

THE OUTDOOR CIRCLE
ANNUAL REPORT
2017 - 2018

President's Message



The 2017-2018 year was a challenging period for The Outdoor Circle's Board of Directors, branches and staff. Thank you to all the volunteers that continue to donate both their time and financial support to the Circle in our ongoing efforts to not only address the various issues that are brought before us, but also help to educate the public about the benefits of environmental stewardship and the mission of The Outdoor Circle that has kept our organization held in such high regard throughout our community.

This past year we had the opportunity to play a significant role in several projects, such as Manoa Marketplace and Manoa Stream flood control project, where TOC was able to suggest creative alternatives to the proposed design solutions so that the final product was much more acceptable to the community, the developer or State, and the environment in general.

It is through open and pragmatic discussions with all the parties involved that realistic solutions can be achieved that meet everyone's expectations.

The Development Committee continues to expand its reach into our membership base by approaching new sponsorship pledges from the real estate and corporate sector of our community. We have also re-evaluated the membership levels for donation, offering more choices for financial support.

The Public Affairs Committee has been very proactive in following the bills flowing through the legislature and City Council. Thank you to all of you for your written testimony and in-person appearances at City Hall over the past year, and to the committee for your hard work to keep on top of the ever-changing agenda.

I'd like to offer a big mahalo to our Executive Director Winston Welch, our Operations Director Jackie Wah and our Programs Director Myles Richie for their continued diligence in making sure the office runs smoothly and our programs meet our goals.

Our Network for Good program appears to be meeting the database needs of the TOC office and branches.

The branches continue to operate smoothly and reflect the concerns of their communities. The 11 branches are the face of The Outdoor Circle throughout the State, and proudly promote our mission to keep Hawai'i Clean, Green and Beautiful.

I thank you for your continued support and I look forward to the opportunities of the upcoming year.

Aloha,

Steve F. Mechler

President, The Outdoor Circle

Exceptional Tree Initiative

Since 2014, TOC has been working on revitalizing its *Exceptional Tree Initiative* for the statewide law it helped to create in 1975 that protects these valuable tree specimens. Part of this program has seen the development of TOC's "*Exceptional Tree Map*" which is constantly being updated as new trees are added and removed from each county's registry across the state. However, over the last couple of years, there has been a net loss of Exceptional Trees (ET) across the state as many of these individuals are reaching the end of their natural lifespan and are beginning to fail.



To reverse this loss, TOC's Programs Director, Myles Ritchie began working much more closely with Arborist Advisory Committees from counties with active ET programs to try and curb this alarming trend. Myles has been appointed to the Oahu Arborist Advisory Committee and is an active liaison working with committees in each county and property owners to increase the number of ET

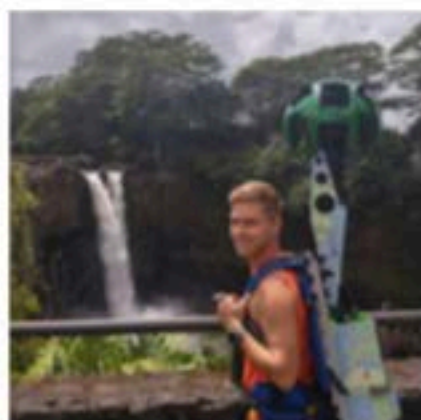
nominations submitted with the overall goal of seeing new ETs added to each county's respective register. This work has paid off as new ETs have been accepted in addition to more under further consideration. While the new status of these trees will not be made official until they are approved by respective county councils when the annual ordinance change occurs, on Oahu alone, there are at least four new trees and one grove that should be receiving this distinction in the coming weeks.

While the nomination of new ETs is crucial to the program's success across the state, education regarding these trees is also a vital component as well. The two most common questions asked when presenting or talking about ETs are: How old is the tree and what were the criteria used in determining its selection for inclusion into the ET registry? While age is always difficult to pinpoint, the use of historical documents always assists with this process as does using the original nominating documents to find the reason for a tree's exceptional status. In order to do just this, Myles has just finished digitizing all of the original Oahu ET nomination documents (this has never been done before) and will be creating a database that will answer both of these questions related to age and selection criteria. In the coming months, this data will be added to the Exceptional Tree Map so that the general public will finally have answers to two of the most commonly asked questions related to these trees.

While all of this is welcomed news, the need to continually send in new nomination forms remains of the utmost importance, in addition to beginning to lay the foundation for a *Next Generation Exceptional Tree* program that will replace those that are near the end of their lifespan.

Google Trekker Program

This past year saw the completion of TOC's partnership with Google's Trekker program which highlighted various environmental, cultural and historical locations from around the state and saw them uploaded to Google Maps/Earth. All imagery from Kauai, Maui, Oahu and Hawai'i Island can now be accessed through Google Maps/Earth and direct links to each location can be found on the TOC website (<http://www.outdoorcircle.org/google-trekker.html>). Please note that for all locations featured, permission was granted by the respective property owner or government agency and no secret locations were a part of the program. The imagery has received praise for the numerous benefits that it can provide including the ability to use it for research purposes such as monitoring changes in invasive species composition over time, and allowing those who may not be physically or financially capable of visiting these wonderful locations, the ability to do so virtually.



Carbon Neutrality Challenge

One year ago, TOC announced a new collaborative program that it had begun to undertake with the University of Hawai'i called the *Carbon Neutrality Challenge*. This program uses a three-tier approach focused on education, a unique carbon footprint calculator that tells you how many trees of a given species you need to plant to become carbon neutral and finally, a means to achieve this goal of carbon neutrality through the planting of trees at one of the

program's sites. Over this time, students from elementary schools through to the university level have participated in this program and has led to the planting of over 200 native Hawaiian tree species (Wiliwili, Lonomea and A'ali'i) at the Camp Palehua site. Now, with the experience gained from this pilot project, the program will be expanding in scope to provide further access to additional students which will ultimately see many more trees planted around Oahu. Currently there are a few hundred trees growing at the UH greenhouse that are scheduled to be out-planted in the fall at the current Camp Palehua site, in conjunction with three newly proposed sites. These are located in Waianae, Moanalua and Wahila Ridge and have been made possible through support of the program by DOFAW, Ko'olau Mountains Watershed Partnership, and Waianae Mountains Watershed Partnership. The goal for the upcoming fall is to have numerous groups of students participate in the program and ultimately come to these sites and plant over 1,000 new native trees.

The Public Voice for Protection of Hawai'i's Scenic Beauty

The Outdoor Circle is the public voice for protection of Hawai'i's scenic beauty! Because we have over a century of advocacy for scenic conservation, our voice is valued by state and local government as well as business and community groups.

This year we were asked by the City and County of Honolulu to assist with a revision of the Land Use Ordinance that regulates development and land use throughout the Island of Oahu. This project allowed us to make recommendations to make progress on several long-term priorities:



1. reduce sign clutter
2. preserve and expand green space, even in urban areas
3. require landscaping screens to preserve the scenic landscape
4. increase planting of street trees
5. protect existing trees

Now we must work diligently to follow these recommendations as they are written into ordinances.

In its early years The Outdoor Circle was instrumental in passing the Hawai'i Outdoor Advertising Law that bans offsite outdoor advertising signs (billboards) throughout Hawai'i. This means that any product or service can only be advertised on signs at the place that it is sold. Only four states in the United States have achieved this goal of eliminating billboards.



A loophole in this law is that it has been interpreted to exclude signs attached to vehicles or other portable signs. We succeeded in adding a provision to the Outdoor Advertising Law in 2006 to put some restrictions on vehicle signage but

this law has been difficult to enforce. Today, there are many illegal signs posted on permanently parked vehicles and numerous "portable" signs and "wind" signs cluttering the street rights-of-way throughout the islands.

The Outdoor Circle is taking several actions to tackle this sign clutter:

- With the help of our branches we are increasing our efforts to report all violations of state and county sign laws.
- We are advocating changes in county ordinances to eliminate signs illegally placed on street rights-of-way or on parked vehicles.
- We are supporting regulation of businesses that operate from parked vehicles by reducing signage and requiring landscape screens and limits on where they can operate.

Hawai'i is the most beautiful place in the world. But that beauty can only be preserved if each generation raises its voice and does the necessary work. The future of Hawai'i's scenic beauty depends on us.

Saving Our Street Trees

An innovative root barrier program that looks to reduce infrastructure damage and save our mature urban forest

In 2017, TOC was approached by University of Hawai'i professor Dr. Andrew Kaufman to participate in a research program that has been designed to find alternative root barrier methods that would work in Hawai'i to greatly reduce the number of mature street trees that are removed annually due to infrastructure damaged caused by their roots. The initial project had already been underway for a few years but it was at this point that increased data collection and research needed to be conducted in order to understand the full impacts of the three different root barrier methods under consideration (standard root barriers, root paths and Silva cells). Due to the immense potential that this research could have on preventing mature trees from being constantly removed and replaced with new smaller trees, and the research experience that TOC's Programs Director, Myles Ritchie, has in the field, this seemed to be a natural fit.

Now, a year and a half later, the data that has been acquired has recently been published in the May/June 2018 issue of the Landscape Industry Council of Hawai'i's (LICH) *Hawaiiscape Magazine* showing the progress that has been made and the potential findings that will be seen when the final data is analyzed in two years' time. Below is an excerpt from the article that highlights the goal and benefits of the research:

"This research will be one of the first projects addressing tree installation, root zone strategies, and mitigating existing tree/infrastructure conflicts in tropical municipal landscapes. It will begin to generate techniques for proper tree selection, installation, and maintenance which could be employed statewide. These kinds of techniques will not only improve the aesthetic quality of Hawaii's public landscapes for visitors, and residents, but has the potential to save the State thousands of dollars per year in urban forest amenity replacements and maintenance practices. In addition, this project will help in the safety of urban trees in relation to sidewalks and streets from improper tree selection, installation, and maintenance practices due to the current lack of knowledge of how trees function in urban tropical environments, as opposed to those in more temperate environments. The results of this research could be immediately applied to future HDOT as well as C & C Honolulu urban tree planting projects. This could begin to drastically change the way trees are selected, installed and maintained in the State of Hawaii, thus improving the aesthetic, social, and safety of urban landscaped streets while becoming a viable economic practice" (Kaufman & Ritchie, 2018)."

Moving forward, the results of the research should help provide new information to those who conduct street tree plantings and infrastructure maintenance. From this, we should see a healthier and more mature urban forest throughout the state that also sees a decrease in the amount of infrastructure damage caused by tree roots, while at the same time, keeping sidewalks safe for all to use by mitigating the constant battle seen between trees and urban infrastructure.

Source: Kaufman, A., Ritchie, M. "Mitigating Infrastructure Damage by Trees: Hawaii's First Research Study on Urban Tree Installation Strategies", *Hawaiiscape*, Published May/June 2018.

Branch Highlights 2017-2018

East Hawai'i Island Branch

The East Hawai'i Island Branch has been working on education and awareness for the trees on Banyan Drive in part by helping start a "Friends of Banyan Drive" and developing an informational pamphlet as the trees are in dire need of care. We have pushed for and achieved, the reestablishment of the Big Island Arborist Advisory Committee.

East Honolulu Branch

The East Honolulu Branch held an Arbor Day celebration for the 10 kou trees planted five years earlier in the Diamond Head Crater.

Kaua'i Branch

The Kaua'i Branch, although small, has had a positive impact on the Kaua'i community. We had our annual educational booth at the Arbor Day Tree Giveaway. We also held tree pruning demonstrations for the State Public Works Department and the County Beautification Department and continue to work with the County Building Department on regulating signs.

Lani-Kailua Branch

The Lani-Kailua Branch had a very successful 26th Annual "I Love Kailua" Town Party this year, raising almost \$30,000 to help fund our beautification projects around Kailua, including the on-going landscape maintenance of two major traffic triangles, and the proposed landscape refurbishment of Alala Point, at the entrance to Lanikai, a landscape project that LKOC installed 25 years ago, with proceeds from the very first Town Party, and has maintained since 1999.

Mānoa Branch

Since October, the Mānoa Branch led 12 community service days to clear three tons of invasive plants from Kamānele Park to reveal the heiau hidden for decades. Members on our board negotiated with Alexander & Baldwin to save the monkeypod trees at the Mānoa Marketplace. This spring, we collaborated with Mālama Mānoa to organize the 1,000 Tree Give Away. In May, our board members worked with University of Hawai'i Faculty housing residents, UH administrators and DLNR to resolve problems surrounding the Mānoa Stream dredging project.

North Shore Branch

Members of the North Shore Branch climbed and volunteered atop Mt. Kaala, held workshops, and pruned trees in Haleiwa's Weed Circle. Members monitored Haleiwa Special District amendments related to signage. We worked on a number of view plane issues: the Haleiwa side of Waimea Bay, the Special District amendments on food trucks, and the land trust behind Sunset Beach Elementary School. We engaged city officials regarding the condition of Ke Ala Pupukea, became a partner in the Sunset Beach Dune Restoration Project, and adopted the ginger garden in Waimea Valley.

Waikiki Branch

Working with the Waikiki Neighborhood Board resulted in two recent *Resolutions of Support* for our work. They encouraged development of our new *Trees and Livability Committee*. We actively promoted the issue of *Save the Ala Wai Promenade*. The project has now received resolutions of support from three adjacent boards and a commitment of city budget funds so far of \$100,000.

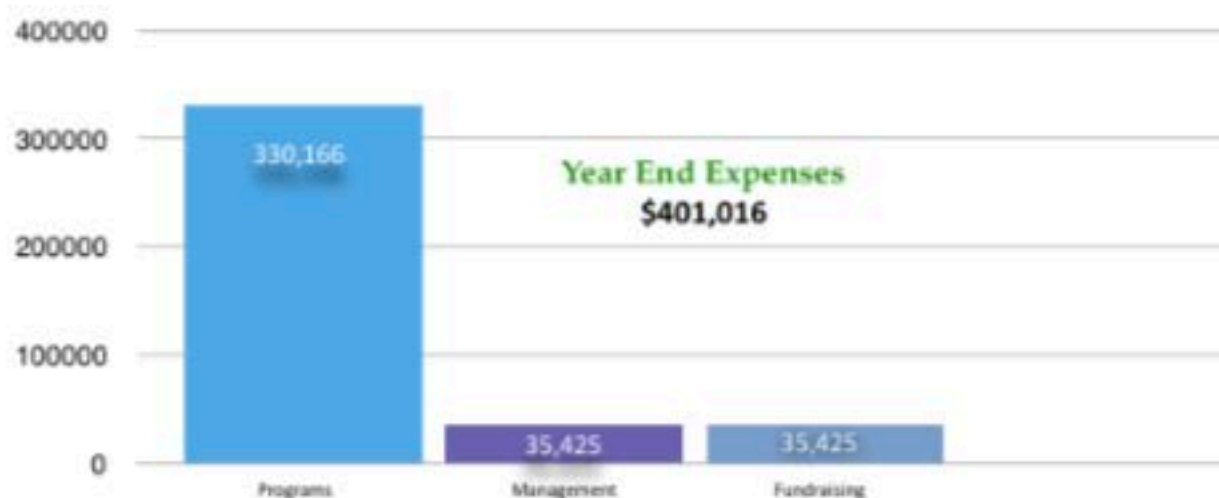
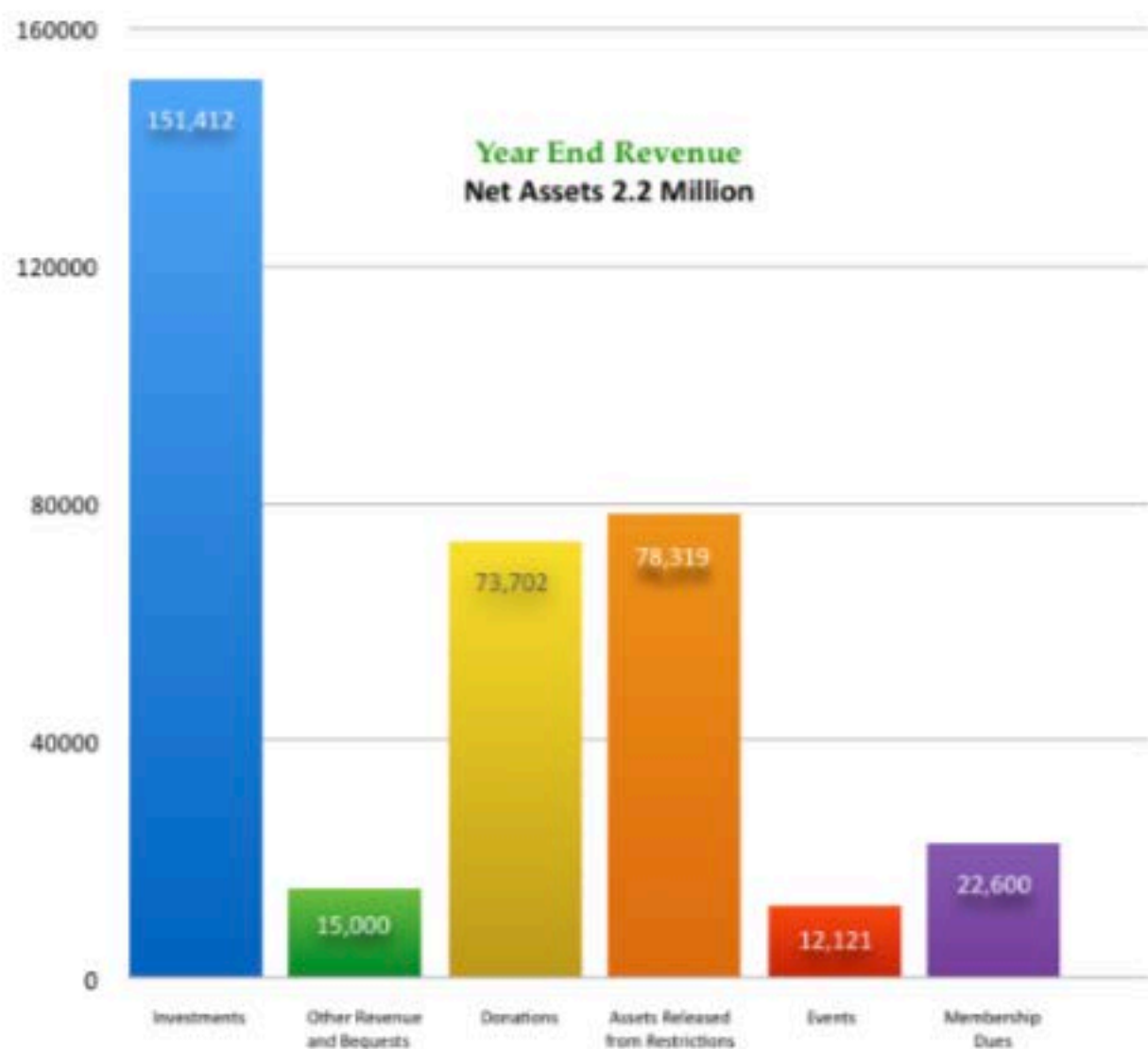
Waikoloa Village Branch

Progress was made towards creating a Waikoloa Community Garden. On the quarter acre lot we procured, we installed a sub-meter for the water, purchased other irrigation supplies, and the trench work has begun. We look forward to completion so planting can begin.

Waimea Branch

The Waimea Outdoor Circle successfully partnered with the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program and recently showcased the completion of a four-year long stream restoration project at Waimea Nature Park Ulu La'au-A Garden of Trees. Community members were invited to see the different methods used to stabilize the banks of the stream and control erosion with native plant restoration.

Financials for Fiscal Year Ending 2017 Revenue & Expenses





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. The Circle is not supported by government funding. Thanks to the consistent support of people like you, we are able to accomplish amazing things for Hawai'i nei.

This Year's Exceptional Donors (donors who gave over \$500 in 2017-2018)

Individuals

Brian Bagnall	Judith Flanders	Mary Mangarin-Kitchen
Josie Bidgood	Diane Harding	Alex Ress
Arlene Block	Carol Hendricks	Paula Ress
Kathleen Bryan	Robert & Jean Johnson	Jean Rolles
Lucia Bu	Mary King	Daniel Shoup
Marilyn & Schuyler Cole	Chacha Kohler	Denise Soderholm
Kenneth Curtis	Jeremy Lam	Chrystal Wong
Lindsey Dymond	Phaedra & Mark	Barbara Schneider Yeackel
Kevin Eckert	Ledbetter	

Corporations, Foundations and Other Entities

Adventist Health Castle	Lin & Ella Wong Foundation
Alexander and Baldwin, Inc.	Matson, Inc.
Armstrong Foundation	Patricia L. Gibson Trust
Hardware Hawaii Kailua	Prisanlee Fund
Home Street Bank	Richard Q.Y. & Esther A. Wong Fund
IBM International Foundation	Sustainable Solutions Foundation
John Simpson Foundation	Target Corporation
Kalani Consulting, Inc.	The MacNaughton Group
Kyo-ya Hotels	Windward Ford Kailua
Lanikai Association	Zadoc and Lawrence Brown Foundation

Mahalo & A Hui Hou

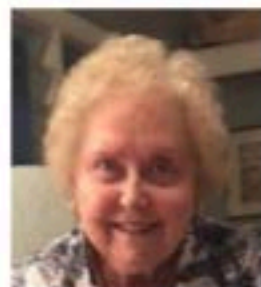


Carol Hendricks (1940-2018)

Carol was the founder and driving force behind the creation and development of Waimea Nature Park Ulu La'au-A Garden of Trees, the only park of its kind in the State of Hawai'i, filled with Native Hawaiian plants and open to the public free of charge.

Lynn Ruthven Rogers (1933-2018)

Lynn, a long-time member of the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle, and head of its Beautification Committee for many years, was dedicated to its mission to beautify Kailua through landscaping projects in our community. These remain a lasting memory of her spirit.



Edna Ruth Jaenke Shoup (1919-2018)

Edna was a member and staunch supporter of the Kaneohe Outdoor Circle for over 50 years. Always giving of herself, she was a leader, mentor and friend to so many, and leaves a gift of aloha in our hearts.

Outgoing Board Members

The **Outdoor Circle** depends on a wonderful group of Board Members to help guide the organization. We thank these outgoing board members for volunteering their time and energy to help uphold our mission.



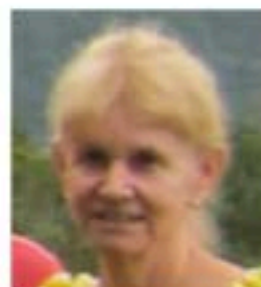
Josie Bidgood is a Senior Vice President and Corporate Facilities Manager for Bank of Hawai'i. She was an Advisor on the board and served as Development Committee Chair.

C. Kauai Lucas is an active volunteer on several Hawai'i nonprofits. She served as an Advisor and Nominations Committee Chair on The Outdoor Circle board.



Michael Moskowitz served as a Director on the TOC board. He is an attorney with a background in biology and a passion for agroforestry.

Paula Ress was a member of The Outdoor Circle's board over the past 17 years, most recently serving as Secretary, and is an active member of the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle board.



Our Mission



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



Board of Directors 2017-2018

Steve Mechler, President

Lowana Richardson, Vice President

Kathleen Bryan, Treasurer

Paula Ress, Secretary

Cheryl Langton, Branch
Representative

Josie Bidgood, Advisor,
Development Committee

Diane Harding, Advisor

C. Kauai Lucas, Advisor,
Nominating Committee

Directors:

Eric Hansen

Michael Moskowitz

Elizabeth O'Sullivan

Branch Presidents

East Hawai'i Island: Donald Inouye

East Honolulu: Susan Spangler

Kane'ohe: Mary Yannell

Kaua'i: Maureen Murphy

Lani-Kailua: Diane Harding

Manoa: Jeremy Lam

North Shore: Lea Albert, Ruth Holmberg

Waikiki: Brian Bagnall

Waikoloa: W.S. Lawrence

Waimea: Cheryl Langton

Staff

Winston Welch, Executive Director

Jackie Wah, Operations Director

Myles Ritchie, Programs Director



The Outdoor Circle

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Cover Image: Kapok Tree, an Exceptional Tree located at the Dept. of Agriculture, S. King Street, Honolulu