

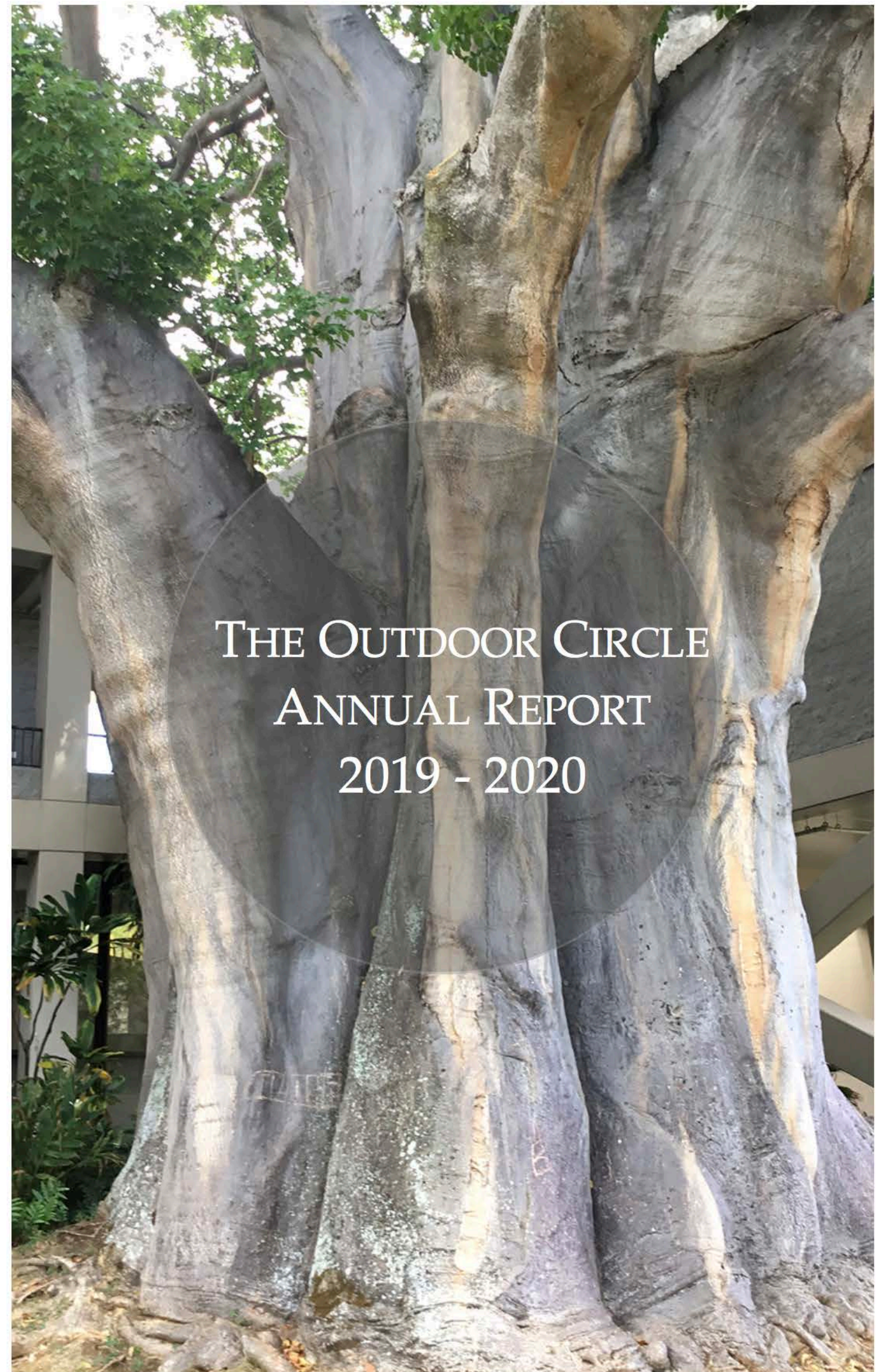


**The Outdoor Circle**

1314 S. King Street #306, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814

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Cover: Baobab tree, an exceptional tree on the campus of the University of Hawai'i Mānoa, Oahu.  
Planted in the 1940's, this tree is considered one of the largest in the United States.



# THE OUTDOOR CIRCLE ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020



## President's Message



It has been months since the Covid-19 pandemic turned our world upside-down. Whether the changes to your life are a disruption of routine, a loss of job or the loss of a family member or friend, I hope you are finding ways to adapt to the new "normal."

In response to the new challenges, TOC has continued its belt-tightening to maintain financial solvency. Our dedicated staff have mostly been operating from home, our committees and Board members meet via Zoom, and, when safe, our community programs continue with mask-wearing and physical distancing.

One of the many strengths of the Outdoor Circle lies in being a respected voice in the community which enables us to work and advocate for issues strongly in public, as well as quietly behind the scenes, and we have enhanced our advocacy efforts to include broader issues of livability and sustainability.

We have worked on a great number of issues across the state, like work to save trees at Diamond Head State Monument from being needlessly cut down, to collaborating with Envision Kaimuki and their plan to replant trees in Kaimuki where many years ago TOC had originally planted thousands of trees.

We worked with our branches on a variety of local concerns: on the windward side to oppose land use ordinance changes on conservation land at Hawaiian Memorial Park; we strongly advocated for sound policies on the proposed Ala Wai Watershed Project and collaborated to protect the Ala Wai Golf Course and its scenic view plane from proposed development. In this election year, we comprehensively surveyed candidates for Honolulu Mayor and City Council on issues important to The Outdoor Circle members which was well-received, and we plan to expand to include other islands in future elections.

TOC has enjoyed strong relationships with government at all levels, companies, other nonprofits and private individuals in pursuit of our goals. One example is our relationship with the Arbor Day Foundation, wherein our recent collaborations allowed TOC to plant trees at Windward Community College that had seen its giant banyan trees decimated by gall wasp, and at Camp Palehua, which had been degraded by cattle.

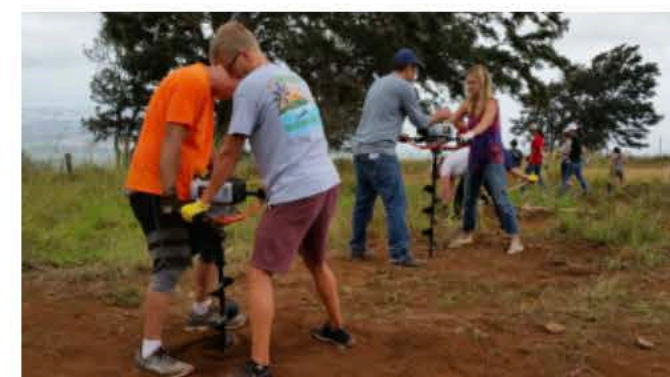
Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell issued a city-wide directive to all departments, effective July 1, 2020, that "the City must invest now in a tree canopy that will be able to mature over time to provide the shade [and] cooling ... that will be increasingly required over the coming decades." The Outdoor Circle was instrumental in initiating discussions with the administration with support from other groups to advance this directive, spurred when trees at Magic Island at Ala Moana Park and other locations were removed without transparency or community consultation. We commend the Mayor for requiring the City and County agencies to work in concert to establish and follow strict procedures when working on all issues related to trees, including consultations with community groups like The Outdoor Circle.

Those are just a few of the TOC's accomplishments in the last year. As the "trunk" of the organization, the central office supports environmental efforts statewide as well as the branches of TOC, in addressing specific issues and concerns in their communities. Our common goal is to keep Hawai'i clean, green, beautiful and livable, in whatever form that takes.

Aloha,  
Scott R. Wilson  
President, The Outdoor Circle

## Windward Community College Tree Planting

This past December saw over 70 volunteers come together to plant 31 large trees (29 native and 2 Ficus) on the Great Lawn of Windward Community College. These trees were planted to replace the Ficus trees that were formerly at the site and should continue to increase the aesthetics of the area as the trees mature. This project was made possible due to a \$30,000 grant and saw The Outdoor Circle, Arbor Day Foundation, Enterprise Car Rental, University of Hawai'i Mānoa and Windward Community College collaborate to make this event a success. Due to that success, TOC is already discussing a follow-up event that would add additional trees to the WCC campus based on the designs laid out in the new WCC landscape masterplan produced by Dr. Christian Palmer, a WCC Faculty Member and TOC Board Member.



Left: Windward Community College students helping to plant trees on campus.  
Right: Volunteers planting trees at Camp Palehua.

## Camp Palehua Tree Planting

On April 4, 2020 a 300-tree planting event was set to take place at Camp Palehua to further add to the native plant reforestation site that TOC has been working on for the past few years. This collaboration with Malama Learning Center was made possible due to a \$20,000 grant from Fed Ex and the Arbor Day Foundation and was designed to allow 50 volunteers the opportunity to plant several trees each. However, due to the restrictions put in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this event was postponed. We are excited to announce that tentatively, the new date for the event will be in November 2020 and will incorporate the same number of volunteers.



## University of Hawai'i Mānoa – Natural Resource Environmental Management (NREM) Tree Labs

2020 saw the fourth iteration of TOC's partnership with University of Hawai'i Mānoa's Natural Resource Environmental Management (NREM) department to produce a set of labs for junior and senior level students focusing on the importance and benefits produced by trees. In years past, the lab had an in-person lecture component and then a field mapping/data collection exercise to utilize the newly learned skills. However, due to Covid-19 shifting all courses online, an innovative solution was used featuring an interactive lecture on Zoom, followed by a diverse set of questions requiring critical thinking skills that are used by professionals associated with Hawai'i's trees. Additionally, there was a Q&A session to assist students who desired to learn more about internship and potential career opportunities with not only TOC, but also other environmental nonprofits, government agencies and for-profit corporations. The goal of the annual lab is to provide students with the necessary skills required to have a successful and impactful career managing and taking care of Hawai'i's urban and rural forests and 2021 should help further this desired outcome when the fifth iteration takes place in the spring.

## Windward Community College Sustainability Speaker Series

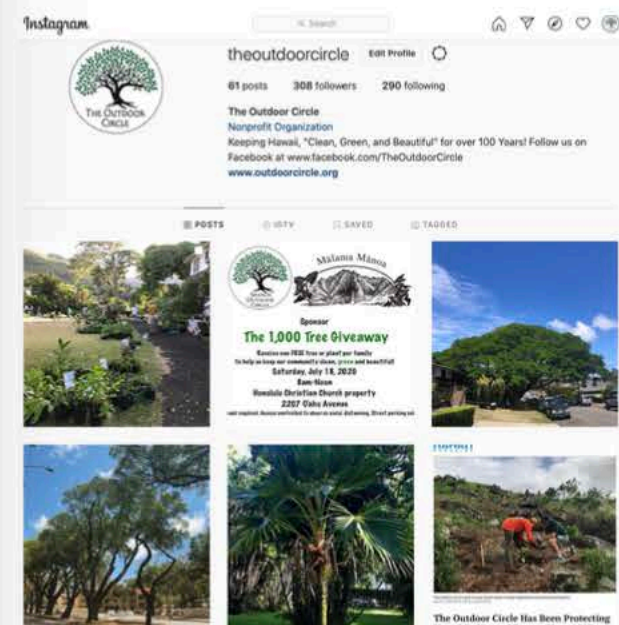
On November 13, 2020, TOC's Programs Director, Myles Ritchie, was the featured speaker for Windward Community College's *Sustainability Speaker Series* which aimed to "educate faculty, staff, students and windward community residents of various issues in sustainability." This event was composed of a lecture discussing TOC's history, current programs and future direction, followed by an open forum to answer any questions posed by the audience. The event was a major success and TOC looks forward to presenting at subsequent iterations once they resume.



## The School for Examining Essential Questions of Sustainability (SEEQS)

TOC was approached by the School for Examining Essential Questions of Sustainability (SEEQS), a charter school in Honolulu, in order to help develop an environmental education program centered around trees and native plants for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The content will focus on the benefits of trees (especially in urban areas), and be taught through lectures, outdoor activities and field trips. While 2020 was the originally anticipated start date for this partnership, it is more likely that the program will begin in 2021.

## Media and Social Media Updates



The past year saw several articles, interviews and even a podcast featuring various projects conducted by The Outdoor Circle's branches and state office. Most recently, TOC was the focus of a new podcast called "Nonprofit Forward," a Hawai'i Magazine article and a 30-minute segment on Think Tech Hawaii's "Out and About." Each of these highlighted different aspects of TOC, from its impressive and important historical achievements, to the constant fight required to keep our islands free of billboards, and even current programs centered around technological

innovation. In addition to these media stories which can all be found on the "TOC in the News" section of our website ([www.outdoorcircle.org/toc-in-the-news.html](http://www.outdoorcircle.org/toc-in-the-news.html)), the organization and its branches has had a significant social media presence on Facebook and most recently, Instagram. One of the newest social media campaigns was our "Exceptional Tree of the Week," which ran for 13 weeks and contained fun facts and metrics about some of Hawai'i's exceptional trees. Phase two of this project will begin in the fall, comprising new exceptional trees, updated high-quality images and even more fun facts about the species representing these trees. A big mahalo to Kathleen Bryan, a member of the TOC Board of Directors, for her wonderful Facebook posts that consistently see thousands of people view, interact with and share the incredible content she posts.

## New Interns

The Outdoor Circle brought in several new interns to the state office to assist with programs and research pertaining to trees. The four interns (Gabrielle Johnson, Camryn Fujita, James Sanft and Cassandra Butler) have helped plan and conduct tree giveaways, planting events and identify best practices that will be used in the near future to protect trees on public property throughout the state. Additionally, blogs and reports on these findings will be released in the coming weeks, and will be featured on the newest addition to TOC's website titled "The Online Circle: Environmental Education Blog" ([www.outdoorcircle.org/the-online-circle---environmental-education-blog](http://www.outdoorcircle.org/the-online-circle---environmental-education-blog)) and our social media platforms. Mahalo to these interns for helping to keep Hawai'i clean, green and beautiful!





## Saving Our Street Trees ~ Innovative Root Barrier Research

Three years ago, TOC began a collaborative partnership with professor Dr. Andrew Kaufman from the University of Hawai'i's Tropical Plant and Soil Science Department to participate in a research program to identify alternative root barrier methods that could have the potential to greatly reduce the number of mature street trees that are removed annually due to infrastructure damaged caused by their roots.

Since then, TOC has been actively involved in this first-of-its-kind research in Hawai'i, gathering both above and below ground biomass data which are cumulatively used to identify which of the three root barrier methods being studied (standard root barriers, root paths and Silva cells) should be used when infrastructure is replaced or newly built around the state. The benefits from this research have the potential to be immense and could lead to a significant reduction in the number of unnecessary removals of mature trees from our urban forests.

The two species being examined for the study are Rainbow Shower and Kou trees (25 each), both of which are prominent street trees throughout Hawai'i. In 2019, below ground data collection began on the Rainbow Shower trees and saw AirSpades used to excavate the roots of each tree, which use air at speeds of Mach 2 (1,200 mph) to remove all soil, without damaging the root structure. From this process, the above ground biomass (height, diameter, crown spread, health, live crown ratio, etc.) is compared with the size of the roots to determine any correlations.



Additionally, these metrics are compared against the results from each of the three root barrier types to see not only which is the most effective, but also how they impact the overall growth and health of a tree. August 2020 saw the beginning of the excavation phase for the Kou trees and while there is a lot more data to collect before the project is finished, the initial results indicate a promising outcome for the Silva cell root barrier.



The outcomes of this research are clear. First, by installing the most effective root barrier, our urban trees will be able to live longer lives without having to be removed prematurely due to the damage their roots can cause. Second, substantial amounts of money could be saved by the State and Counties as less infrastructure damage will take place, resulting in fewer repairs. The combined result is a win-win for trees and our urban infrastructure which are typically at odds with each other, but with this research, it appears as if those conflicts can be mitigated.

To learn more about the project, please read the May/June 2018 Landscape Industry Council of Hawai'i's (LICH) *Hawaiiscape Magazine*.

## Branch Highlights 2019-2020

### East Hawai'i Island Branch

The East Hawaii Branch participated in our second Kamaholo Craft Fair in Volcano, doing plant sales, information dissemination and membership. Over the year we welcomed three educational speakers: Myles Ritchie on Carbon Restoration; Boyd Bond on Banyan Drive History; and Jaya Dupuis, from the Keau'ohana Native Forest Rainforest Restoration. After months of negotiations with Hawai'i County Parks and Recreation, and a generous in-kind donation from Mike Kraus of Tree Works Inc. for crown containment and cleaning, we saved several 45-year-old Monkeypod trees at the Pana'ewa Equestrian Center from being cut down. We continue work on saving the banyan trees on Banyan Drive, working to prove the trees were exceptionalized several years ago. We also began setting up a sub-branch for elementary students at Volcano School of the Arts and Sciences.

### Kaua'i Branch

The Kaua'i Branch again participated in the Arbor Day tree giveaway where we distributed 1,200 trees to Kaua'i residents from all parts of the island. In addition, we continue to work on adding trees to the Exceptional Tree list, in particular the 75 shower trees along the Kōloa by-pass Road.

### Lani-Kailua Branch

LKOC had a productive year in the landscape beautification arena. A major refurbishment of the landscaping at Alala Point, at the entrance to Lanikai, was completed last year, where new lawn and shrubs were planted. LKOC also refurbished the landscaping at the Pali Palms Triangle, and has been working closely with the City regarding the Kalapawai Triangle, in which a major redesign of the triangle (now a rotary) is being planned. LKOC installed and maintains the landscaping at both those traffic triangles. LKOC also worked with the city on a tree planting project for Oneawa Street in downtown Kailua, where eight new street trees were recently planted to replace those that had failed over the years, thus restoring the tree canopy along that central corridor.

### Mānoa Branch

The Mānoa Branch reviewed several Environmental Assessments, submitted comments, and met with developers of important projects, focusing especially on the UH Atherton Redevelopment. As an extension of our advocacy work, our branch donated the refreshments for the "Forum for Alternatives for the Ala Wai Flood Mitigation Project," and volunteered at the event. The most significant contribution we made to the community was organizing the 1,000 Tree Giveaway on July 18, 2020. Despite being postponed due to the pandemic, the event was a tremendous success. We offered sixty varieties, with kukui as our signature choice, and hundreds of families came to pick up free trees.

### North Shore Branch

The North Shore Branch enjoyed a field trip to Hui Ku Maoli Ola to learn about native Hawaiian plants, we joined forces with an organization called the Public Lands Stewardship Collective which works to protect the environment, and we continued to submit testimony and monitor sign abuses to protect the scenic beauty of the North Shore. NSOC continued working with DPR to facilitate much needed repairs to Ke Ala Pupukea, as well as having a diseased tree removed from Weed Circle. In June, we were able to resume volunteering in the ginger garden in Waimea Valley.

### Waikiki Branch

This past year saw the Monkeypod trees along both sides of Kapiolani Boulevard between Atkinson Drive to South Street, designated as Exceptional Trees. This accomplishment was made possible due to the hard work of Brian Bagnall and the Greater Waikiki Branch. This process took nearly three years, but as a result, these trees are now protected and will ensure that the wonderful canopy aesthetics produced by the grove will be enjoyed for generations to come.

### Waikoloa Village Branch

Waikoloa Village Outdoor Circle's Community Garden has gone through one year of successfully growing vegetables, flowers, and community.

### Waimea Branch

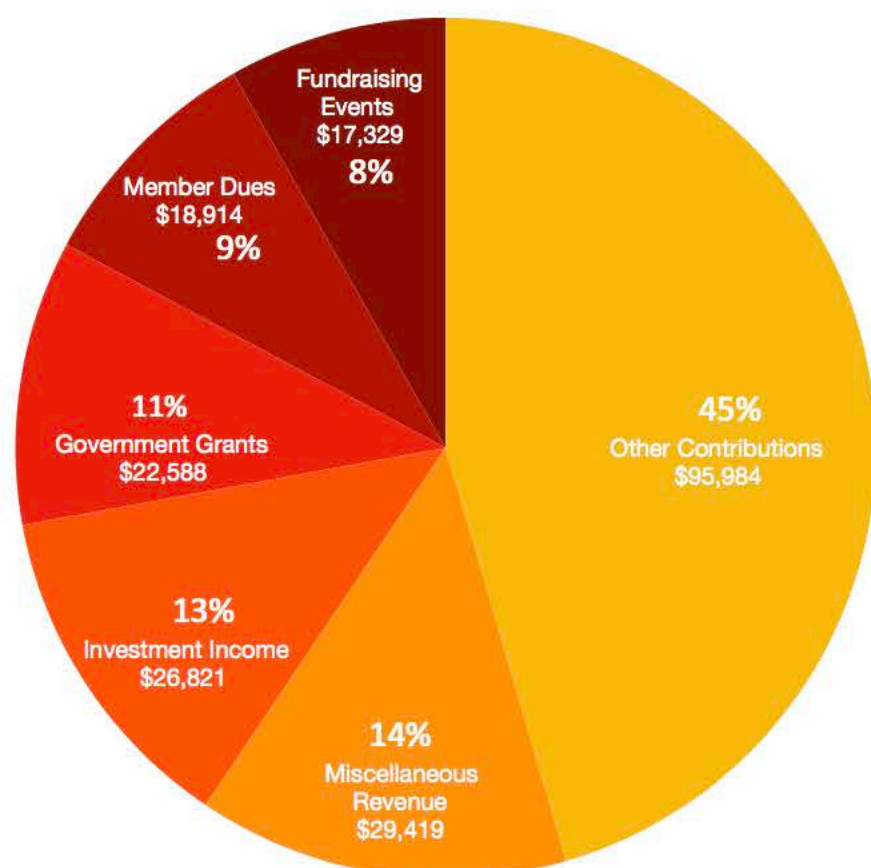
The Waimea Branch anxiously awaits the release of funding from the State Legislature that was approved for paving the entrance into the Nature Park. We are all excited to begin this much needed project that will also address the flooding issue during our seasonal rains.



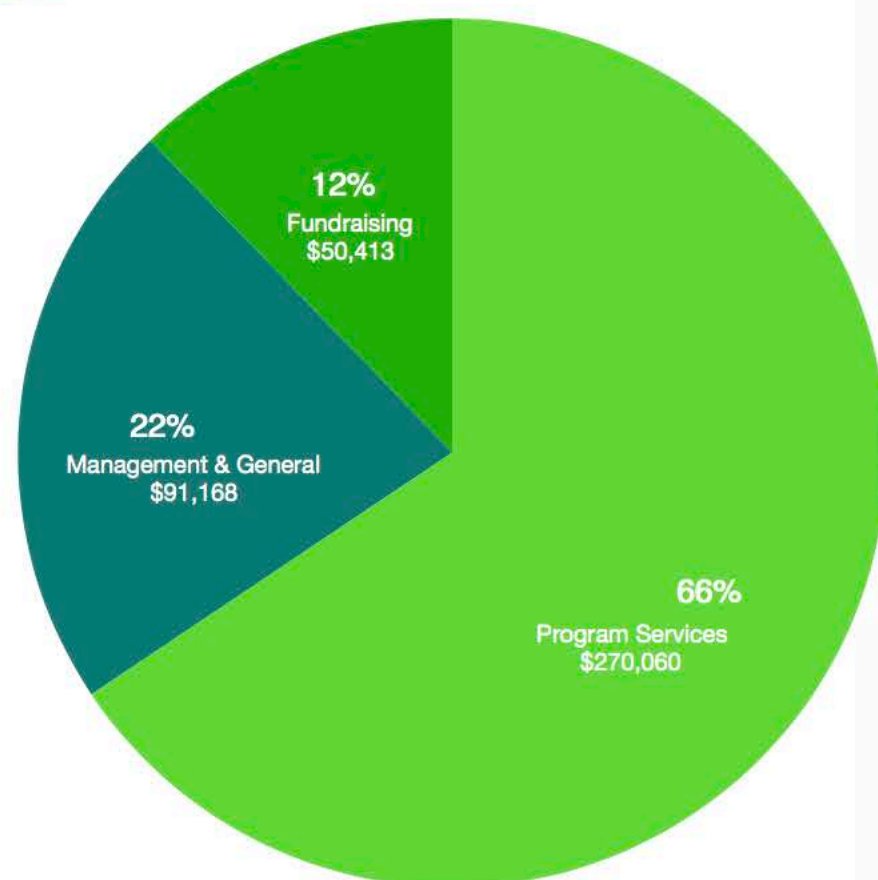
## Financials for Fiscal Year Ending 2019

### Revenue & Expenses

Net Assets \$1.93M



**Year End Revenue**  
**\$209,621**  
 (Includes Depreciation  
 of -\$1,434)



**Year End Expenses**  
**\$411,641**

## Mahalo to Our Donors & Supporters



The Outdoor Circle relies on the generosity of individuals like you. From in-kind gifts and services to bequests and grants, our donors are the backbone of our organization. We are thankful for the consistent support of people like you, through which we are able to accomplish amazing things.

### This Year's Exceptional Donors [ donors who gave \$500 or more in 2019-2020 ]

#### Individuals

Robert & Kelly Armstrong  
 Patricia Benjamin  
 Arlene & Ken Block  
 Marilyn & Schuyler Cole  
 Kelly Doyle  
 Peter Drewliner  
 Kevin Eckert  
 Judith Flanders  
 Joan Gossett  
 Alice Guild  
 Diane Harding  
 Janet Harris

Jean & Randall Jaycox  
 Alice Jenkins  
 Lynne Johnson & Randolph Moore  
 David Keliikuli  
 Mary & Harvey King  
 Lucia Kye  
 Clytie Mead & Peter Sparks  
 Jean Rolles  
 Denise Soderholm  
 Scott Wilson & Christine Yano  
 Barbara Schneider Yeackel

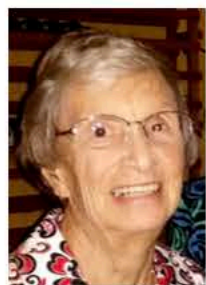
#### Corporations, Foundations and Other Entities

Adventist Health Castle  
 Alexander & Baldwin Properties  
 American Carpet One Foundation  
 Arbor Day Foundation  
 Armstrong Foundation  
 Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope Corp.  
 County of Hawai'i  
 Eastern Star Hawaii Chapter Number One  
 Friends of Ann Kobayashi  
 Hardware Hawaii Kailua  
 Hawaii Community Foundation  
 HomeStreet Bank

Kalani Consulting, Inc.  
 Kalapawai Market and Cafe  
 Lanikai Association  
 Prisanlee Fund  
 St. Christopher's Church  
 Sustainable Solutions Foundation  
 The Garden Club of Honolulu  
 The MacNaughton Group Foundation  
 The Poha Fund  
 Turtle Bay Foundation  
 Zadoc and Lawrence Brown Foundation

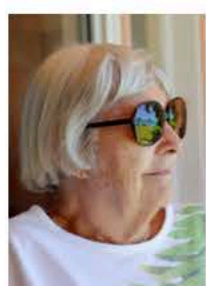


## Mahalo & A Hui Hou



**Winifred Bennett** was a landscape and seascape artist and long-time member of the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle, serving on the Board of Directors for many years. She worked as a volunteer in LKOC's "Learning to Grow Program" at the Women's Community Correctional Center, mentoring and nurturing the students there. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her, and was buoyed by her unfailing kindness and sense of humor.

**Bob Loy**, a former reporter and news director at KGMB-TV, became TOC's Director of Environmental Programs in 2005. He brought many skills, along with an innate intelligence and a commitment to the work at hand. He vigorously defended The Outdoor Circle bills at the legislature and the state signage laws. Bob left Hawai'i, eventually making his way to North Carolina. We will cherish his memory and remain grateful for his tireless efforts in preserving and protecting Hawai'i, a place he continued to hold dear.



**Jane Morris** was a joyful, helpful, generous fighter for important causes. For many years, she sat on the Board of the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle. In addition to her Public Affairs efforts, she hosted many annual meetings in her lovely home and garden. She was extremely supportive of LKOC's "Learning to Grow Program" at the Women's Community Correctional Center, where her kindness and cheerfulness made her loved by all.

## Outgoing Board Members

The **Outdoor Circle** thanks these outgoing board members for volunteering their time and energy to help uphold our mission.



Kathleen Bryan



Eric Hansen



Cheryl Langton



Elizabeth O'Sullivan



Christian Palmer



Lowana Richardson

**Kathleen Bryan**, a retired Vice President at the Bank of Hawai'i, served four terms as Treasurer, and was previously chair of the Finance Committee and Development Committee. She is also very active with the Lani-Kailua Branch where she serves as branch Treasurer. **Eric Hansen** was a Director on the TOC Board and is the program coordinator for Go Farm Hawaii on Kauai'i. **Cheryl Langton** has served as an Advisor and Branch Representative, and as President of the Waimea Branch nurtured the creation of Ulu La'au, the Waimea Nature Park. **Elizabeth O'Sullivan** practices environmental law in the Pacific Division of the NOAA, previously serving as TOC's Secretary. **Christian Peterson** is an anthropology instructor at Windward Community College who served as a Director on the TOC Board and was instrumental in the TOC tree planting at Windward Community College. **Lowana Richardson** helped establish the East Hawai'i Branch, and served as TOC's Branch Representative and Vice President.

## Our Mission



To keep Hawai'i clean, green, beautiful, livable and sustainable by preserving, protecting, and enhancing our environment for future generations.



### Board of Directors 2019-2020

Scott R. Wilson, President  
Jonathan Sudler, Vice President  
Elizabeth O'Sullivan, Secretary  
Kathleen Bryan, Treasurer  
Lowana Richardson, Branch Representative  
Mimi Bornhorst Gaddis, Advisor,  
Nominating Committee  
Cheryl Langton, Advisor  
Directors:

Joan Gossett  
Eric Hansen  
Christian Palmer  
Jennie Peterson

### Branch Presidents

East Hawai'i Island: Donald Inouye  
East Honolulu: Susan Spangler  
Kaua'i: Maureen Murphy  
Lani-Kailua: Diane Harding  
Mānoa: Jeremy Lam  
North Shore: Vera Stone  
Waikiki: Brian Bagnall  
Waikoloa: W.S. Lawrence  
Waimea: Cheryl Langton

### Staff

Winston Welch, Executive Director  
Jackie Wah, Operations Director  
Myles Ritchie, Programs Director