

## Owning a Business on the Shoulders of Black Giants Who Came Before Me

When I was 23, I became the youngest person of African descent living in the U.S. to own a cannabis dispensary. Long after another young brother or sister beats this record, the fact that I own one (actually three) will still be significant.

According to Marijuana Business Daily, between January and June 2020, [\\$2.6 billion was raised to fund new cannabis](#) ventures in North America, and of that amount, around 4 percent was used to fund cannabis businesses owned by people of African descent—all of this amid the backdrop of the #JusticeforGeorge protests. Talk about irony.

As frustrating and angry making as our reality is, I think of all the people of African descent who broke barriers. We stand on the shoulders of giants. There isn't enough space to acknowledge them all, but here are a few of the notables.

Thank you to:

- Frederick Douglass
- Harriet Tubman
- Madame C.J. Walker
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Dr. Henry Louis Gates
- Katherine Johnson
- Dorothy Vaughn
- Mary Jackson
- Former President Barack Obama
- Vice President Kamala Harris
- Michelle Obama
- Rashida Jones
- Thurgood Marshall
- Fannie Lou Hamer
- Arthur Ashe
- Serena Williams
- Reginald Lewis
- Nelson Mandela
- And my mother