

# 2020 Annual Report Financial Aid and Scholarships

For the 2019-2020 Award Year



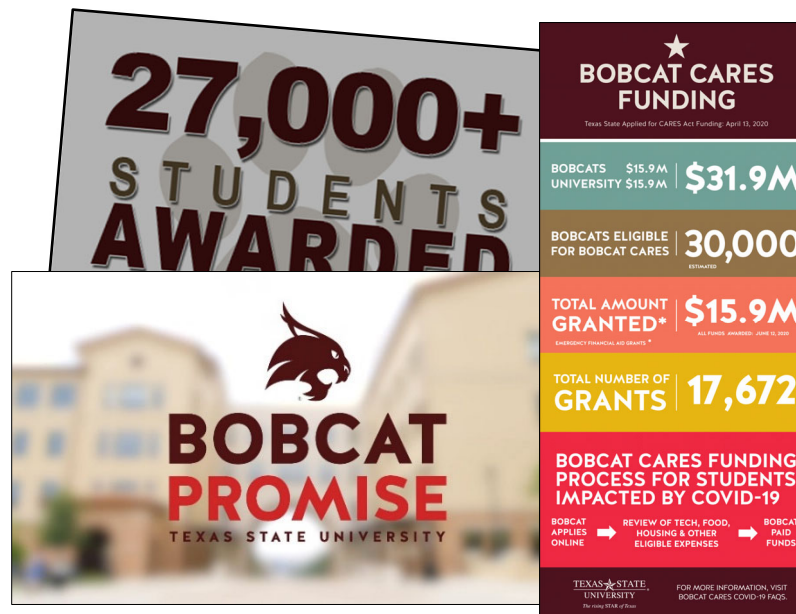
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# Purpose

An overview of the work accomplished  
by Financial Aid and Scholarships  
during the 2019-2020 academic year.



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## Executive Summary

- Processed over 75,000 financial aid applications.
- Disbursed over \$371.1 million in aid to 27,000+ students and their parents; a \$2.8 million (-0.8%) decrease from last year.
- Increased the AGI threshold for the Bobcat Promise program from \$35,000 to \$50,000.
- Administered the application, compliance, and awarding of over \$16 million in Bobcat Cares funds (i.e., emergency grant and Bobcats-2-Bobcats scholarship monies).
- Incoming customer service contacts (i.e., emails, calls, and counter visits) decreased by 31,125 (-17.6%) from 176,922 (FY19) to 145,797 (FY20).
- No adverse findings were identified in two separate audits; federal and state.

**\$371 MILLION**  
**AID AWARDED**  
**IN 2019 - 2020**

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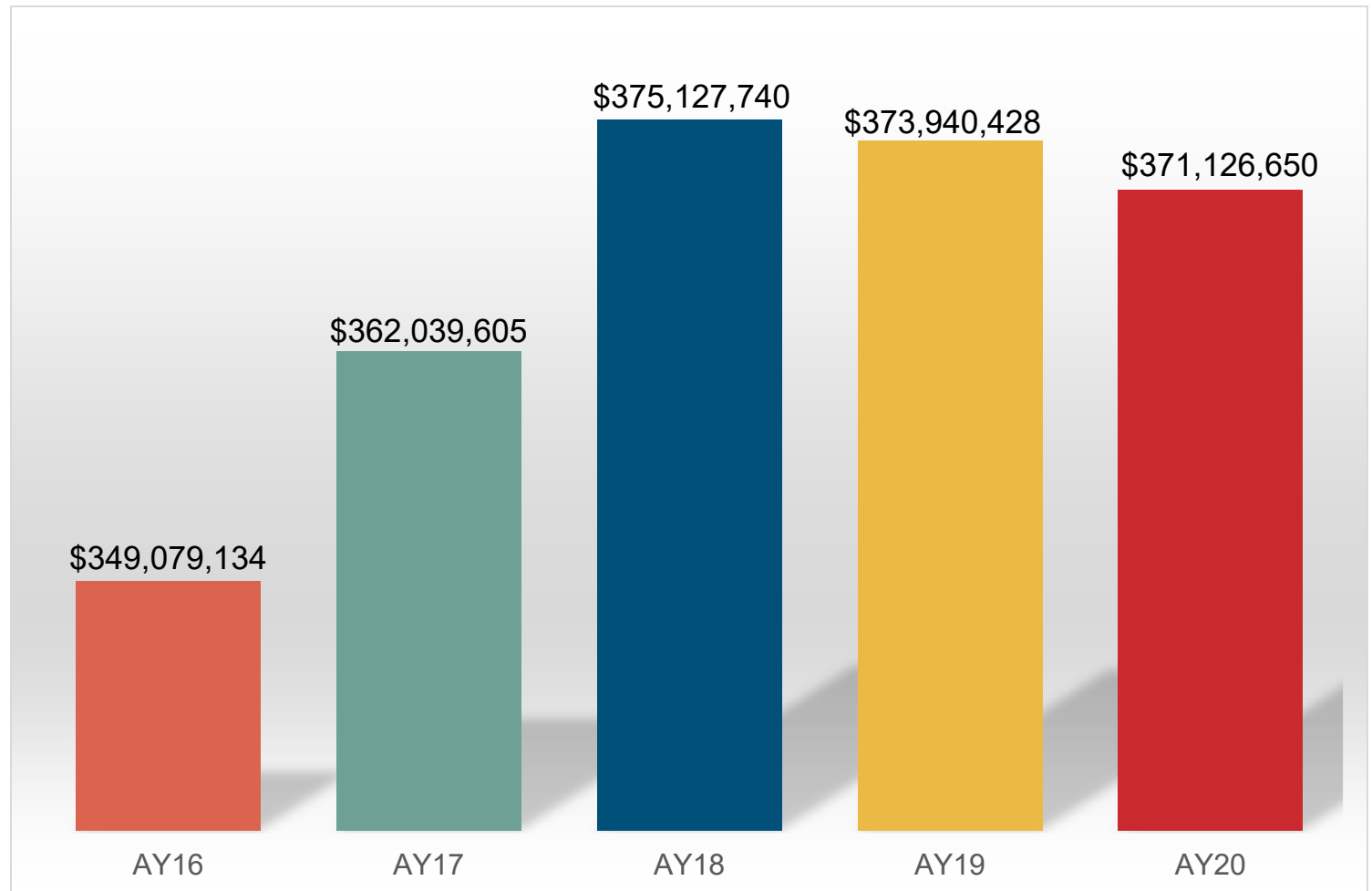
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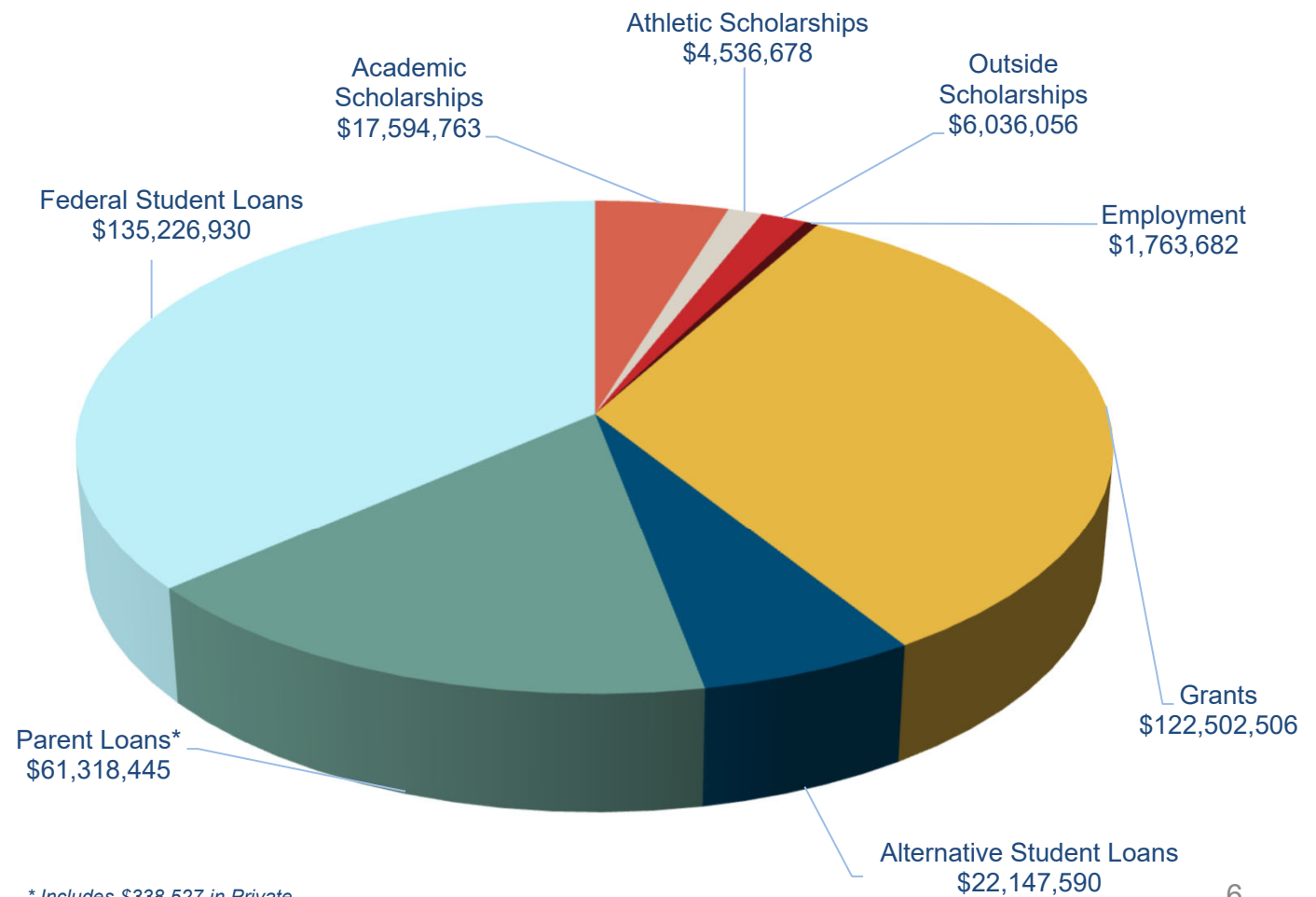
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## Aid Disbursed by Financial Aid and Scholarships



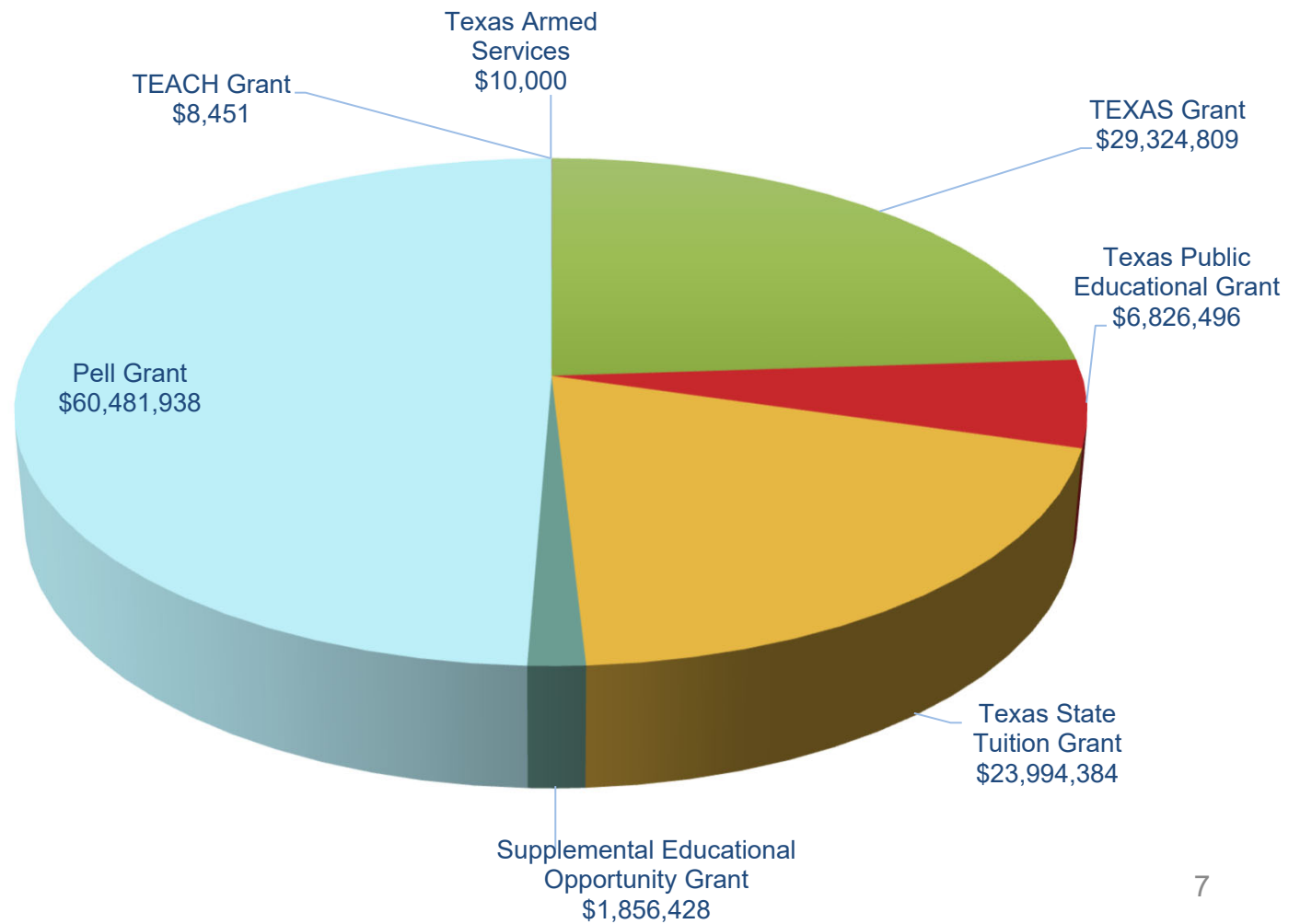


# 2019-2020 Aid Disbursed by Category



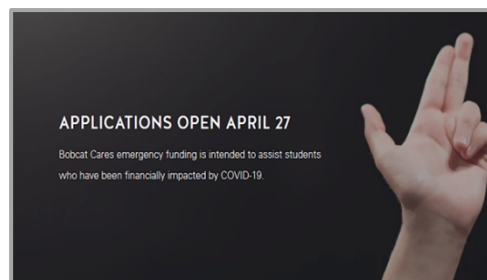
\* Includes \$338,527 in Private Alternative Parent Loans.

# 2019-2020 Grant Aid Disbursed by Type



## Pandemic-Related Activities

1. Administered the application, compliance, review and awarding of more than \$15.8 million in federally-funded Bobcat CARES emergency grants for students affected by the pandemic.
2. Administered the application and awarding of over \$350,000 in Bobcats-2-Bobcats Scholarships for students who were at risk of not matriculating for fall 2020 due to the hardships imposed by COVID-19.
3. Awarded \$130,000 in SEOG emergency grants to work study students who were unable to continue working in spring 2020 due to the pandemic.
4. Transitioned to online financial aid advising sessions as an alternative to students visiting the office.
5. Implemented online appointment scheduling for those needing to come into the office to sign dually-endorsable checks, thus, improving customer service and social distancing.





# Improvements in Customer Service

1. Increased the AGI threshold for the Bobcat Promise program from \$35,000 to \$50,000.
2. Implemented phase one of Dynamic Forms that allows students, as well as their parents and spouses, to complete and electronically sign certain verification forms online.
3. Partnered with the University Registrar's Office to implement financial aid feeds to the Bobcat Family Portal, which nudges parents when their students need to submit verification documents, accept awards, etc.
4. Established an online portal allowing outside scholarship donors to transmit their scholarship recipient information and funds electronically; significantly shortening the related receipting and depositing timeframe.
5. Established an outside scholarship database and import process that automates the posting of outside scholarships to Banner; reducing the disbursement timeframe of these funds by 5 business days.
6. Onboarded to the Bobcat Online Scholarship Systems (BOSS):
  - College of Applied Arts
  - University Libraries
  - McCoy College of Business
  - Housing and Residence Life

# Compliance Topics

1. No adverse findings were identified in the FY19 federal financial aid cluster (A-133) audit conducted by Montemayor Britton Bender PC.
2. No adverse findings were identified in the FY19 TEXAS Grant audit conducted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
3. Created a weekly exception report to identify student loans not reported to the U.S. Department of Education and flagged as a reject, thus, strengthening compliance with federal 15-day reporting rules.

*Compliance is the office's primary guiding business principle, and related work helps prevent financial risks for the university and loss of aid for students.*

TEXAS  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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# Customer Service Data

## Email Contacts

- Email volume increased by 4,360 (13.5%) from 32,372 (FY19) to 36,732 (FY20).

## Call Center

- Call volume decreased by 25,240 (-21.4%) from 117,995 (FY19) to 92,755 (FY20).
- Average caller wait time was 12:44—a decrease of 8:30 (-40%) compared with the FY19 wait time of 21:14.

## Customer Service Lobby

- Walk-in volume decreased by 10,245 (-38.6%) from 26,555 (FY19) to 16,310 (FY20).
- Average guest wait time was 6:41—a decrease of 1:42 (-20.3%) compared with the FY19 wait time of 8:23.

## Processing

While processing over 26,500 verification documents alone, the verification processing and awarding time remained at 7 – 10 days.

# Future Objectives and Challenges

1. Implementation of an automated customer service ticketing and tiering system to more effectively manage and reduce the wait times associated with incoming contacts (i.e., phones, visits, remote advising, and emails).
2. Implement phase two of Dynamic Forms that will allow more students, as well as their parents and spouses, to complete and electronically sign all verification forms online.
3. Develop and implement a plan for the review and awarding of assured, as well as competitive, scholarships that includes test-optional students.
4. Work with IT to effectively test and manage the migration of the Banner Financial Aid module to the Cloud to minimize downtime and potential customer service issues.

