

Kevin A. Sabet, Ph.D.

Bios and introduction for event hosts and press. Updated October 2026. kevinsabet.com

ONE-PARAGRAPH BIO

Kevin A. Sabet, Ph.D., is a drug policy scholar and the only person ever appointed to the White House drug policy office by both a Republican and a Democratic administration. He is President and CEO of Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM) and the Foundation for Drug Policy Solutions (FDPS), and the author of *One Nation Under the Influence*.

SHORT BIO

An affiliate of the Institution for Social and Policy Studies and the Medical School at Yale University, and dubbed by NBC News as the “prodigy of drug politics,” and by Salon as the “quarterback of the new anti-drug movement,” author, consultant, and advisor to three U.S. presidential administrations, Kevin A. Sabet, Ph.D., has studied, researched, written about, and implemented drug policy for over 30 years. He is the only person appointed to the White House drug policy office by both Republican and Democratic administrations. Kevin is currently the President and CEO of the Foundation for Drug Policy Solutions (FDPS) and SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana), two non-profit organizations he founded with Congressman Patrick Kennedy. His latest book, *One Nation Under the Influence: America’s Drug Habit and How We Can Overcome It*, was published by Polity in 2025. His 2021 book, *Smokescreen: What the Marijuana Industry Doesn’t Want You to Know*, distributed by Simon & Schuster, won the Next Generation Indie Book Award in the Social Justice Category, and was released in theaters by Wayfarer Studios as “THC, Inc,” where Sabet served as Executive Producer. He published *Reefer Sanity* with Beaufort in 2013 and regularly publishes op-eds, and his work has been seen in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, and other publications; he is also a regular columnist for Newsweek and hosts a podcast, *High Stakes*. He received his doctorate and master's degrees from Oxford University and BA from the University of California, Berkeley.

FULL BIO

An affiliate of Yale University’s Institution for Social and Policy Studies and the Medical School, dubbed by NBC News as the “prodigy of drug politics,” author, consultant, and the only bipartisan drug policy advisor to three U.S. presidential administrations, Kevin A. Sabet, Ph.D., has studied, researched, written about, and implemented drug policy for more than 25 years. He is currently the President and CEO of both The Foundation for Drug Policy Solutions (FDPS) and SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana), two non-profit organizations he founded with Congressman Patrick Kennedy. His first book, *Reefer Sanity: Seven Great Myths About Marijuana*, was published by Beaufort in 2013, and its second edition released in 2018. His bestselling 2021 book, *Smokescreen: What the Marijuana Industry Doesn’t Want You to Know*, distributed by Simon & Schuster, won the Next Generation Indie Book Award in the Social Justice Category, and was released in theaters by Wayfarer Studios as “THC, Inc,” where Sabet served as Executive Producer. His latest book, *One Nation Under the Influence: America’s Drug Habit and How We Can Overcome It*, was published by Polity in 2025. He regularly publishes op-eds, and his work has been seen in the New York Times,

Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, and other publications; he is also a regular columnist for Newsweek and hosts a podcast, High Stakes.

Dr. Sabet's work as a government advisor began in the Clinton Administration as a researcher, and he was the senior speechwriter on drug policy in the Bush Administration (2002-2003). He returned to government in 2009, where he was asked to assist in drafting President Obama's National Drug Control Strategy as a senior advisor. In 2011, he stepped down after being the only drug policy staffer to have served as a political appointee in Democrat and Republican administrations.

He has since been profiled in the Wall Street Journal, Politico, Vox, Crain's Business, Salon Magazine, the International Business Times, and The Daily Beast and many other publications as America's point person on drug policy issues. He has spoken at the Allen and Co. Sun Valley Conference, the Aspen Ideas, New Yorker, and Politicon festivals, at the Puebla Ideas Conference to debate the former presidents of Mexico and Colombia, on the Organization of American States blue ribbon commission advising hemispheric drug policy, and in hundreds of forums and discussions. He has been featured on the front page of the New York Times and in virtually every major media publication and news channel on the subject of drug policy. He has published op-eds in the Washington Post, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and dozens of other publications. Dr. Sabet's regular blog is housed at the Huffington Post and two of his op-eds have earned him a "Five Best Columns" distinction by The Atlantic.

Dr. Sabet also regularly advises foreign governments, several non-governmental organizations working to reduce drug abuse and its consequences, and serves in an international role as an advisor, in various capacities, to the United Nations and other multi-national organizations.

He is the winner of numerous drug policy awards, including the 2014 Nils Bejerot Award for Global Drug Prevention, given at Stockholm City Hall by the anti-drug organization chaired by H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden, the 2019 National Narcotics Lifetime Achievement Award, and the John P. McGovern Award for Drug Prevention given by the Institute for Behavior and Health, and Robert DuPont, the founding director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

He received his Doctorate of Philosophy and Masters of Science from Oxford University as a Marshall Scholar in 2007 and 2002, respectively, and his B.A. with high honors in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2001.

INTRODUCTION FOR EMCEES AND MODERATORS

Our next speaker has spent more than three decades at the center of America's drug policy debate. Dr. Kevin Sabet served in the White House drug policy office under Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama, the only person ever appointed there by both parties. He co-founded Smart Approaches to Marijuana with Patrick Kennedy and leads it today, along with the Foundation for Drug Policy Solutions. He is the author of One Nation Under the Influence, the executive producer of the documentary THC INC, and the host of the podcast High Stakes. Please welcome Dr. Kevin Sabet.