

## Introducing **Randy Hencken:** MAPS' New Director of Communication and Marketing



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PLEASE CONSIDER THIS the warmest greeting I could possibly give to everyone in the MAPS community. My name is Randolph Hencken—you are welcome to call me Randolph or Randy—and I am the newest member of the MAPS team. I am privileged to take the role of Director of Communication and Marketing. Serendipitously, I finished my Bachelors of Science in business management and was completing a masters program at San Diego State University's (SDSU) School of Communication, when MAPS began seeking a new Communication Director.

Six years ago I was Program Coordinator at the Ibogaine Association in Mexico. It was not a coincidence that I worked with Ibogaine. In my early twenties I was addicted to heroin and cocaine. That part of my life seems like ancient history to me now, and I don't feel it is necessary to write in detail about my addiction. However, my experience is of great relevance to my connection with the MAPS community. The medicinal application of Ibogaine pulled me out of the throes of addiction and propelled me onto a brighter and more fulfilling life path. I am a living testament to the fact that psychedelic therapy can be miraculous!

I met Rick Doblin during my time at the Ibogaine Association. Rick nurtured a relationship between the Ibogaine Association and MAPS, as well as relationships between numerous active members of the community and myself. Valerie Mojeiko made several visits to our facility and she performed hours of research to establish a methodology for measuring patient outcomes with Ibogaine treatment. Unfortunately, due to the worst of undesirable consequences--the death of one of our patients--the project was stalled. At the same time, I left my position and focused my energies on my education at the university. (The ibogaine research project is currently being reestablished, and the Ibogaine Association now has an entirely new staff and a much improved patient safety standard.)

I was the founder and president of SDSU's chapter of Students for Sensible Drug Policy, and I interned for the Drug Policy Alliance in San Diego. Drug policy reform is my passion! I focused all of my graduate studies on the topic. One of my research papers--entitled "Why Won't Teenagers Just Accept Our Anti-Drug Messages? The Folly of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign"--was presented at the National Communication Association conference in Chicago last year. Another research project investigated whether various forms of parent-offspring communication were related to non-drug use, responsible drug use, or irresponsible drug use. My thesis investigated how non-drug users perceive the importance of illegality in their choice to abstain from drug use, and how various political attitudes correlate with drug policy beliefs. I also tested several arguments for drug policy reform to find which are most effective at persuading people to adopt a more reform friendly attitude. I would be more than happy to share the results of my thesis with anyone who is interested.

I am very excited about my new position at MAPS! I look forward to communicating with our members and helping to increase our member base. It is, after all, our members who make it possible to fund our efforts to demonstrate the therapeutic values of psychedelic medicines and medical marijuana.