

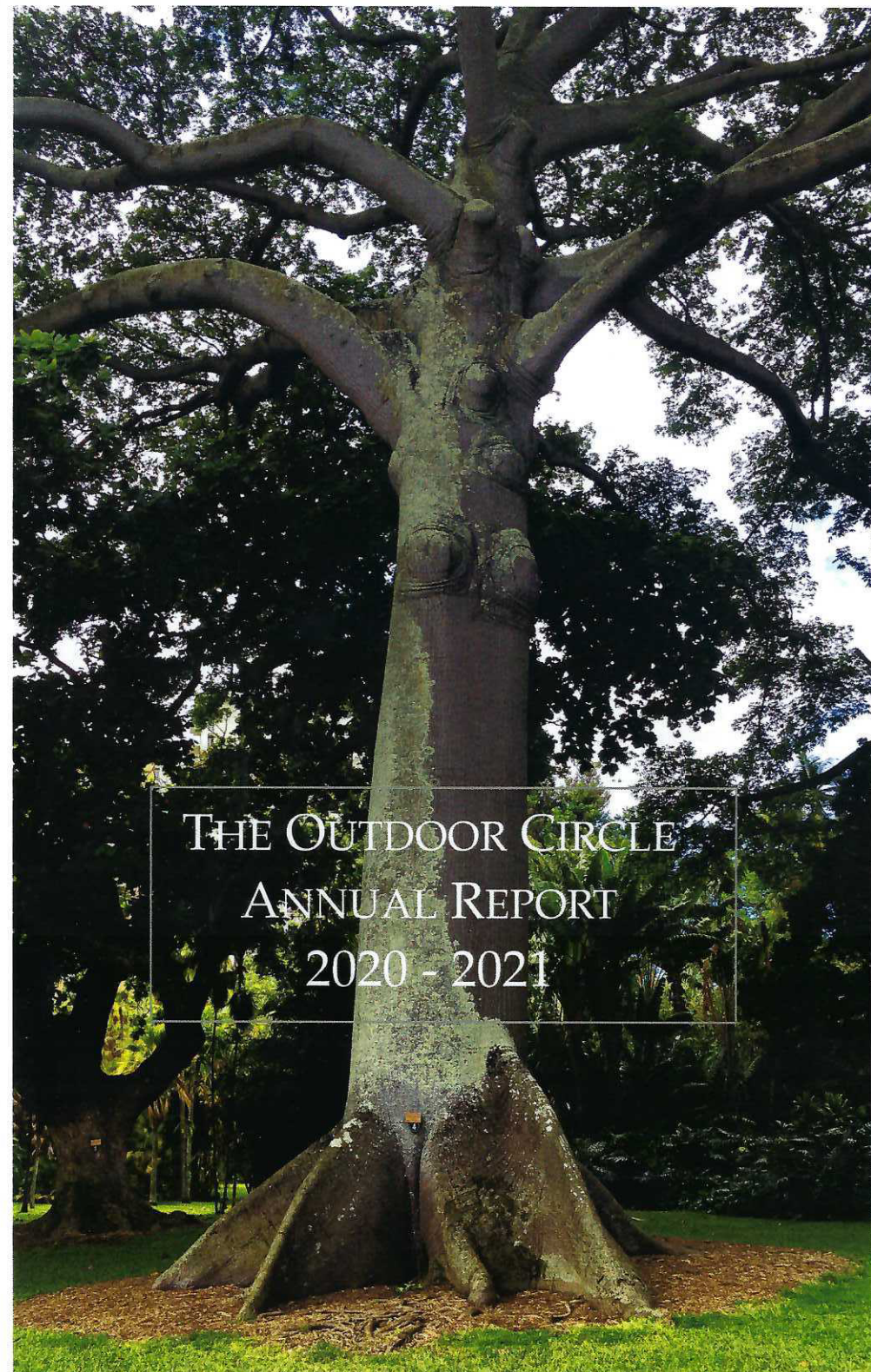


The Outdoor Circle

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

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Cover: Kapok Tree, an Exceptional Tree at Foster Botanical Garden, Honolulu, Hawai'i



President's Message



Due to the continuing pandemic, the past year has been full of continuing challenges, not just for The Outdoor Circle, but for all of us collectively. I am pleased to report that, even with these challenges, The Outdoor Circle was able to maintain its ability to be proactive in many areas.

The Development Committee continued its efforts toward effective financial stability for the organization and how we can best meet our needs. We recently undertook a membership survey and marketing study with the aim of better meeting member needs and expectations. We hope some of the results will be an increased public awareness of The Outdoor Circle, growth in

our membership, and offer more ways for community participation and involvement in the stewardship of our islands.

Much of our work this year was, as it often is, "behind the scenes" pushing for protection or promotion of green spaces and quality of life issues. This involved testifying to ban noisy and polluting leaf blowers, working with the counties to staff and constitute their Arborist Advisory Committees, and working with the Board of Water Supply to repair damage to Diamond Head and prevent it from being marred with garish fencing. We also testified against zoning variances, opposition to encroachments on setbacks, and exceeding maximum building areas, all of which impact the character of our neighborhoods. We worked with city and state agencies to oppose and prevent unnecessary removal of trees in houseless encampments, pressing for community clean up events and reclaiming parks for public usage.

As The Outdoor Circle was instrumental in enacting the strict statewide signage laws that banned the billboard, this effort continued in revisions made to our policy positions to include murals that are increasingly becoming a part of our visual landscape. We will see more work in this area to come, as the challenges to our visual landscape are never-ending.

We remain forever dedicated to trees, not just for all the environmental benefits they provide, but for the many ways they beautify our streets, our parks, as well as our own backyards. The relationship we have nurtured with the Arbor Day Foundation enabled us to do another substantial tree planting at Camp Palehua, hold another hugely successful tree giveaway in Hilo with the East Hawai'i Branch, and allowed us to maintain trees we planted at Windward Community College in 2019, which are now thriving.

Our branches kept up safety precautions during the pandemic while continuing their beautification projects and advocating for preservation of areas across the state as we continued to work with them to ensure that activities were safe for all those participating.

I am grateful and appreciative of the work of The Outdoor Board of Directors and our dedicated staff: Winston Welch, Executive Director; Jackie Wah, Operations Director; and Myles Ritchie, Programs Director. Together we maneuvered through a year of starts and stops, which was felt acutely as we mourned the loss of one of our trusted Board members, Jennie Peterson, who will be especially missed for her kindness and grace.

I want to thank all our members and donors who helped sustain us this past year. You are an important part of our organization and your support has helped our Circle to expand and grow.

Aloha,

Scott R. Wilson
President, The Outdoor Circle

Sustaining the Effort

The Outdoor Circle's Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 calls for "Sustaining the Effort" by securing diversified financing for the whole organization. This year the Board has chosen to establish the Development Committee as a "committee of the whole" with all Board members participating. Our strategic plan set specific action plans for diversifying our revenue sources and implementing a phased marketing plan to increase community awareness about TOC's work. The Board has begun this marketing plan with a survey to get feedback from our membership and has retained a communications consultant to guide implementation of the plan.



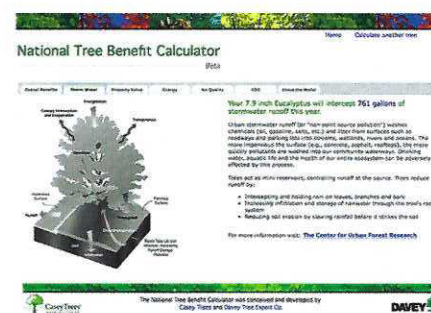
A total of 120 donors responded to the year-end appeal for financial support this year. An additional \$109,000 in grant funds were received during the year including grants for specific projects as well as government grants related to the pandemic. The Board is also exploring new approaches to fundraising such as a sustaining donor program in which donors will establish a monthly donation.

Throughout its history TOC has been sustained by bequests from its long-time supporters. We will establish a new effort to solicit planned giving support to sustain the future of The Outdoor Circle.

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Natural Resources & Environmental Management – Valuing Tree Benefits Lab

This year saw the 5th iteration of the environmental education collaboration between The Outdoor Circle and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa take place. The program is an annual event that teaches two labs designed for junior and senior students about the numerous

benefits of trees, how to calculate their quantitative and qualitative characteristics and career opportunities in the field of urban forestry and environmental conservation. While the first three years featured in-person lectures and field data collection, due to the pandemic, the two most recent years have been virtual. However, each student still completed all aspects of the aforementioned curriculum, albeit with data provided to them and a greater emphasis on critical thinking related to an urban forestry using a



multidisciplinary focus. The continued success of this program, regardless of being in-person or online, has now set the stage for the 6th iteration of this partnership to take place in the spring 2022 semester.

Waimanalo Root Barrier Project

Nearly a decade ago, Dr. Andrew Kaufman of the UH Manoa Department of Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences began a project to examine the best root barrier methods that would allow trees to reach maturity and ensure longevity for decades, while also minimizing the infrastructure damage of their roots that often result in their premature removal. Four years into the project, The Outdoor Circle began their partnership with Dr. Kaufman to assist with this project in the form of data collection, tree pruning and eventually excavating the trees using AirSpades, which shoot compressed air at speeds of Mach 2 to expose a tree's roots, without damaging them in the process. This method allows different root barrier methods to be compared by measuring the number and size of damaging roots and ultimately deriving which is the ideal material to use in urban environments.



As of July 2021, all data has been collected and is now being analyzed by Myles Ritchie, The Outdoor Circle's Program Director, and Dr. Kaufman's research lab. In the coming months, this data will be published in academic journals, as well as in local magazines such as Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii (LICH), which will help practitioners around Hawai'i learn about and utilize these new findings to better our urban forest.

The goal of this research is to produce scientific data that can be utilized by government agencies and industry professionals to help mitigate the continuous conflicts that are seen between trees (specifically their root systems) and urban infrastructure (concrete sidewalks, roadways, etc.). Ideally, the findings will be beneficial through the promotion of best practices for tree root management, that should ultimately lead to a reduction in the number of unnecessary removals of street and parking lot trees. This should all culminate in a scenario where our urban forest is healthier and is composed of greater numbers of larger and older trees. Should such an outcome be achieved, the numerous ecosystem services these mature trees provide (shading, stormwater runoff reduction, increased biodiversity, etc.) would also be enjoyed by all.

This was the first time a study of this nature has been conducted anywhere in the world for a tropic environment and will ultimately have the ability to inform better policy and management decisions.

Camp Palehua Tree Planting

On November 20 and 21, 2021, The Outdoor Circle returned to Camp Palehua to partner with Malama Learning Center and planted over 900 native trees. The event was funded by the Arbor Day Foundation and FedEx and saw 14 species planted on two sites located on the property. The tree planting acted as an educational learning center for elementary and high school students.

This restoration project saw 905 native Hawaiian plants (301 trees, 253 shrubs and 351 ground cover) go into the ground and were selected based on the complementary and symbiotic functions they have with one another. While our original total was intended to

be 250-300 plants, we were able to surpass this amount by nearly three times due to the hard work of all those involved and that the plants themselves were grown on site, rather than being purchased by a third party as was originally anticipated.



Additionally, the event featured immersive education sessions where each group of participants learned about each of the native species being planted, why they were selected and how they will improve the former pasture

land they were being planted on. The education component went beyond botanical and environmental concepts to include the invaluable cultural benefits these species provide and how these future native forests will restore the 'aina.

This was one of the first planting events conducted since the COVID outbreak began which forced volunteer events to halt. There were groups of up to four volunteers (usually from the same household) in two-hour sessions that amounted to over 40 volunteers planting at the site over the two-day span.

Volunteers indicated their joy at being able to not only enjoy nature once again, but also participate in this educational restoration event that met all County and State COVID requirements.

Without the support of the Arbor Day Foundation and FedEx this extremely successful event would not have been possible and we are extremely grateful for their support.



Is it Art – Or is it a Billboard?

In July 2020, a mural artist painted a bold message on the side of a 16-story building in Honolulu to make a statement about the importance of voting. Immediately people started calling The Outdoor Circle wanting to know how such a billboard could be allowed in Hawai'i where The Outdoor Circle worked to ban billboards over a hundred years ago!



As a result of this incident the Public Affairs Committee and TOC staff went to work researching and advocating for definitions, limitations and standards to make sure that outdoor murals enhance the built environment while protecting Hawai'i's natural beauty and scenic view planes.

Upon hearing our concerns, the artist kindly agreed to remove the mural in question for now. However, several additional large murals have been proposed or installed on public and private property within the last year highlighting the need for a policy framework to protect the scenic landscape from being overwhelmed with visual

clutter the way many cities are overwhelmed with signs and billboards competing for public attention.

TOC's Board has amended our Public Policy Positions to add our support for limits on the placement and number of outdoor murals to ensure that individually and collectively they aesthetically enhance the built environment while protecting Hawai'i's natural beauty, scenic view planes and urban view corridors. Additionally, TOC advocates for protecting the tranquility and natural beauty of public parks and recreational areas.

East Hawai'i Outdoor Circle Tree Giveaway

On October 24, 2020, the East Hawai'i Outdoor Circle conducted a follow-up tree giveaway to provide trees to residents of the East Hawai'i community as a direct response to the natural disasters 2018, while also beginning to address the widespread food insecurity caused by COVID. By giving away over 655 trees consisting of 14 desirable fruit and native species, the community will now be able to help replant following the volcanic eruption, hurricanes and flooding that took place three years ago, which has produced negative impacts that continue to linger to this day and have been exacerbated by COVID. These trees will be able to help mitigate future natural disaster impacts, especially when flooding occurs and begin to provide food security for residents of Hawai'i Island who received these trees.



This event also allowed us to reach-out to numerous demographics in the community to let them know about the wonderful work The Outdoor Circle is currently undertaking, as well as that of the Arbor Day Foundation and International Paper who sponsored the event. A third iteration of the event is scheduled for November 2021, and will once again be supported by the two aforementioned entities.

Branch Highlights 2020-2021

East Hawai'i Island Branch

In October 2020 we did a second successful tree giveaway in Hilo. Due to advertisements on radio and social media, it was so well attended it was estimated there were 4,000 cars in line although we only had enough trees for 325 cars. We will be revamping the process for the 2021 tree giveaway and hope to set-up an online reservation process. In March 2021 we did a replanting with assistance of JROTC from Hilo High School on some land controlled by DAGS, where two healthy 45-year-old monkeypod trees were taken down due to adjacent building complaints. We planted 48 trees: 2 gold trumpets, 10 brunfelsia, and 36 mock orange. All are doing well. We continue our efforts to establish relationships with our new administration, and for getting the Arborist Advisory Committee in Hawai'i County up and running again.

Greater Waikiki Branch

We are pleased to welcome Lucia Kye as the incoming President of the Greater Waikiki Branch, taking the baton from founding President Brian Bagnall, who will remain a trusted advisor and contributor.

Lani-Kailua Branch

LKOC's "Learning to Grow" program at Kailua's Women's Community Correctional Center continued to thrive despite the facility's pandemic lockdown. Students managed the hydroponics program themselves and regularly produced lettuce for the community and vegetables for their cafeteria. In March, LKOC funded trimming of four Exceptional Monkeypod trees on the WCCC grounds that are some of the oldest, largest and most beautiful in Kailua. LKOC has had them professionally pruned every few years since 2002. In addition to ongoing landscape beautification projects, LKOC is collaborating with HECO to plant trees at a substation on Kainalu Drive, and continues to work with the city to preserve trees on Kailua streets and municipal parking lots.

Mānoa Branch

The Mānoa Branch has continued the environmental stewardship of Kamānele Park, with continued community service days to remove the invasive vegetation at the heiau site. Litter clean-ups at various public parks in the Mānoa area have also been scheduled with the City's Adopt-a-park program coordinator. Earth Day gift baskets of environmental themed books and learning games were donated to Noelani Elementary School and the Mo'o School. Learning that 76 acres of the conservation land at Paradise Park was listed on the market, the Mānoa board organized a working group to advocate for public acquisition. So far, they have facilitated six in-person meetings with a number of leaders. Furthermore, the Mānoa Branch has continued to be an active partner with the Mānoa Stakeholders group which collaborated to develop the Mānoa Community Needs Survey. The data from the 1,301 completed surveys will be used for strategic planning.

North Shore Branch

Despite the uncertainties that we are living in these days, the North Shore Outdoor Circle continues to keep our community clean, green, and beautiful. We continue to maintain our lush, well-shaded Ke Ala Pupukea Bike Path, our gateway to Haleiwa, Weed Circle, and we do monthly work days in Waimea Valley to help with Torch Alley. We had our first field trip since the pandemic on July 15, 2021, where we toured the Kokua Learning Farm in Haleiwa town. Joe Wat and Kelly Perry explained how they follow their mission to provide students from grades K through 12 with hands-on experiences which will enhance their appreciation for and understanding of the environment.

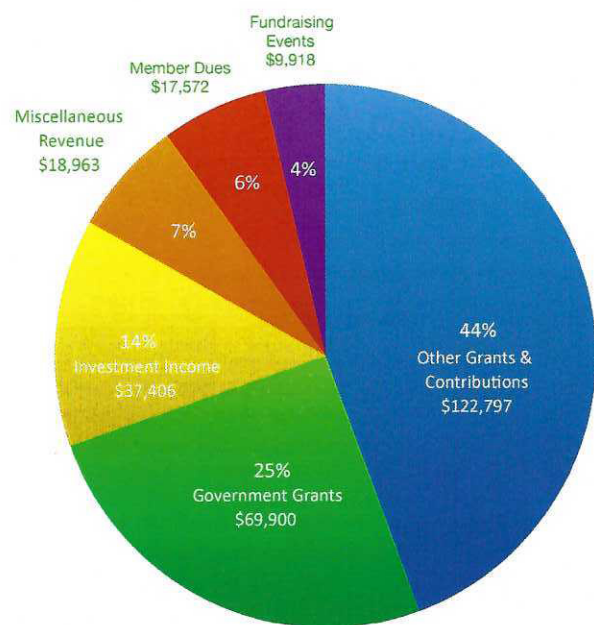
Waikoloa Village Branch

The Waikoloa Village Branch is enjoying two years of community gardening. In our harsh environment, we are amazed that we can grow tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant and much more. It's all about learning what to plant when and what varieties work for us. It has definitely been a learning experience.

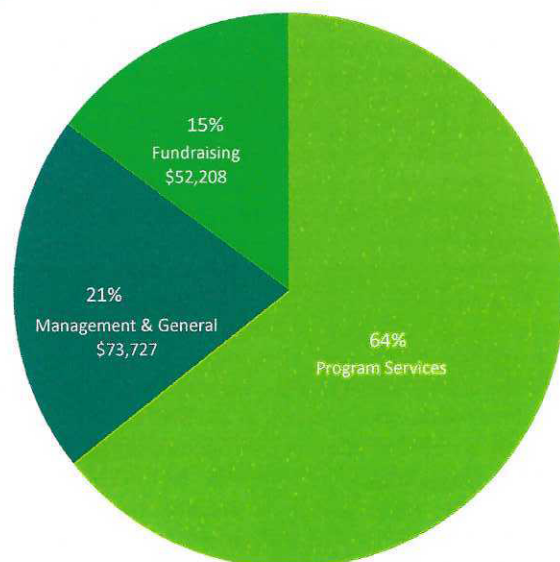
Waimea Branch

Funding from the State Legislature was released on January 1, 2021 for paving the entrance into the Nature Park and we are currently working with our engineer on the design. We will soon have plans to submit to contractors for bidding.

Financials for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2020 Revenue & Expenses



Total Revenue
\$276,556



Total Expenses
\$352,901

Net Assets at Year End \$1.87M

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 2020-2021]

Individuals

Patricia Benjamin
Arlene & Ken Block
Mimi Bornhorst Gaddis
Abbey Cash
Peter Drewliner
Kevin Eckert
Suzanne Engel
Severine Fleming
Joan Gossett
Diane Harding
Peggi Kamisato
Mary & Harvey King

Chacha Kohler
Lucia Kye
Ann Lum
Maile McLaughlin
Lelan Nishek
Cynthia Quisenberry
Jean Rolles
Denise Soderholm
Roger Soderholm
Sonja Walawender
Scott Wilson & Christine Yano
Barbara Schneider Yeackel

Corporations, Foundations and Other Entities

American Carpet One Foundation
Arbor Day Foundation
Armstrong Foundation
County of Hawai'i
Hawaiian Electric Companies
HomeStreet Bank
Lanikai Association
Estate of Marianne Maynard
The Padosi Foundation
The Poha Foundation
Prisanlee Fund
Sustainable Solutions Foundation
Zadoc and Lawrence Brown Foundation

A Hui Hou

The Outdoor Circle's members and supporters are an integral part of our organization. We honor the memory of a few who have passed away over the last year, grateful for their devotion and commitment to our mission.



Marianne Maynard was a retired high school teacher, Ironman World Championship volunteer, and a former board member of the Kona Outdoor Circle. The branch remained special to her throughout her life.

Jennie Peterson was a beloved member of The Outdoor Circle Board of Directors, where she served for 3 years as a Director and Education Committee Chair, drawing upon her expertise and decades of service to the environmental community. Prior to retiring, she served as the Environmental Education Program Manager, Curriculum Specialist, and Natural Historian at the Hawai'i Nature Center, where she touched the lives of many students.



Sara Marie Riley was a long-time Lani-Kailua Branch member and Outdoor Circle supporter. A big proponent of natural health, her interest in health extended to the natural environment, feeling that a healthy environment was crucial for a healthy life.

Laura Kalaukapu Low Lucas Thompson had an abiding love of nature, along with a strong commitment to Hawai'i. She made an impact in so many areas of our community, volunteering and serving on countless boards, including The Outdoor Circle, where she was a former Board President. She was known for her kindness and compassion, which extended to the land, the environment, and all living things.



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 2020-2021

Scott R. Wilson, President
Jonathan Sudler, Vice President
Paula Ress, Secretary
Kathy Whitmire, Treasurer
Diane Harding, Branch Representative
Mimi Bornhorst Gaddis, Advisor,
Nominations Committee
Denise Soderholm, Advisor
Directors:

Gordon Aoyagi
Cheryl Chesnut
Joan Gossett
Maureen Murphy
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: Lucia Kye
Waikoloa Village: W.S. Lawrence
Waimea: Cheryl Langton

Staff

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