

Cannabis Is Driving Social Change through 420 Skin Care and 420 Medibles

Philanthropic effort spawned a business to support it
by Tyler Butler



420 Skin Care and 420 Medibles products make customers feel good inside and out. Their soothing, all-natural ingredients can improve several skin conditions, all while helping the less fortunate. Fifty percent of the proceeds from sale of these products goes directly back into Start Living Recovery Home, helping homeless men and women get off deadly alcohol and opioids. 420-skincare.com



Tyler Butler (“Tyler Butler | Giving in Style”), founder and CEO of 11Eleven Consulting, is a corporate social responsibility practitioner and expert leader in the corporate citizenship space. She has served on numerous national and local boards and is often cited as a subject matter expert by *Forbes*, *Entrepreneur*, *U.S. News & World Report* and more. 11elevenconsulting.com givinginstyle.net

As a registered nurse, helping people came naturally to Marvina Thomas. She recognized that opioids were presenting real problems for her patients, serving only to foster an addiction and not providing the pain relief needed. As she saw her patients struggle with serious side effects and dependence, she found her true calling. Thomas set out to help those who were suffering and had little resources or solutions to help themselves.

She wanted to support people as they worked through struggles with addiction. It was this mission that led to Thomas to launch a 501(C)3 nonprofit, Start Living Behavioral Health. With its origins in 2003, Thomas opened a recovery home to help homeless people kick their alcohol and opioid addictions to get their lives back on track. The nonprofit’s mission is to provide a positive environment where people can learn the basic skills of character, ethics, accountability, responsibility and relationships to prepare them for a better life.

Thomas’s commitment to help people was so great, in fact, that in 2016 she recognized she would need to find an endeavor to finance her philanthropic ventures. As Thomas considered her options to maintain and grow her nonprofit, she realized what she needed to do. She set out to create a startup that would develop, fund and implement solutions to the social and cultural issues her charity was focused on. She would create her own social enterprise.

Thomas sought to create a business that she could blend with her nonprofit. She wanted their goals to align and it was important to her that both endeavors would generate a positive impact on society. Through her social enterprise, she would further conversation on the topic of opioid addiction and homelessness, while addressing the issue by introducing solutions and actual programs to combat the problem.

This is how 420 Skincare and 420 Medibles came to be. These product lines were created to have a more sustainable way to help others beyond traditional philanthropic efforts. A portion of the proceeds benefits Start Living Behavioral Health, the 501(C)3 nonprofit recovery home for those fighting addiction that Thomas had launched. The goal for both is to provide services and resources to reintroduce patients to clean living.

Thomas came up with her business when researching the benefits of cannabis. She began experimenting with CBD and THC from cannabis. “To support the group recovery home I started, I learned to make natural, organic soaps and other skincare products to help fund the group home and provide toiletries for patients at a lower cost. I added CBD oil from the cannabis plant as a natural healing ingredient in the soaps, creams and lotions to help with pain and anxiety. When I had a patient whose face was burned from a drug explosion use my soaps and creams to heal with an amazing new glow to her



face, I knew I had a new business that would make a difference in people’s overall well-being.”

Even in the current volatile economy, 420 Skin Care and 420 Medibles has expanded. Thomas grew her lineup of THC-infused cookies, brownies, crispy treats and bars to give patients delicious options to help reduce pain and inflammation in familiar flavors without using opioid pharmaceuticals. With some ingenuity and creativity, Thomas was able to integrate her purpose with profit by creating businesses with giving as the driving force.

For this reason, these businesses dedicate a portion of all sales to help those with mental illness and addiction issues by reintroducing patients to clean living. They do their best to not only lead by example but to lend a hand to the underserved in the communities they serve. This driving force of giving has made a significant difference in their profits and the continued success of the business.

Thomas is also continuing her strides to make positive social change possible through her advocacy for greater diversity equity and inclusion. “As a woman of color, I do not see many entrepreneurs who look like me. I work tirelessly to mentor and inspire others to create their own opportunities, and find it extremely rewarding.” In fact, Thomas recently launched a new CBD skincare distributor program to create jobs and empower other women and people of color with a pathway into the cannabis industry known for high barriers of entry for BIPOCs (Black, Indigenous, People of Color).

