TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
President's Briefing
for the Board of Regents
March 1, 2021

PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCREDITATION

2017-2023 University Plan

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Texas State University engaged in a mid-cycle review of the 2017-2023 University Plan. This review followed a collaborative process. It gave all employees an opportunity to provide feedback. Their input was integrated into division and college level progress reports for academic year 2019-2020. These individual progress reports were then compiled into a university-wide progress report. This marked the end of the Plan's first phase. In academic year 2020-2021, the second phase of the Plan commenced.

SACSCOC Reaffirmation

As Texas State prepares for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 2021, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Development Task Force finalized the QEP. The QEP was subsequently reviewed by the President's Cabinet prior to submission. The QEP Development Task Force has also started a marketing campaign to inform and engage the university community in the various aspects of the QEP prior to the SACSCOC virtual on-site review scheduled from March 30, 2021 through April 1, 2021.

Texas State received the results from the SACSCOC off-site review of the Compliance Certification Report on December 3, 2020. An unprecedented 69 of the narratives for the 72 standards were found "in compliance" by the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee. Of the three remaining standards:

1. the financial statement and review were not completed at the time of the off-site review due to the timing of the fiscal year, and, since then, both financial documents have been finalized;
2. the qualifications of ten faculty members, half of whom are no longer employed by Texas State, need additional justification: and
3. the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is reviewed for compliance by the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee rather than the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

Focused Reports for the two standards deemed “not in compliance” and the QEP have been submitted to the SACSCOC on-site review team. The virtual on-site review will focus on the two cited standards, the QEP, and the 20 standards with embedded criteria required by the U. S. Department of Education for an accrediting agency to review by the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Enrollment Across the State of Texas

During the pandemic, the state of Texas has seen a significant decline in students applying to college. In December 2020, compared to the same time in the previous year, fall 2021 applications fell by:

- 19 percent for freshmen,
- 12 percent for transfers,
- 23 percent for international freshmen, and
- 35 percent for international transfers.

The decrease in international students applying to Texas colleges may be attributed, in part, to a request backlog or ongoing reduction in visas granted by the U. S. Government.

Through December 25, 2020, only 30 percent of the Texas high school class of 2021 completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid; this represents nearly a 12 percent decline compared to the same time in the last academic year.

The pandemic is widening equity gaps as more low-income students and students of color are opting out of enrolling in higher education. To offset the impact, Texas State announced a $10 million expansion of its freshman scholarship program for fall 2021. The growth of Texas State's assured scholarship program follows the university's expansion of the Bobcat Promise Program in May 2020. Designed for first-time freshmen, the Bobcat Promise Program covers full tuition and fees for families with adjusted gross income of $50,000 or less.

It is expected that the statewide trends described in this section will improve as more students begin a later start to the college application process.

Undergraduate Recruitment

Texas State applications for spring and fall 2021 reflect the statewide trends described above.

Spring 2021. As of December 14, 2020, and compared to the same time in the previous year, the number of:

- freshman applications received were 603, a 20 percent decrease (-153 applications);
- freshman acceptances were 242, a 17 percent increase (+35 acceptances);
- spring transfer applications were 2,334, a six percent decrease (-159 applications); and
- transfer acceptances were 1,575, a two percent decrease (-42 acceptances).

Fall 2021. As of December 14, 2020, and compared to the same time in the previous year, the number of:

- freshman applications received were 19,161, a 14 percent decrease (-3,197 applications);
- freshman acceptances were 9,757, a 13 percent decrease (-1,487 acceptances);
- transfer applications were 751, a four percent increase (+33 applications); and
- transfer acceptances were 295, a 16 percent decrease (-58 acceptances).

Graduate Recruitment

Spring 2021. As of December 14, 2020, and compared to the same time in the previous year, the number of:

- doctoral applications received were 26, a 24 percent increase (+5 applications);
- doctoral acceptances were 21, a 110 percent increase (+11 acceptances);
- master's applications received were 956, a five percent decrease (-51 applications); and
- master's acceptances were 636, an 11 percent increase (+62 acceptances).

This decline in master's applications was expected as one program (i.e., the M.S. in Nursing-Family Nurse Practitioner program) shifted its admission to fall only. It is expected that the resulting decrease in spring applications will be offset by higher application rates in this program for fall admissions. Despite the decrease in applications in this one program, many graduate programs saw an increase in their application numbers. At the doctoral level, for instance, the Ph.D. in Mathematics Education program saw a significant increase of applications in comparison to last spring, and at the master's level, the M.S. in Aquatic Resources, the M.A. in Literature, the M.S. in Dementia and Aging Studies, and the M.A. in Communication Studies programs saw significant increases in applications. In addition, the M.S. in Construction Management, which was just approved Summer 2020, added another 31 applications and 23 admissions.

Student Retention

Compared to Spring 2020, the Spring 2021 preliminary registration numbers indicated that:

- the 2020 freshman class registered for spring (4,850 students) is up slightly (89.3 percent versus 88.4 percent);
- the continuing undergraduate student enrollment (27,477 student) is down 2.8 percent (-806 students); and
- the continuing graduate enrollment (3,578 students) is up 8.2 percent (+274 students).

In June 2020, Texas State announced a new retention initiative with ReUp Education. Approved by the Board of Regents (BOR) during the February 2020 meeting, the new partnership is designed to help stop-out students with some college experience, but no degree, return to the university and chart a path to graduation. As a result of this recruitment program, 82 former undergraduate students enrolled in fall 2020. At the time this report was written, 149 new students have been admitted for spring 2021; of these, 86 have registered.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Capital Improvements

Three capital projects totaling over $108 million remain in deferment because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Status of Construction and Renovation Projects

This status report is organized by the phase in which each project falls in the development cycle. The phases include:

- Planning and Programming – The process of identifying space needs and general magnitude of project cost.
- Design – The process of developing detailed blueprints and cost estimates.
- Construction – The entire process of building the project.
- Project Completion – The construction is complete, the bills are all paid, the building has been turned over for use, and The Texas State University System (TSUS) has officially approved project close-out.

Note. When multiple projects are underway in one building, all projects are presented together for ease of understanding regardless of their phase in the development cycle.

Projects in the Planning and Programming Phase

The draft program of design for **Esperanza Hall** has been completed, and the project size is 107,665 Gross Square Feet (GSF). This will be the fourth academic building on the Round Rock Campus and will include classrooms, labs, and offices to support four departments in the College of Health Professions, the College's Advising Center, and the Dean's Office. The program document has been used in preparing a Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) funding request for the 87th Texas Legislature. This project is on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and will be initiated pending TRB funding. The current estimated Total Project Cost (TPC) is $88 million.

The draft program of design for the **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Building** has been completed. This building will be located on the San Marcos Campus and will include classrooms, labs, and offices to support the Department of Mathematics, Department of Computer Science, and the School of Criminal Justice and Criminology. The building will also provide teaching space for several other academic disciplines. The draft program has been used

in preparing a TRB funding request for the 87th Texas Legislature. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending TRB funding. The current estimated TPC is $157 million, and the project size is 200,000 GSF.

The **Music Building** will be located on the San Marcos Campus near the Performing Arts Center and the Theatre Center to address the pressing needs of the School of Music. The new building will include classrooms, offices, and rehearsal spaces. A draft program of design in June 2019 resulted in a project size of 110,128 GSF and an estimated TPC of $70 million. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending successful fundraising.

Projects in the Design Phase

The **Film and Television Studios Project** (previously the Aqua Sports Repurposing Project) is on the CIP. Located on the San Marcos Campus, this project will provide much-needed space for students pursuing filmography and media studies, and will provide dedicated teaching labs that achieve a high degree of acoustical performance for specialized course work. The Architectural Space Program is complete, and Lawrence Group Architects has been selected as the architect on the project. Vaughn Construction has been selected as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) on the project. The TPC is $10 million. The scope of work changed from a renovation project of an older building to a new construction project after it was discovered that the Aqua Sports building's structural system had deteriorated due to decades of chlorine exposure to the point that is not fiscally reasonable to restore the building. The Aqua Sports building will only be used for storage for the time being and will be decommissioned and demolished at a later date. A Design Development document was submitted in January 2021 for the BOR's approval at the February meeting.

The **Infrastructure Research Laboratory** is on the CIP. This project will provide the College of Science and Engineering with state-of-the-art capabilities and innovative technology for advanced testing of beams, girders, and other concrete components under high stress and tension as well as provide research space for the civil engineering degree program at the Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park. The TPC is $18.2 million. However, anticipated grant funding of approximately $4 million has become unavailable. Thus, the TPC will be reduced; accordingly, funding will only support the base building project, roadway access, and drainage swale. Alamo Architects has been selected to provide design services for the project. The project will be under construction in March 2021.

The current TPC for the planned **Hilltop Housing Complex** on the San Marcos Campus is $96.7 million based on 1,006 beds. Barnes Gromatzky Kosarek Architects is the architect, and Vaughn Construction is the CMR. Demolition of Hornsby and Burleson Halls and utility upgrades have been completed. Design development was approved during the May 2019 BOR meeting. The architect has completed 100 percent construction documents. The construction phase is being delayed until student enrollment rebounds after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Projects in the Construction Phase

The construction of the **Round Rock Campus Services Building** started in September 2020 and will fulfill the needs of several support services departments while freeing up space in academic buildings for teaching and research. McKinney York Architects is the architect, and Kitchell Construction is the CMR. This project has a TPC of $6.2 million. Substantial completion is estimated in May 2021.

The construction of the **University Police Department (UPD) Building** began in October 2020. This project will include approximately 20,987 GSF and will relocate UPD from its current home in the Nueces building to make room for academic programs. The TPC is $9 million and will reach substantial completion in February 2022. Atkins is the architect and Vaughn Construction is the CMR.

Projects Completed

The following completed projects took place on the San Marcos Campus:

The **Albert B. Alkek Library Learning Commons Project**, with a TPC of $8.3 million, reached substantial completion in February 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **Albert B. Alkek Library Seventh Floor Wittliff Collections Expansion Project** is now complete. The TPC is $4.7 million and a total size of 10,849 GSF. The final report has been submitted and is on the February 2021 BOR's agenda for review.

The **Blanco Residence Hall Renovations Project**, with a TPC of $29.6 million, reached substantial completion in July 2019. The final report has been submitted and is on the February 2021 BOR's agenda for review.

The **Elliott Hall Project**, with a TPC of $6.65 million and a total size of 37,293 GSF, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **Jowers Center Renovation Project**, with a TPC of $3,416,000, reached substantial completion in July 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **LBJ Student Center (LBJSC) Expansion Project**, with a TPC of $31.2 million and a total size of 36,866 GSF is now complete. The project also included 38,643 GSF of renovation in the "old" part of the LBJSC. The final report is being prepared.

The **Multi-Use Recreation Fields**, with a TPC of $7.87 million, reached substantial completion in June 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **Roy F. Mitte Space Reconfiguration Project**, with a TPC of $6.5 million, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **University Events Center Expansion Project**, with a TPC of $62.5 million and a total size of 81,272 GSF, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As of the end of the first quarter of fiscal year 2021, Texas State raised approximately $3 million, including three gifts valued over $100,000. These gifts included $500,000 in support of The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, $125,000 to establish a new scholars program in the Honors College in partnership with the Stelos Alliance, and $100,000 from the Wayne and JoAnn Moore Charitable Foundation for scholarships.

In fiscal year 2020, the university raised $1.4 million to support the Big Ideas initiative. This included a partnership with Advanced Micro Devices who will provide approximately $450,000 in research funding and in-kind hardware and cloud computing services. In October 2020, the university closed a second round of proposal submissions to identify additional fundraising priorities aligned with the six Big Ideas areas. In total, 32 proposals were submitted and 28 were selected to be featured fundraising priorities as part of the Big Ideas initiative.

The Bobcats to Bobcats Scholarship Fund was launched in May 2020 to support students, who experienced a loss of income because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as they continue their education at Texas State. The collective generosity of the Bobcat community enabled the university to provide $1,000 scholarships for over 350 students in fall 2020. With financial hardship continuing to impact enrollment decisions, Bobcats to Bobcats scholarships is a top priority in the upcoming academic year. The university will continue fundraising for immediate-use scholarships to support its students through the Bobcats to Bobcats Scholarship Fund.

During fall 2020, the Texas State Alumni Association made progress in implementing new initiatives from their strategic plan approved by their Board of Directors in August 2019. For example, since September 1, 2020, 100 new members have joined Forever Bobcats, a new lifetime membership program, bringing the total number to over 2,700 members. The new alumni networks began delivering programming virtually with events including an Austin technology roundtable and a workshop on crisis communications delivered by a Texas State alumni panel. The alumni virtual events strategy has proven effective at continuing to engage alumni with the university during the pandemic. Over 400 alumni participated in virtual events hosted by the Alumni Association in fall 2020, exceeding the 350 alumni attending in-person events delivered through the alumni chapters program in fall 2019.

SPONSORED PROGRAM AWARDS - RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL

New sponsored program awards obtained during the first quarter of fiscal year 2021 include both the Instructional Awards and the Research Awards categories. The Instructional Awards category consists of awards that cannot be classified as research according to definitions provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The Research Awards category impacts both restricted research and total research and development expenditures for the university. Both research-related metrics contribute to determining National Research University Fund eligibility and the Core Research Support Funding allocated to Emerging Research Universities via the THECB.

Below are the research and instructional awards over $100,000 received during the first quarter of fiscal year 2021.

Recipient/Unit	Funding	Project Title and Purpose
Dr. John P. Blair Advance Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center	**$8,780,893** U. S. Department of Justice	**ALERRT-Preparing for Active Shooter Situations** will study the effectiveness of historical response tactics and dissemination of research at integrated training classes for police, fire, and EMS personnel.
Dr. Araceli Martinez Ortiz LBJ Institute for STEM Education and Research	**$2,908,424 Supplement; Total Award $6,066,912** National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	**HSI-NASA STEM Educator Professional Development Collaborative** will support STEM engagement for students and educators nationwide.
Dr. Weston Hugh Nowlin Department of Biology	**$2,872,906** U. S. Army Corps of Engineers	**Predicting Ecological Futures in Texas Watersheds** will obtain a large multi-river basin field-based dataset that determines environmental drivers for the distribution and abundance of species at multiple spatiotemporal scales and across hydrogeomorphic conditions in Texas rivers.
Dr. Kathy Erin Martinez-Prather Texas School Safety Center	**$2,235,125** U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	**FDA Tobacco Prevention and Control Program** will implement the FDA's State Tobacco Retail Compliance Inspection program.
Mrs. Sylvia T. Gonzales University College	**$1,297,635 Year 5 of 5; Total Award $6,063,103** U. S. Department of Education	**HSI: IMPACTing STEM Success at Texas State** will enhance and develop the STEM success pipeline through high impact practices and outreach and will strengthen STEM success through professional development research.

Mr. David N. Dornak The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment	**$1,000,000** Texas General Land Office	**The Texas Coastal Collaborative-A Dynamic Approach to Hazard Mitigation, Resiliency and NPS Control** will utilize to support activities that lead to local plans, ordinances, sustainable stormwater management, and reduction of pollutants, hazards, and flooding.
Dr. Norma Judith Perez-Brena School of Family and Consumer Sciences	**$913,812 Year 1 of 5; Total Award $4,569,079** U. S. Department of Health and Human Services	**Strong Relationships/Strong Futures: Healthy Relationship and Adult Preparation Education** will provide adolescent parents with a comprehensive research-based relationship education program that strengthens the multiple relationships they manage as new parents.
Mr. John Robert Curnutt Advance Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center	**$786,694** Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Service	**Homeland Security National Training Program** will offer a research-based Incident Management Course as part of the ALERRT Center's overall research program.
Dr. Paula Elaine Stigler Granados School of Health Administration	**$705,755** Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences	**Chagas Disease Surveillance and Readiness Along U. S. Mexico Border and Ports of Entry** will utilize proven surveillance techniques to identify infected vectors near and around the Southwest border areas, of operation, estimate seroprevalence of the disease in these high-risk areas, and propose sound public health policies to address this important disease.
Mr. Paul Joseph Harper Small Business Development Center	**$564,152** Small Business Development Center (UTSA)	**Fiscal Year 2021 Texas State Small Business Development Center Grant** will support the Center's activities for Fiscal Year 2021.

Mrs. Sylvia T. Gonzales University College	**$491,692 Year 3 of 5; Total Award $2,442,115** U. S. Department of Education	**HSI: Project MAESTROS: Growth the Teacher Education Pipeline at Texas State** will expand accessibility to teacher education and increase success of Hispanic students in teacher education, thereby increasing the numbers of Hispanic teachers along the IH 35 corridor and across Texas.
Dr. Kathleen Mary Melhuish Department of Mathematics	**$477,407 Year 3 of 3; Total Award $1,984,657** National Science Foundation	**Using Technology to Capture Classroom Interactions: The Design, Validation, and Dissemination of a Formative Assessment of Instruction Tool for Diverse K-8 in Mathematics** will design, validate, and disseminate a formative assessment of instruction tool intended to support teacher learning focused on interactions by and among students and teachers.
Dr. Feng Wang Ingram School of Engineering	**$449,720** Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)	**Improve Data Quality for Automated Pavement Distress Data Collection** will develop quality assurance capability and guidelines on automated pavement distress data for TxDOT.
Dr. Liqin Du Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry	**$445,639** National Institutes of Health	**Molecular and Therapeutic Mechanisms of Differentiation-Inducing MicroRNA miR-506-3p in Neuroblastoma** will elucidate the mechanisms underlying the differentiation-inducing function of a differentiation-inducing miRNA recently identified in miR-506-3p, and develop miR-506-3p analogs with enhanced differentiation-inducing activity.

Mr. Rafael A. Cordero, Jr. Institutional Inclusive Excellence-Student Initiatives	**$428,567 Year 4 of 5; Total Award $1,658,973** U. S. Department of Education	**Upward Bound-San Marcos Fiscal Year 2020-2021** will help prepare disadvantaged youth from San Marcos schools for the challenges and rewards of pursuing a postsecondary education.
Mr. Rafael A. Cordero, Jr. Institutional Inclusive Excellence-Student Initiatives	**$428,225 Year 5 of 5; Total Award $2,167,490** U. S. Department of Education	**Texas State-Rural Talent Search Austin Fiscal Year 2020-2021** will focus on increasing the secondary school graduation rates of its participants and the percentages of low-income and first-generation college students.
Dr. Norma Judith Perez-Brena School of Family and Consumer Sciences	**$421,875** U. S. Department of Health and Human Services	**Sexual Risk Avoidance Education for Adolescent Parents** will provide pregnant and parenting adolescents with comprehensive relationship and sex education to reduce sexual risk behaviors, lower repeat pregnancies, improve adolescent well-being, and increase school retention.
Dr. Kenneth D. Mix Department of Agricultural Sciences	**$400,000** U. S. Department of Agriculture	**The Small Producer Initiatives Agricultural Mentoring Program** will aid small producers' ability to increase their financial success through mentoring, technical assistance, and trainings that assist farmers with bookkeeping, and grant and loan writing applications.
Mrs. Jenna J. Walker The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment	**$361,009** Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	**Texas Stream Team Fiscal Year 2020-2021** will allow the Texas Stream Team to offer statewide their services focused on impaired or priority watersheds.

Dr. Natalie A. Ceballos Department of Psychology	**$357,591** National Institutes of Health	**Innovative Physiological Predictors of College Binge Drinking** will allow researchers not only to capture the events leading up to a natural binge drinking episode, but also to model the underlying causal processes of binge drinking by combing laboratories and field measurements.
Mrs. Chelsea Regina Moore Institutional Inclusive Excellence-Student Initiatives	**$355,040 Year 5 of 5; Total Award $1,688,416** U. S. Department of Education	**Texas State -Rural Talent Search Fiscal Year 2020-2021** will focus on increasing the secondary school graduation rates of its participants and the percentages of low-income and first-generation college students.
Mr. Rafael A. Cordero, Jr. Institutional Inclusive Excellence-Student Initiatives	**$297,601 Year 4 of 5; Total Award $1,164,231** U. S. Department of Education	**Upward Bound-Del Valle 2020-2021** will prepare disadvantaged youth from Del Valle schools for the challenges and rewards of pursuing a postsecondary education.
Dr. Cathy Thomas Department of Curriculum and Instruction	**$249,994 Year 2 of 5; Total Award $1,075,428** U. S. Department of Education	**Project PAIR-IT: Partnering Assessment and Intervention Responsiveness in Interdisciplinary Teams** will prepare 20 scholars to become fully licensed in their respective fields to serve children with disabilities with high-intensity needs.
Dr. Paul Christian Dawkins Department of Mathematics	**$268,417** National Science Foundation	**Collaborative Research: ECR DBER DCL: Extending a Theoretical Model for Undergraduate Students. Reflections and Abstraction of Proof Structures in Transition to Proofs Course** will develop models of student thinking and learning to address serious gaps in the field's research-based knowledge of student learning and instructions in a key course meant to ease undergraduate mathematics students' transition into proof-oriented mathematics.

Dr. Patrice H. Werner Department of Curriculum and Instruction	**$261,655** Texas Tech University	**TXSTeachers-US PREP Coalition** will build capacity for evidence-based and data-informed teacher preparation in collaboration with PreK thru 12 district partners.
Dr. Bahram Asiabanpour Ingram School of Engineering	**$249,985** U. S. Department of Agriculture	**Bluewater: A Smart Circular Economy for Integrated Organic Hydroponic-Aquaponic Farming to Empower an Underrepresented Workforce** will train students with marketable skills necessary to become professionally competitive in the job market. The students will engage in multidisciplinary research concerning organic hydroponic-aquaponic farming with limited resources.
Dr. Stanley A. McClellan Ingram School of Engineering	**$239,200 Supplement; Total Award $1,880,749** Jacobs Technology	**Task Order** will study remote sensing of Earth, Mars, and other planets and extraterrestrial bodies by collecting and analyzing imagery and other remote sensing data to divine similarities and differences between atmospheric, environmental, and terrestrial factors.
Ms. Amy E. Reid Center for Archaeological Studies	**$238,315 Supplement; Total Award $463,543** New South Associates, Inc.	**Cultural Resources and Curation Services, USACE St. Louis District Nationwide** will provide storage and rehabilitation services for archaeological materials and associated documentation from the Southwestern Division.
Dr. Zhijie Dong Ingram School of Engineering	**$220,819** Texas Department of Transportation	**Determine Evacuation Planning Design for Disease Resilience** will use social media data to analyze the movement behavior of different types of evacuees in detail and combine multiple data sources to identify the evacuation origin and destination distribution of vulnerable populations in the Texas communities.

Dr. Stanley A. McClellan Ingram School of Engineering	**$202,400 Supplement; Total Award $473,352** Jacobs Technology	**Task Order** will research the fundamental questions regarding the nature of carbon-based compounds in astromaterials.
Dr. Michael Solem Department of Geography	**$199,123** National Science Foundation	**Encoding Geography Researcher-Practitioner Partnership: Scaling up the California Researcher-Practitioner Partnership** will develop a survey protocol and strategy for courses relating to geography and computer science, which includes training and workshops.
Dr. Jesus Jimenez Ingram School of Engineering	**$197,752** Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)	**Exploratory Analysis and Quality Assurance to Support Texas State Use Program Administration** will enable technical experts at TWC, WORKQUEST, and Texas State to collaborate in the implementation, testing, and validation of quality assurance controls applied to the products purchased from the Works Wonders/State Use Program.
Dr. Federico Macias Aguayo, Jr. Department of Engineering Technology	**$186,337 Year 2 of 3; Total Award $465,000** Texas Department of Transportation	**Use of Rapid Setting Hydraulic Cement for Structural App Fiscal Year 2019** will advance the state of the art and state of practice regarding the use of rapid setting concretes as a structural building material.
Dr. Alexander Vladimir Kornienko Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry	**$141,231 Year 2 of 2; Total Award $353,106** National Institute of Health	**Tandem Discovery of Drug Leads and Targets via Paal-Knorr Reaction** will develop a new platform for drug design that identifies both lead and target in parallel by combing recently emerged protein-templated fragmentation ligation with under explored chemical pathways such as the Paal-Knorr Reaction.

Dr. Paula Elaine Stigler Granados School of Health Administration	**$133,333** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	**Chagas Disease Education and Awareness in the United States** will increase awareness and improve surveillance of Chagas disease in the United States by maintaining and building upon the current Texas Chagas Taskforce model, improving healthcare provider access to expert information, and piloting a national CHW curriculum on Chagas disease.
Mr. Nicholas Everett Weimer University College	**$128,045** Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	**Work-Study Student Mentorship Program** will pay work-study students an hourly wage; the total amount each student can earn is determined by their financial aid eligibility award**.**
Dr. Yihong Chen Ingram School of Engineering	**$125,000** Nanohmics, Inc.	**Conformal, Peel-and-Stick Ferrite Waveguide Embedded in Road Stripping** will support research on antenna design and simulation, material characterization, and printing of thin films.
Dr. Scott Thomas Walter Department of Biology	**$122,967** National Science Foundation	**Collaborative Research: IRES Track I: International: Socio-ecological training in a Tropical Landscape** will provide a three-year program of research, education, and cultural experience in U. S. and Ecuador.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Learning Management System

The migration from Texas State's previous learning management system (TRACS) to the new Canvas system is nearly complete. TRACS has been configured to be "read only" for historical data retrieval; all future courses will be conducted through Canvas. Canvas has quickly become a vital piece of the university community as instructors continue to embrace the power behind the new learning management system. Many additional tools requested by faculty and approved by the Learning Management System Steering Committee are being integrated to extend Canvas' functionality.

The transition of the student information system (Banner) to Ellucian Cloud Services is nearing completion. It is estimated that Banner will be live in the cloud-hosted environment beginning in late February 2021. This migration should complete the futureproofing of Texas State's Enterprise Resource Planning environment.

The addition of the computer lab availability capability to the Texas State mobile app has transformed the way students search for open computer stations in labs across the campuses. The functionality allows students to search for computers close to them using their current location. Students can also search for computers which have discipline-specific software installed on them and view the number of open computers available before they start making their way to the lab.

The Division of Information Technology (DOIT) partnered with the Division of Student Affairs to create a technology-rich eSports arena for the Texas State eSports team. The space serves as the practice facility for the eSports team and will host eSports tournaments with competitors from multiple universities across Texas and beyond. The space, located in the LBJ Student Center, has been outfitted with high-end gaming computers specifically designed for eSports gaming and will aid in university recruitment and recognition in this quickly growing field. The facility became operational in mid-December 2020.

DOIT is leading a joint effort with multiple areas across the university to create a more comprehensive digital signage strategy to better utilize the capabilities of the existing platform (OnSign). The overall goal of the initiative is more strategic use of the displays to deliver content more easily from all over the university, especially university marketing and university communications, and to configure all signs to support emergency messaging when necessary.

The Information Technology Assistance Center (ITAC), which serves as the end-user support arm of DOIT and provides a myriad of other services for the university community, has been focused on better serving the needs of both campuses. Several process improvements have been made within the last few months. Examples include online payment options for ITAC services (when required), an improved service dashboard that clearly indicates the status of multiple DOIT services on each campus, and numerous workshops to better utilize the tools and applications provided to faculty and staff.

The Information Security Office has implemented new tools to better protect the university community. The International Travel notification provides an added layer of security for Bobcats while traveling. The new service allows members of the Texas State community to enable travel settings on their Microsoft 365 accounts. When enabled, Bobcats travelling outside of North America can log into their Microsoft 365 accounts using their Texas State NetID and password. When not enabled (default setting), no users are able to log into their Microsoft 365 accounts internationally. As a significant number of threat actors operate outside of North America and only a small percentage of NetID holders travel internationally for business, this strategy provides an enhanced level of security on Texas State Microsoft 365 accounts.

UNIVERSITY SPECIFIC ITEMS

In September 2020, Texas State established the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration in the pursuit and development of new ideas. Dr. Shannon Weigum, associate professor in the Department of Biology, and Mr. Daniel Roy, Entrepreneur in Residence in the McCoy College of Business Administration, will serve as CIE co-directors. The CIE replaces and builds on the prior work of the Center for Entrepreneurial Action by expanding the reach of innovation and entrepreneurship across the university. The goals of the CIE are to support a growing ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the university and assist the launch of new ventures, which brings those new ideas to life.

Dr. Manusheela Pokharel, assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies, received the 2020 Gerald R. Miller Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award from the National Communication Association. Given annually, the award recognizes new scholars who completed outstanding dissertations during the previous academic year.

An interdisciplinary research team was awarded in-kind hardware and cloud computing services from Advanced Micro Devices' HPC Fund for COVID-19 research. Texas State's proposal was led by Dr. Lawrence Fulton, associate professor in the School of Health Administration, and included faculty from the Ingram School of Engineering, the Department of Computer Science, and the Department of Psychology. Public collaboration and support from Dr. Ted Lehr, data architect for the City of Austin, was included in the proposal.

The Center for Archaeological Studies (CAS) received a curation services agreement with TxDOT for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The agreement adds new services CAS will conduct for TxDOT, including hi-resolution artifact photography using computer-operated, drop-out lighting system with standardized composition for publication, analysis, and curation-quality 2D digital images. CAS will also handle 3D scanning and printing, oversized archives scanning, and digitization of archival photographic prints, film, and slides to better document and share the cultural resources that TxDOT manages.

The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, in partnership with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M Corpus Christi, has created the Mitchell L. Mathis Program for Environmental Water Economics (watereconomics.org) to contribute to learning and research on the economics of water availability and quality and its impact on the economy. The program will bring the next generation of socio-economic tools, education, and outreach to address current water issues, and future challenges, in a holistic manner.

Dr. Stephanie Dailey, an associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies, received the Linda L. Putnam Early Career Scholar Award from the International Communication Association. The Putnam award recognizes the contributions of an early career scholar to organizational communication research. Eligible scholars are no more than six years past receipt of their doctoral degree for a body of work that has made a significant contribution to the field of organizational communication and shows promise for continued development.

In October 2020, Texas State was recognized as one of the “Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics” for enrolling and awarding degrees to Hispanic students. The rankings were published in the October issue of *Hispanic Outlook on Education* magazine and are based on 2018-2019 data from the U. S. Department of Education. Texas State ranked 21st nationally for total Hispanic enrollment, according to *Hispanic Outlook*.

In August, Texas State was named among "America's Best-in-State Employers" by *Forbes* magazine. The bi-weekly business magazine listed Texas State at number 86 among the 100 best employers in Texas. Texas State is the only four-year university to be included in the Texas ranking. Forbes previously recognized Texas State among "America's Best Employers" in 2019 and 2017, "Best Employers for Women" in 2018, and "Best Employers for Diversity" in 2019.

Mr. John Quiñones, the Emmy and Peabody Award-winning journalist, delivered the LBJ Distinguished Lecture with a YouTube Livestream on November 9, 2020. Quiñones' moderated discussion, "Upward and Onward: Opportunity Through Education," was free and open to the public. The lecture was presented in cooperation with the Common Experience.

When SpaceX-21 launched for NASA on December 6, 2020, a Texas State experiment that could have lasting impact on spaceflight systems safety was part of the mission payload.
Dr. Robert McLean, Texas State University System Regents' Professor and a professor in the Department of Biology, is the principal investigator for the Bacterial Adhesion and Corrosion (BAC) spaceflight experiment. The BAC is a continuation of McLean's 2016 project with NASA to study polymicrobial biofilm growth during spaceflight.

Texas State hosted in-person, socially distanced commencement ceremonies for fall 2020 degree candidates as well as spring and summer 2020 graduates in December 2020. A virtual ceremony was also held for fall graduates. In-person commencement ceremonies were limited to 25 percent capacity in guest seating in Bobcat Stadium. Graduates were arranged to ensure socially distanced seating. Face coverings that completely covered the nose and mouth were required for all graduates and guests in attendance. Approximately 2,100 fall 2020 candidates for undergraduate and graduate degrees participated; additionally, approximately 1,000 spring and summer graduates took part.

Major Construction Spring 2021

1. University Police Department Building
2. Film and Television Studios