other website about drugs. Collectively they have written thousands of pages of information about these substances, authored numerous articles, spoken at academic and professional conferences, and had their work cited by newspapers, education programs, college courses, and seminars around the world.

Dr. John Sperling is the winner of the **Richard J. Dennis Drugpeace Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Drug Policy Reform**, which is given to the individuals who most epitomize loyal opposition to drug war extremism. Beginning in 1995, Sperling provided the pivotal leadership, together with George Soros and Peter Lewis, that catapulted the nascent drug policy reform movement into the big leagues of American politics. Their partnership resulted in more than a dozen victories for ballot initiatives reforming state drug laws. An Ehrman Scholar who received his PhD in Economic History from Cambridge University, Sperling began his career as an academic. He went on to found the Apollo Group, the largest provider of private-sector higher education in the United States, for whom he currently serves as executive chairman. He was honored as Arizona's Entrepreneur of the Year and designated one of eight top entrepreneurs by *Business Week* magazine.

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