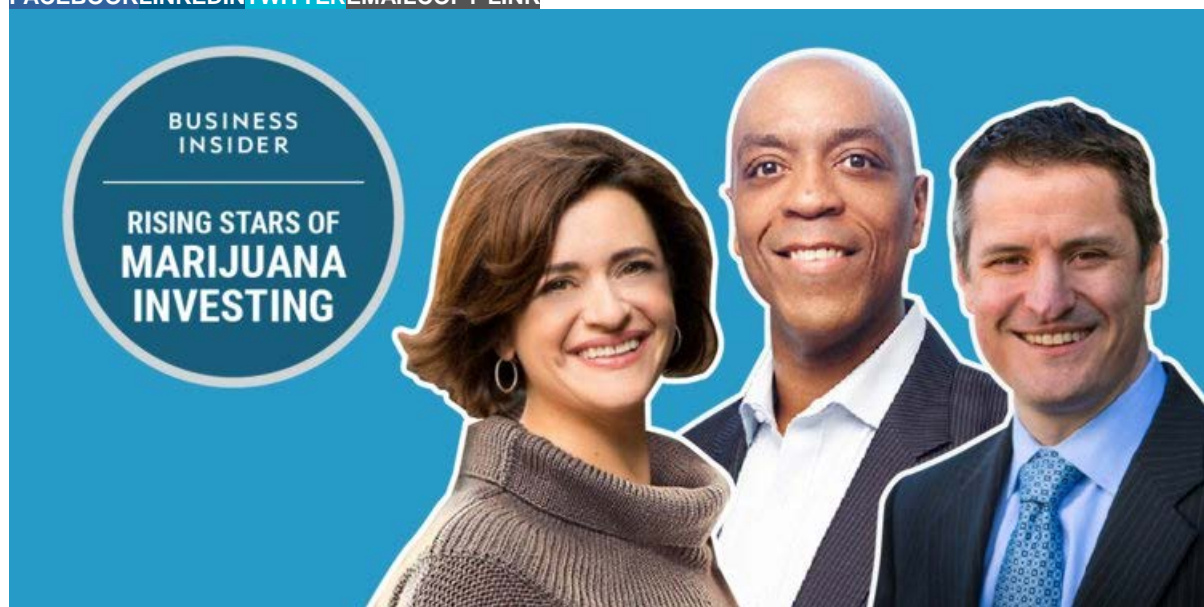


The rising stars of marijuana's investment scene that everyone from Wall Street to Silicon Valley should know

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Investors are piling into the legal cannabis industry. [Jenny Cheng/ Business Insider](#)

As the [legal-cannabis industry](#) continues to grow at a [breakneck pace](#), investors from Wall Street to Silicon Valley are seeing green.

Venture-capital investors from around the world spent [\\$355 million on 100 marijuana-industry deals](#) in 2017, and 2018 is on pace to break last year's record. By the end of February, there were 19 venture-backed deals in the industry worth \$176 million alone, and that doesn't factor in the money investors have poured into hedge funds set up to take advantage of the budding industry.

For Business Insider's first-ever list of rising stars in the marijuana-investment space, we asked readers to [submit nominations](#) and surveyed our [past coverage of the industry](#). The list celebrates top investors from Wall Street to Silicon Valley and a number of places in between.

Federal prohibition has prevented most American institutional investors and top venture-capital firms from investing in the space. The situation has given rise to a number of marijuana-specific venture firms in the US — funded by high-net-worth individuals and family offices — and provided an opening for Canadian firms. Both these groups are well represented on our list.

We considered any active investors who have made investments in the marijuana industry, whether their contributions come from angel investing, venture capital, or hedge funds.

These are the rising stars of the marijuana-investment scene.

Sherri Haskell bridges the gap between accredited investors and carefully vetted marijuana startups as the founder and CEO of her own angel investment consortium.



Courtesy of Tom Goren

Title: CEO and founder of [Canna Angels LLC](#)

Type: Angel Investor

Location: Sausalito, California

Canna Angels is on a mission to curate the top marijuana-related businesses in agriculture technologies, real estate, genetics, bioscience, and lab-data analytics.

Haskell, a [former stockbroker](#), has raised \$150 million in capital in her career. Her portfolio includes [Civilized](#), a digital publication focused on marijuana, and the "Mary Kay for marijuana" startup [Octavia Wellness](#).



Cowen Group

Title: Managing Director, [Cowen](#)

Type: Investment Bank

Location: New York City

Azer, a Wall Street veteran who holds an MBA from New York University, covers the cannabis industry as a senior research analyst for the investment bank Cowen.

Azer's research has been widely disseminated among prominent investors and the media, and her position is a sign that large institutional investors are taking the emerging industry seriously.

Mitch Baruchowitz, a former general counsel for a boutique investment bank, is an expert in the licensing process for states where marijuana is legal.



Merida Capital

Title: Managing Partner, [Merida Capital](#)

Type: Private Equity **Location:** New York City

After spending two decades working on Wall Street, most recently as the general counsel of Pali Capital, Baruchowitz started investing in the cannabis industry through his private-equity firm Merida Capital in 2012.

The firm splits its investments between cultivators, technology services, and pharmaceuticals, and includes companies like Kush Bottles and Simplifiya.

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