



**TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**President's Briefing**  
**for the Board of Regents**  
**November 18-19, 2021**

**PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCREDITATION**

SACSCOC Reaffirmation

Texas State University successfully completed the requirements for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The university awaits the announcement of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees' decision at the SACSCOC Annual Meeting in December 2021.

2017-2023 University Plan

The 2020-2021 Strategic Plan progress reports for divisions, colleges, and the university are being gathered using Texas State's standard plan progress reporting template. Final progress reports will be posted on the University Planning website in early spring. Meanwhile, preliminary steps are being taken to guide the development of the 2023-2029 University Plan. Key phases, responsibilities, and a timeline are being developed.

Data Management

Texas State has been reexamining its data management policy, committee structure, and leadership to ensure compliance with Texas Senate Bill (SB) 475, relating to state agency and local government information management and security. Staff in the Office of Institutional Research along with representatives from Information Security, continue to provide leadership to ensure compliance with SB 475.

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

With a record-breaking new student enrollment of more than 11,000 graduate and undergraduate students for the fall 2021 semester, Texas State took a significant step in overcoming the pandemic-related enrollment drop in 2020. The momentum and growth in new students were not by accident, but rather by strategic investments in new academic programs and new scholarships during the past few years. In particular, Texas State expanded financial support in response to the pandemic, awarding \$40 million in student assistance this fall through the federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund and providing Bobcats-to-Bobcats scholarships to help hundreds of students stay enrolled and work toward their degrees.

## Undergraduate

Texas State's freshman class of 6,625 is the largest in the institution's history. In addition to the financial support described above, the rise in first-year student enrollment is also due, in part, to Texas State's expansion of the tuition-free Bobcat Promise program to give more Texas students the chance to attend Texas State. Bobcat Promise is designed to increase access for Texas students with a family-adjusted gross income (AGI) that does not exceed \$50,000 annually. Previously, the upper AGI limit was set at \$35,000.

Beginning fall 2021, Texas State increased the freshman assured scholarships by \$10.5 million, from \$5.4 million to \$15.9 million. Impact on the quality of the freshman class was also immediate as freshmen ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class increased by 27 percent (175 registrants).

As of September 8, 2021, Census Day, and compared to the same time in 2020:

- freshman applications received were 30,943, a five percent decrease (-1,742 applications);
- freshman acceptances were 21,670, a 1.7 percent increase (365 acceptances);
- freshman registered for new student orientation were 7,734, a 6.1 percent increase (442 registrants);
- freshman enrolled were 6,625, a 13.2 percent increase (770 registrants);
- transfer applications were 6,665, a one percent decrease (-84 applications);
- transfer acceptances were 5,072, a 2.9 percent increase (145 acceptances);
- transfers registered for new student orientation were 3,749, a 1.8 percent increase (65 transfers); and
- transfers enrolled were 3,118, a 1.9 percent increase (59 more registrants).

Texas State is a popular destination. Via Apply Texas Applications, Texas State was ranked third in undergraduate applications behind The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University, receiving more than 38,000 applications for fall 2021.

## Graduate

As of September 8, 2021, Census Day, and compared to the same time in 2020:

- doctoral applications received were 309, a one percent increase (three applications);
- doctoral acceptances were 165, an 11.5 percent increase (17 acceptances);
- new doctoral registrations were 99, a 20.7 percent increase (17 registrations);
- master's applications received were 3,930, a 1.8 percent decrease (-74 applications);
- master's acceptances were 2,151, an 8.9 percent decrease (-211 acceptances); and
- new master's registrations were 1,187, a 13.6 percent decrease (-187 registrations).

Overall graduate enrollment of new and continuing graduate students is up 1.3 percent (55 students). This increase was largely due to a higher number of continuing master's students than in the previous year.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

### 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 feasibility study for **Bobcat Stadium South End Zone Complex** has been completed. The project size is 34,458 Gross Square Feet (GSF), and the Total Project Cost (TPC) is \$17 million. Currently, the project feasibility study is being revised to include more breakout team rooms in the existing building, to relocate the athletic performance center to open up into the end zone, to connect the west and east concourse level balcony, and to create an alumni pavilion and deck on the roof of the building. A preliminary budget and phasing plan is being developed. This project is on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and will be initiated pending successful fundraising.

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 was prepared in 2010 and updated in June 2019 with a project size of 110,128 GSF and an estimated inflation adjusted TPC of \$90 million. The draft program is being adjusted and fundraising materials are being prepared and updated. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending successful fundraising.

The **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics 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 of design has been completed with a projected size of 200,000 GSF and an estimated TPC of \$157 million. The program document was used in preparing a Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) funding request for the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending TRB funding.

**Esperanza Hall** 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 draft program of design has been completed with a project size of 107,665 GSF and an estimated TPC of \$88 million. The program document was used in preparing a TRB funding request for the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending TRB funding.

#### Projects in the Design Phase

The 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 Construction Manager at Risk (CMR). Demolition of Hornsby and Burluson Halls and utility upgrades have been completed. Design development was approved during the May 2019 Board of Regents meeting. The architect has completed 100 percent construction documents. The construction phase is being delayed until student enrollment stabilizes after the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Projects in the Construction Phase

The construction of the **Infrastructure Research Laboratory** began in July 2021 and the General Contractor, Bartlett Cocke, has mobilized and begun site work. Located at the Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park, this laboratory 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. The TPC is \$14.1 million. Alamo Architects provided design services for the project.

The construction of **Live Oak Hall** began in May 2021. This is a one-story, 10,291 square foot structure that will provide much needed space for film, journalism, and mass communication majors. Teaching spaces include a sound stage, video editing lab, sound recording/mix classroom, and a state-of-the-art television studio. The TPC is \$10 million. The Lawrence Group Architects is the architect. Vaughn Construction is the CMR and site work for the project is underway.

The construction of the **Pecan Building** began in October 2020. This project will include approximately 14,000 GSF and will relocate the University Police Department from its current home in the Nueces Building to make room for academic programs. The TPC is \$9 million. The building is nearing substantial completion scheduled in November 2021. Atkins is the architect, and Vaughn Construction is the CMR.

#### Projects Completed

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

The **LBJ Student Center Expansion Project**, with a TPC of \$31.2 million and a total size of 36,866 GSF, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **Round Rock Campus Services Building**, with a TPC of \$6.2 million, reached substantial completion in May 2021. 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, is now complete. The final report is pending the completion of a construction audit.

## **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

In the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021, the university added nearly \$7 million in philanthropic gifts, bringing the fundraising total for fiscal year 2021 to approximately \$19 million. That is more than double the same period in fiscal year 2020. In total, the university has received 30 gifts valued at \$100,000 or more this fiscal year, including a \$4 million planned gift for endowed scholarships, \$1 million for the football training facilities in the Bobcat Stadium South End Zone Complex, \$1 million for graduate fellowships in psychology, and \$500,000 from The Meadows Foundation for climate change research.

The university launched the public phase of the Capital Campaign during the Centennial Celebration of the university bands gala event on October 8, 2021. University Advancement worked with University Marketing to align the fundraising campaign with the roll-out of the new Texas State NEXT branding initiative. Since the Capital Campaign began in 2014, the focus has been on advancing Texas State as a national research university. As of the end of fiscal year 2021, over 40,000 donors have contributed more than \$172 million to support university priorities through the campaign. These gifts have also contributed to the increase in the university endowments, which have nearly doubled in the last seven years from \$164 million in fiscal year 2014 to more than \$299 million as of August 31, 2021.

The strong fundraising results in the last quarter of the fiscal year were supported by the ongoing efforts to continue engaging with alumni and donors throughout the pandemic. Over the last year, Texas State engaged in over 1,250 meetings and phone calls with alumni and donors, submitted 106 proposals to prospective donors, and hosted 63 events with a total attendance of approximately 3,500. Many of these events and meetings were conducted virtually when meeting in person was not possible. The alumni and development teams have returned to engaging in person this fall.

## **SPONSORED PROGRAM AWARDS - RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL**

The initial analysis of research expenditures for fiscal year 2021 indicates that the recovery of restricted research expenditures (RRE) and total research and development (TRD) expenditures began in April 2021 and has continued through the fourth quarter. In fact, the fourth quarter was the largest recorded at Texas State for both key research metrics. Currently, for fiscal year 2021:

- RRE is \$34.6 million which is the third highest RRE ever recorded at Texas State – \$3.5 million more than last year and only \$1 million shy of the university’s record RRE in fiscal year 2018; and
- TRD is \$71.9 million which is the highest TRD ever recorded at Texas State.

Both key metrics are still under development as the Annual Financial Report is being finalized and both are tracking toward near record highs. Based on the fourth quarter expenditures coupled with the number and magnitude of submitted proposals and new awards received, Texas State is poised during fiscal year 2022 to make consistent progress toward its institutional goals of achieving National Research University Fund (NRUF) eligibility and Research 1 university status.

New sponsored program awards obtained during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021 include ones in 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. The Research Awards category impacts both restricted research and total research and development expenditures for the university. Both research-related metrics contribute to determining NRUF eligibility and the Core Research Support Funding allocated by the Texas Legislature to Emerging Research Universities.

Below are the Research and Instructional Awards over \$100,000 received during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021.

<b>Recipient/Unit</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Project Title and Purpose</b>
<b>Dr. Norma Judith Perez-Brena</b> School of Family and Consumer Sciences	<b>\$913,815</b> United States Department of Health and Human Services	<b>Strong Relationships/Strong Futures: Healthy Relationship and Adult Preparation Education</b> will provide adolescent parents with a comprehensive relationship education program that strengthens the multiple relationships they manage as new parents.
<b>Dr. Tania Betancourt</b> Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry	<b>\$853,110</b> National Science Foundation	<b>Central Texas PREM: A Partnership Between Texas State and The University of Texas at Austin's MRSEC</b> will provide research opportunities for underrepresented students in materials science research.
<b>Dr. John P. Blair</b> ALERRT Center	<b>\$762,670 Year 3 of 3;</b> <b>Total Award \$1,782,670</b> Federal Bureau of Investigation	<b>ALERRT Active Shooter Training</b> will support Active Shooter training for state, local, tribal, campus law enforcement and federal agencies.

<p><b>Dr. Kathy Erin Martinez-Prather</b> Texas School Safety Center</p>	<p><b>\$756,521</b> Texas Department of State Health Services</p>	<p><b>Tobacco Youth Prevention and Control Program Fiscal Year 2022</b> will continue planning, implementation, and oversight of the Texas Teen Ambassador Initiative, Regional Teen Tobacco Summits, Statewide Tobacco Conference, Texas Tobacco-Free Kids Day, and Say What! Youth Conference.</p>
<p><b>Dr. David Rodriguez</b> Department of Biology</p>	<p><b>\$635,333</b> National Science Foundation</p>	<p><b>CAREER: Unraveling Post-Invasion Dynamics of the Amphibian-Killing Fungus</b> will elucidate post-invasion pathogen dynamics in equatorial forests by identifying which hosts have driven the transition from an epizootic pathogen.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Jangmin Kim</b> School of Social Work</p>	<p><b>\$601,457</b> Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</p>	<p><b>Title IV-E Year 28</b> will expand the contractual relationship between the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Center for Applied Interdisciplinary Research and Texas State to enhance the skills of current and perspective Child Protective Services employees.</p>
<p><b>Mr. John Robert Curnutt</b> ALERRT Center</p>	<p><b>\$472,909 Year 3 of 3; Total Award \$1,661,468</b> Texas A&amp;M Engineering Extension Service</p>	<p><b>Active Shooter Incident Management</b> will provide research-based training for Active Shooter Incident Management Courses.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Norma Judith Perez-Brenna</b> School of Family and Consumer Sciences</p>	<p><b>\$421,875</b> United States Department of Health and Human Services</p>	<p><b>Strengthening Relationships/Strengthening Families</b> 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.</p>

<p><b>Dr. Taylor W. Acee</b> Department of Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p><b>\$315,837</b> Greater Texas Foundation</p>	<p><b>Investigating Effectiveness of Learning Frameworks Courses Supporting Success</b> will be used to investigate the effects of learning frameworks courses on students' academic achievement, persistence, and college completion outcomes over a three-year period.</p>
<p><b>Ms. Carrie Lynne Thompson</b> The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment</p>	<p><b>\$275,000</b> Texas Water Development Board</p>	<p><b>An Integrated Flooding Framework for Texas</b> will develop a strategic approach for technical experts to manage flooding in Texas in collaboration with the Texas Water Development Board.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Merritt L. Drewery</b> Department of Agricultural Sciences</p>	<p><b>\$274,999</b> United States Department of Agriculture</p>	<p><b>HSI: Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Mathematics Integration</b> will provide experiential learning opportunities; provide mentoring for underrepresented students; and enhance student recruitment and retention across the academic continuum.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Shawna R. White</b> Texas School Safety Center</p>	<p><b>\$220,000</b> WestEd</p>	<p><b>An Evaluation of a Statewide Approach to Prevention and Intervention of Violence Using School Threat Assessment Teams</b> will evaluate the impact of behavioral threat assessment on student discipline outcomes in Texas.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Tahir Ekin</b> Department of Computer Information Systems and Quantitative Methods</p>	<p><b>\$207,045</b> United States Department of Defense Airforce Office of Scientific Research</p>	<p><b>Hardening JADC2 to Adversarial Data: Theory, Algorithms and Applications</b> will be used to develop a statistical framework, Adversarial Statistical Decision Theory, implement the framework, and illustrate methods tailored to the information environment in accordance with recent events in the United States.</p>

<p><b>Dr. Robert Earl Mace</b> The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment</p>	<p><b>\$195,307</b> Hays County</p>	<p><b>Blanco River-Aquifers Assessment Tool for Water and Understanding Sustainability</b> will be focused on the construction of an integrated surface water/groundwater numerical model that will simulate how the Blanco River interacts with its aquifers.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Kecheng Yang</b> Department of Computer Science</p>	<p><b>\$175,000</b> National Science Foundation</p>	<p><b>CRII: CNS: Supporting Mixed-Criticality Real-Time Systems Heterogeneous Platform</b> will aim to develop an effective and efficient framework for modeling and realizing a micro-controller real-time system on a shared hardware platform.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Stanley A. McClellan</b> Office of Research and Sponsored Programs-JETS</p>	<p><b>\$170,613</b> Jacobs Technology, Inc.</p>	<p><b>Jacobs JETS Task Order M. Thorpe</b> will be used for Astro-materials curation Mars sample return that scientist will provide relevant knowledge and participate in scientific and technology assessments on best practice for storage and maintenance of future returned Mars samples.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Stanley A. McClellan</b> Office of Research and Sponsored Programs-JETS</p>	<p><b>\$155,210</b> Jacobs Technology, Inc.</p>	<p><b>Jacobs JETS Task Order-McCarthy</b> will allow Astro-materials Curation Cell Biologist to be responsible for growing and sustaining cell-based organ models for experiments to evaluate planetary dust toxicity to astronauts and laboratory personnel at NASA.</p>

<p><b>Dr. Nicholas Paul Herrmann</b> Department of Anthropology</p>	<p><b>\$150,000</b> National Institute of Justice</p>	<p><b>Skeletal Blast Trauma: Determining the Effect of Known and Experimental Blast</b> will be used to analyze records from known blast events to synthesize skeletal blast trauma profiles of accidental, intentional (suicidal and homicidal), and warfare-caused blast events, and then compare these data to real-world experimental blast events using human cadavers.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Timothy Paul Gocha</b> Department of Anthropology</p>	<p><b>\$150,000</b> National Institute of Justice</p>	<p><b>Finding the Missing and Unidentified: The Application of Predictive</b> will be used to improve methods for detecting the unmarked burials of unidentified human remains and to refine these methods within cemeteries.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Michelle D. Hamilton</b> Department of Anthropology</p>	<p><b>\$150,000</b> National Institute of Justice</p>	<p><b>An Examination of Musculoskeletal Markers in Modern Populations for Forensic Study</b> will be used to investigate the utility of musculoskeletal markers to estimate occupation, physical level, or socio-economic status in unidentified skeletal remains for the purposes of medicolegal casework.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Keisuke Ikehata</b> Ingram School of Engineering</p>	<p><b>\$149,999</b> United States Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation</p>	<p><b>Development of Multi-parameter Direct Water Quality Monitoring System</b> will continuously monitor two different byproducts, along with bacteria using novel direct methods in the hybrid pilot-scale water purification system involving ozone and reverse osmosis.</p>

<p><b>Dr. Carolyn Elizabeth Boyd</b> Department of Anthropology</p>	<p><b>\$144,848</b> National Endowment of the Humanities</p>	<p><b>Origins and Tenacity of Myth, Ritual, and Cosmology in Archaic Period Rock Art of Southwest Texas and Northern Mexico</b> will perform studies of myth, forager social organization, art history, and the origins of Mesoamerican myth and art.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Karen A. Lewis</b> Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry</p>	<p><b>\$143,033</b> National Institutes of Health</p>	<p><b>U-RISE at Texas State</b> will implement an undergraduate research training initiative to increase the diversity and number of Texas State students entering Ph.D. programs in biomedical research.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Jessica Dutton</b> Department of Biology</p>	<p><b>\$142,564 Year 1 of 2; Total Award \$247,528</b> Texas A&amp;M University</p>	<p><b>Mercury and Plastic in Commercial and Recreational Fisheries in Lavaca, Matagorda, and San Antonio Bays: Risk Assessment and Interaction between the Two Areas</b> will determine the concentration of mercury in plastic debris, water, sediment, fishes, and shellfishes collected throughout Lavaca Bay, Texas.</p>
<p><b>Mr. Nicholas Everett Weimer</b> University College</p>	<p><b>\$126,108</b> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</p>	<p><b>Work-Study Student Mentoring Program Fiscal Year 2022</b> will be used to pay work-study students who serve as mentors to incoming and high school and first year students on financial aid and educational applications.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Aimee Kendall Roundtree</b> Department of English</p>	<p><b>\$125,000</b> Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)</p>	<p><b>Usability and User Experience Research and Consultation for the DSHS</b> will perform testing, research, and training for the DSHS Center for Health Statistics.</p>

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

### University Libraries Self-Check-out Stations

The University Libraries implemented self-check-out stations in the Albert B. Alkek Library. These stations allow patrons to check out items from the library without having to go to the main circulation desk. This additional service, implemented on the second, third, fifth, and sixth floors of the library reduces the need for students and other library patrons to visit the main circulation desk, further eliminating any perceived barriers to obtaining library materials.

### Expanded Printing Services and Related TXST Mobile App Upgrade

The University Libraries released expanded printing services for students this semester. This project, in coordination with the Student Government, overhauled existing printing services. New print kiosks have been installed in the library, in all University Libraries managed computer labs, and in other strategic locations around campus. This expanded service allows students added flexibility and functionality when choosing where to print their materials. The TXST Mobile App was also updated to reflect printing changes such as location and printer availability. This added convenience has been well received by students on the San Marcos Campus and will be expanded to more locations on the San Marcos Campus and at the Round Rock Campus.

### Renovated Academic Services Building (ASB) TechSpot

The University Libraries successfully completed the renovation and rebranding of library-managed computer labs at Texas State, starting with the Academic Services Building. The newly renovated space mirrors the look and feel of the main library computer labs and offers expanded services to students, including reservable group study spaces and quiet spaces. The rebranding of the computer labs to TechSpot strives to provide state-of-the-art computer environments to students in support of faculty instruction.

### Opening Celebrations for Alkek One

On September 2, 2021, the University Libraries celebrated the official opening of the renovated Albert B. Alkek Library, including Alkek One, the technology-focused space located on the first floor of the Albert B. Alkek Library, and The Wittliff Collections expansion. Alkek One features a variety of technology supporting the “maker culture,” immersive reality, geographic information systems, and digital design. The Wittliff Collections was expanded to include three new galleries, plus a newer, larger gallery hosting the Lonesome Dove Collection. The celebration was attended by various members inside and outside of the Texas State community, including industry leaders and dignitaries from libraries around the state. The celebration was the culmination of the multi-year renovation and reimagining of the library’s spaces.

### Remote Instruction Classroom Upgrades

The IT Assistance Center completed upgrades in all medium sized classrooms at the university to improve their audio and video conferencing capabilities. These upgrades aided in the delivery of remote instruction by providing improved camera and microphone functionality to further enhance the remote experience for students attending classes virtually. More upgrades will be completed in the future for large classrooms to better provide a seamless remote-learning experience.

### J. C. Kellam Network Upgrades

As part of ongoing network improvements on the university campuses, the J.C. Kellam Administration Building network was upgraded to enhance network scalability and security. The upgrade to Multi-Protocol Label Switching creates different virtual networks for various applications such as credit card readers, building lighting and controls, research networks, and student WIFI. It delivers each service with its unique security and performance characteristics over the same underlying physical infrastructure. In addition, HP legacy switches in the building will be replaced with new Juniper switches enhancing network performance and availability.

### Cyber Security Awareness Month

The Information Security team held Cyber Security Month in October 2021. The event brings in speakers from the cyber security industry for talks and other events at the San Marcos Campus. The event is held virtually to allow as many people to attend as possible and is focused on a holistic security approach for students, incorporating security practices for students to implement in their university and personal interactions.

## **UNIVERSITY SPECIFIC ITEMS**

On August 20, 2021, President Denise M. Trauth announced that she will retire effective May 31, 2022. “After almost 20 wonderful years in this position, I have decided it is time to move on to the next chapter of my life,” Dr. Trauth wrote in an email to students, faculty, and staff. Dr. Trauth became president in 2002. Before joining the university, she was provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Texas State celebrated its decade-long designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution in September 2021. The U.S. Department of Education designation requires a minimum enrollment of at least 25 percent undergraduate Hispanic students to qualify, and Texas State achieved that milestone in 2010. As of fall 2021, approximately 44 percent of incoming first-time Texas State students are Hispanic.

*Military Times* ranked the university number 60 out of 188 of the best ranked four-year schools for military students in 2021. Texas State and other universities were ranked after hundreds of colleges across the United States were surveyed. Their survey answers were then analyzed, along with federal data. The rankings are based on university culture, academic quality, policies, student support, and financial aid.

Texas State was honored with a gold designation in the first-ever Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Award by the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC) Veterans Education Program. Established by the State of Texas, the new award recognizes universities and colleges that provide excellence in education and related services which significantly contribute to the academic success of student veterans and military connected students. TVC provides three levels of recognition -- gold, silver, and bronze -- intended to highlight the depth and breadth of services provided to veteran students and their families.

*U. S. News and World Report* named Texas State among the Best National Universities for 2022. In the overall list, Texas State fell within the range of No. 299 to No. 391 among 1,466 U. S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions and based on 17 measures of academic quality. In addition, Texas State was ranked No. 132 for Top Performers in Social Mobility and fell within the range of No. 156 to No. 209 for Top Public Schools and No. 195 to No. 210 for Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs.

*The Princeton Review* named Texas State one of the top institutions in "The Best 387 Colleges: 2022 Edition." Only about 13 percent of America's 3,000 four-year colleges are included in *The Princeton Review's* annual book. The book does not rank universities in numerical order.

The university received \$5.1 million over the biennium from the 87th Texas Legislature to establish the Community Health and Economic Resiliency Research (CHERR) Center for Excellence. Expanding the university's ongoing program of applied health research, the new center of excellence will be led by Dr. Melinda Villagran, director of the Translational Health Research Center. CHERR is a strategic initiative funded by the State of Texas to help individuals and businesses across the state to better be able to prepare, adapt, and recover from public health emergencies.

St. David's School of Nursing at Texas State was ranked second out of 48 on the list of best prelicensure bachelor of science in nursing programs in Texas for 2021 by *Nursing Schools Almanac*.

Texas State's strong commitment to student success and to lowering the costs of learning materials for students is signaled in the work of the Managing Textbook Costs Committee (MTCC). This university-wide committee was appointed by the Provost to comprehensively research the issue of learning material costs and propose solutions to lower the same. One of MTCC's activities for Fiscal Year 2022 is to support the effort of faculty to apply for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board administered Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Program. The OER grant program, that included both development and implementation grants, required that the target courses be part of the Texas Core Curriculum (TCC). Each successful faculty applicant would receive \$5,000 per grant for implementation grants toward the substantial redesign of one or more TCC courses to incorporate OER. Texas State submitted five implementation grant applications. All five grants were funded for a total funding amount of \$25,000. Courses impacted include those from the disciplines of Biology, English, History, and Psychology.

Dr. Alexander Kornienko, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, was selected as the inaugural holder of the Texas State University Denise M. Trauth Endowed Presidential Research Professorship. His research explores novel synthetic organic chemistry and possible applications in anticancer drugs. The endowed presidential research professorship was established in 2020 with a \$1 million gift from Dr. Miriam McCoy of San Marcos and named after Texas State President Dr. Denise Trauth at McCoy's request. This research professorship marks the first time the university has had such a prestigious award for faculty.

Astronomer, physics professor emeritus and Texas State University System Regents' Professor Dr. Donald Olson applied his distinctive brand of celestial sleuthing to the question of who discovered the gegenschein and determined that Danish astronomer Theodor Johann Christian Ambders Brorsen was actually the first person to observe and record the elusive celestial phenomenon in 1854, more than a century after the supposed discovery by French Jesuit astronomer Esprit Pezenas. Dr. Olson published his findings in the October 2021 issue of *Sky and Telescope* magazine.

Playwright Mr. José Rivera received a career tribute during the 19th annual Black and Latino Playwrights Celebration (BLPC) at the university. Organized by the Department of Theatre and Dance, the BLPC featured two plays selected for workshopping and staged readings after a nationwide call for submissions.

# Major Construction Fall 2021

1. Pecan Building
2. Live Oak Hall
3. Infrastructure Research Laboratory at STAR Park

