



MAPS

Bulletin of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies

CELEBRATION IS IN ORDER. MAPS has leveraged an investment of \$10,000 and considerable staff time over the last five and a half years into almost \$1 million for medical marijuana research. The \$978,000 grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to Dr. Donald Abrams, UC San Francisco, will pay for all the expenses of the first Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved research into a medical use of marijuana in a patient population in fifteen years. Dr. Abrams' study will focus on the use of smoked marijuana, the oral THC pill (Marinol) and a placebo in AIDS patients receiving the protease inhibitor, Indinavir. MAPS provided \$10,000 to Dr. Abrams and his team to cover costs associated with protocol design and grant applications. A detailed protocol as well as a history of the struggle to initiate medical marijuana research can be found on the MAPS web site at www.maps.org/mmj.

Letter from Rick Doblin, MAPS President

From an economic perspective, Dr. Abrams' \$978,000 grant exceeds all that MAPS has spent in its entire history. The total amount of money that MAPS has expended for all purposes from its founding in 1986 to the conclusion of its latest fiscal year (see annual report on p. 11) is about \$925,000. From a political perspective, the success of Dr. Abrams' initiation of medical marijuana research is similar to the success MAPS achieved in working with Dr. Charles Grob, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, to initiate the first FDA-approved human study with MDMA. MAPS worked to catalyze MDMA research for six and half years, from early 1986 to November 1992, when the FDA finally approved Dr. Grob's Phase 1 MDMA safety study. The FDA had previously rejected all four other MDMA research proposals that had been submitted since 1985, when MDMA was placed in Schedule 1.

Though celebration is in order, it must be tempered by acknowledgement of the difficulty of further progress. Dr. Abrams' initial safety study will take two years to complete. If the data suggests that marijuana can be safely administered to AIDS patients, at least three years for additional studies will be required before it may be possible to submit data to the FDA requesting that marijuana be made a prescription drug. Also problematic, on November 3, Dr. Ethan Russo, U. of Montana, learned of the rejection of his MAPS-supported NIH grant application to study marijuana in the treatment of migraine headaches. Dr. Russo and MAPS fully intend to continue working together to seek approval for his protocol, inspired by the precedent set by Dr. Abrams, whose first grant application was also rejected. Dr. Russo is, as far as I know, the only physician other than Dr. Abrams trying to obtain permission to conduct medical marijuana research in a patient population.

Another cause for celebration is that the first book published by MAPS, *The Secret Chief*, by Myron Stolaroff with contributions by Albert Hofmann, Stan Grof, and Sasha and Ann Shulgin, is now available (see page 29). *The Secret Chief* has been a labor of love by all concerned. We are especially proud to offer a unique hardcover collector's edition of 100 numbered copies signed by Myron Stolaroff, Albert Hofmann, Stan Grof, and Sasha and Ann Shulgin. These copies are for sale for \$250 each, with 100% of the proceeds devoted to psychedelic psychotherapy research.

Through their support of MAPS, its members have played an essential role in MAPS' success. With your continued support, the possibilities are inspiring to consider, even though the rate of progress is likely to be frustratingly character building.

Best wishes for the holidays.—Rick Doblin