

|                                                                                      |                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Bobcat Pride</b>       |
| <b>Application Completeness Check for 2026 HSAB Funding</b>                          | <b>Stabilization Fund</b> |
|                                                                                      |                           |
| <b>Amount Requested</b>                                                              | <b>\$10,000</b>           |
|                                                                                      |                           |
|                                                                                      |                           |
| <b>Questions</b>                                                                     |                           |
| Are all questions answered?                                                          | Yes                       |
| Is the application signed? (this is a certification)                                 | Yes                       |
| Does the program have measurable outcomes?                                           | Yes                       |
| Is the agency a Human Services Agency?                                               | Yes                       |
| Is the agency overseen by a Board of Directors?                                      | Yes                       |
| <b>Required Attachments</b>                                                          |                           |
| <b>BUDGETS</b>                                                                       |                           |
| 1. Program budget for current fiscal year                                            | Yes                       |
| 2. Program budget proposed for next fiscal year                                      | Yes                       |
| 3. Budget showing the exact uses of the HSAB funding, to be included in the contract | Yes                       |
| <b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS INFORMATION</b>                                                |                           |
| 4. Board of Directors membership roster                                              | Yes                       |
| 5. Board of Directors City of Residence                                              | Yes                       |
| 6. Board of Directors Meeting Attendance Record                                      | Yes                       |
| 7. Board of Directors membership criteria                                            | Yes                       |
| <b>ORGANIZATION INFORMATION</b>                                                      |                           |
| 8. Current IRS Form 990, pages 1 and 2 (not required for churches)                   | Yes                       |
| 9. Non-discrimination policy statement                                               | Yes                       |
| <b>PROGRAM INFORMATION</b>                                                           |                           |
| 10. Final Performance Report for 2024 Funding (if funded)                            | Yes                       |
| 11. Letters of support for the program - how many                                    | 3 letters                 |
| 12. Policies and Procedures for the proposed Program, if available                   | Yes                       |

City of San Marcos Human Services Grants  
**FY2026 Application**

**I. SUMMARY INFORMATION**

Please spell out organization name and program name completely, without acronyms.

Applicant Organization: Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF)

Contact Name: Heather Aidala Telephone: [REDACTED]

Contact E-Mail Address: [REDACTED] Website: <https://bobcatpridescholarship.com/>

Mailing Address: [REDACTED] Kyle, TX 78640

San Marcos Service Address for this Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is authorized to execute program documents? (Name, Title) **Rickie Fleck, Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director; Heather Aidala, Executive Director; and Shanequa Terrell, Financial Director.** Rickie Fleck, the Program Director, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has a PhD in Social Work. Heather Aidala holds a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology and has more than 15 years of experience in nonprofit leadership roles. Shanequa Terrell has a Master's Degree in Accounting and Information Technology and ensures that funds are distributed with integrity and in accordance with state and federal financial requirements.

Program Name: **Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund**

Amount of Funds Requested: \$10,000

What percentage of the cost of this program is requested as funding through this application? 20.9%

**II. QUESTIONS**

**All questions must be answered. Please type your answers. Application evaluations will be based on, but not necessarily limited to the criteria stated in each section.**

**OVERVIEW**

1. Summarize the program for which funding is being requested, the services it provides, and the clients it serves.

BPSF has used its expertise and experience to identify and aid in the needs of underrepresented and vulnerable LGBTQIA+ emerging adults in San Marcos for 15 years. The direct clients of the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund (JOTESF) are emerging adults (ages 18 to 25), who have LGBTQIA+ identities (minority sexual and/or gender identities), residing in the greater San Marcos area, and are experiencing an unforeseen crisis. Specifically, the BPSF JOTESF provides a one-time, up to \$400 emergency stabilization stipend based on need, to those who meet the program criteria. This stipend can assist with covering essential needs such as rent, medical and mental health bills, and transportation/gas/car repairs, etc. Our Program Director provides referrals, connecting them to other community resources for utility and food assistance. Since 2021, BPSF has provided more than \$80,000 in emergency aid to 307 individuals in San Marcos and Hays County. Of those 307, 299 resided in San Marcos and the majority attended Texas State.

BPSF prioritizes having a dedicated volunteer, Program Director, with a mental health and counseling background administer the JOTESF program. The added benefit of having a credentialed professional at the helm ensures that the emerging adults served by BPSF are also made aware of other resources and support available through the city, county, and university. For our marginalized LGBTQIA+ community members, these resources might otherwise seem inaccessible because they do not explicitly state inclusion for sexual and gender minority individuals. BPSF is the only organization in San Marcos that exists to serve the LGBTQIA+ emerging adult community with emergency funding.

## COMMUNITY NEED AND JUSTIFICATION –15 POINTS

*Evaluation: documentation and justification of the need for the program in the City of San Marcos.*

### 1. Describe in detail the need for this program in San Marcos.

The city of San Marcos estimates that as of January 1, 2025, the population had reached 90,000. That is huge growth over the last official census data taken in the 2023 American Community Survey that estimated the population to be 68,920. In a city where the majority population is 20-24 year olds, the median rent is \$1,263/month, and the poverty rate is 26.7%--almost twice the poverty rate for the state of Texas as a whole (<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US4865600-san-marcos-tx/>)--emergency stabilization funding for 18 – 25-year-olds is a necessary resource for community health. Statistically, of 18 - 25 year olds facing financial strain, those who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community are both more likely to experience financial hardship and less likely to have family resources to access in case of an emergency (<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/2024-LGBTQ-Financial-Wellness-Report.pdf>; <https://lgbtq-economics.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/LGBTQ-Wealth-Gap-Summary.pdf>; <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Food-Insufficiency-Apr-2022.pdf>).

BPSF addresses this specific community need through the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund (JOTESF), which provides emergency financial aid to LGBTQIA+ identified emerging adults, 18 – 25 years old. Since its inception, BPSF has targeted this community to support due to a disproportionate lack of resources in Texas for this population. Texas has the second highest number of LGBTQIA+ identified residents in the United States, and in the last two legislative sessions there have been more than 200 bills proposed that would negatively impact these individuals and codify into law discrimination against sexual and gender minorities. The combination of circumstances, a high population, and low governmental tolerance or support in Texas complicate factors for LGBTQIA+ community members to feel a sense of belonging, safety, and security. In Texas, according to research released in 2024 by Every Texan Data, 43% of LGBT identified individuals said paying for household expenses was somewhat or very difficult; 26% are more likely to be uninsured, and therefore subject to financial precarity in the event of a medical event or common illness; and more than 59% identify as experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression (<https://everytexan.org/2024/10/15/data-brief-celebrating-pride-month/>).

**By providing emergency funding, BPSF is allowing these LGBTQIA+ young adults to continue to be productive members of the San Marcos community and reduce their need for any government assistance.**

Last fiscal year, BPSF applicants in San Marcos reported an average income of \$714 per month, putting them well below the federal poverty level of \$1,304 per month (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/df03c95bc141ef99b4caf28b7e9e4d00/detailed-guidelines-2025.xlsx>). Young adults in our community are now facing the toughest economy in generations due to inflation, high interest rates, possible recession, and increasingly frequent “unprecedented” weather events. The inability to pay an electric or gas bill during an ice storm or heat wave is more than uncomfortable, now it can be life-threatening. Living paycheck to paycheck, just one unforeseen financial barrier leaves them at risk of not having access to basic needs such as shelter, transportation, medical/mental health care, and/or the ability to maintain enrollment towards their career goal.

BPSF launched the first Emergency Stabilization Fund in 2013, and in 2019 it became the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund. We continue honing our experience and expertise in serving LGBTQIA+ young adults who are facing an unforeseen financial crisis that could upend their stability. In addition to funding those eligible, our Program Director utilizes her expertise as a social worker to provide all applicants who follow-up with community resources that may be able to assist them. BPSF maintains a list of resources on our website (<https://bobcatpridescholarship.com/other-resources1/other-resources>) and has demonstrated high utilization. BPSF is an essential safety net for these marginalized young adults. San Marcos is a successful community only when all members can thrive and live up to their full potential and contribution. BPSF serves a unique role in helping to make that aspirational goal a reality.

2. Has the need for this program been increasing in recent years?

Yes, between fiscal year 2024 and 2025 we saw a 15% increase in total emergency awards granted to San Marcos residents. However, in the first four months of the current fiscal year we saw a **58.5% increase** in awards given during the same period in the previous fiscal year. The rapid population growth in San Marcos has created an affordable housing shortage as cost increase, inflation, and changes in how and to whom the Department of Education issues financial aid, have created the conditions to dramatically increase the number of financially vulnerable LGBTQIA+ young adults in our community. As mentioned previously, the State of Texas has systematically created fewer legal protections for LGBTQIA+ peoples, exacerbating the existing need for support and resources that address unforeseen financial barriers. BPSF is the only non-profit in San Marcos that expressly serves this community with emergency funding, and the demand for our services is evidenced by the number of applications and awards administered.

In January 2025, BPSF increased one-time awards from \$300 to \$400. This is the second increase in less than two years based on need, and the ongoing increase in costs for basic services and goods. This adjustment ensures that recipients can secure access to their shelter, medical/mental health needs, transportation, and/or education. BPSF was able to make this increase in the award amount because of growth in both the number of donors and the amount of donations coming in from donors, as well as the funding from the City of San Marcos. These critical funding sources allow BPSF to serve more community members in need with more dollars, making a more meaningful difference for vulnerable emerging adults in precarious financial situations. We know this is a long-term investment in the vibrancy of the City of San Marcos, and we are committed to continuing to provide this essential support.

## IMPLEMENTATION –15 POINTS

### *Evaluation:*

- *The application demonstrates that resources needed to manage the proposed program are available and ready.*
- *Applicant has clearly defined objectives focusing on results and measurable outcomes vs. only program activities descriptions and numbers served.*
- *Past performance of programs funded by Human Services Grants has met expectations.*

1. Are all resources in place to be able to implement this program? If not, what is missing?

Yes. BPSF operates very leanly to keep the overhead low and concentrate funds on programs and services. The infrastructure and resources required to administer the JOTESF program have been in place for 15 years, an online application using google forms and a phone number, where the Program Director can interview applicants, determine need and eligibility, counsel applicants, and arrange payments, are the only capital resources needed. The Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director, Rickie Fleck, is a highly qualified volunteer who is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and holds a doctorate in social work.

2. What specific, measurable outcomes or results do you hope to achieve with this program?

- BPSF will fund 100% of San Marcos applicants who meet the awardee criteria.
  - 80% of recipients will report being extremely or very satisfied with their experience with BPSF.
  - 80% of recipients will rate their interactions with BPSF representatives as Excellent.
  - 80% of recipients will rate the timeliness of BPSF's responses to their application as Extremely Timely.
3. If funding is not available at the requested amount, what is the minimum Human Services Grant funding needed to be able to run this program?  
\$7,000

## IMPACT AND COST EFFECTIVENESS –15 POINTS

### Evaluation:

- *impact on the identified need*
  - *implementation costs compared to impact*
  - *use of available resources (financial, staff, volunteer)*
  - *impact compared to other applicants*
1. Programs can provide value by deeply impacting the lives of a few, with effects that may ripple through generations, or by providing smaller but meaningful impact to a larger group. Describe in detail the impact this program will have on the identified need and on San Marcos residents.

The average income of JOTESF recipients in fiscal year 2025 was \$714 a month, which is well below \$1,304/month qualifying an individual as 100% of the federal poverty level (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/df03c95bc141ef99b4caf28b7e9e4d00/detailed-guidelines-2025.xlsx>); and though we serve all of Hays County, 93.5% of recipients were San Marcos residents; and all recipients were 18 – 25 years old, the largest age demographic in San Marcos. BPSF's commitment to serving LGBTQIA+ individuals who are potentially in San Marcos specifically because of their attendance at Texas State with an intention to longitudinally improve their financial prospects through education and job training, is a commitment to and investment in the fabric of the community in San Marcos. We believe that supporting these vulnerable young people at critical points in their development and during their education journey will positively imprint San Marcos on them, increasing the potential that they will, in turn, give back to the community when they are able. The mission of BPSF is to provide financial support that fills immediate gaps which, for a fiscally precarious individual, can be catastrophic long-term, and in so doing, create a sense of security and belonging that allows that individual to flourish and thrive. Those individuals are flourishing and thriving in San Marcos, as productive citizens contributing to the continued growth of the city.

2. Briefly describe other funding sources, volunteers, or in-kind donations that will be used with this program.

Most of the funding for BPSF comes directly from local donors, many of whom have been consistent supporters of BPSF since our inception in 2010. Our annual on-line campaigns, spring in-person birthday celebrations, and fall soiree are consistently supported by donors who provide matching grants, doubling the impact of funds raised by individual donors. Local businesses, artists, musicians, and performers partner with BPSF regularly to provide in-kind donations by organizing and participating in our community-based fundraisers throughout the year. An additional benefit of community events is the ability to reach potential applicants and new donors. The other very significant funding source for BPSF comes from volunteer time, primarily from the working Board of Directors who donate hundreds of hours of professional services in the areas of social work, psychology, marketing, and accounting each year (Over the last two years the board has contributed almost 4,000 hours of service to the organization.). BPSF is also starting to invest modest amounts of donor dollars to amplify the impact small donations have over time and secure the sustainability of funds well into the future.

3. How many total annual unduplicated direct clients is this program expected to serve? What percentage will be San Marcos residents?

Over the last five years, BPSF has awarded over 300 emergency stabilization stipends. Of those, 97% have been to San Marcos residents. The organization has had an unprecedented start to the current fiscal year and is expected to serve more than 80 individuals with emergency funds. In keeping with previous years, we anticipate the percentage of San Marcos residents will be at least 90%.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT – 15 POINTS

### Evaluation:

- *A minimum of three letters of reference that indicate strong local support for the program and the agency's ability to implement it as described in the application. Letters must be in support of the specific program requesting funding, not the agency as a whole. Letters will preferably be from San Marcos residents as well as direct clients of the program.*
- *Evidence that volunteers play a vital role in the program or agency's operation.*
- *Evidence that board members are actively involved in and supportive of the agency*

1. What actions do Board members take to support the programs of the agency?

All BPSF Board members engage in fundraising and community outreach on behalf of the agency. A list of Board Member descriptions may be found following the Board organizational chart. Each year, the Board Members donate hundreds of hours of professional services in the areas of social work, psychology, marketing, and accounting.

2. Briefly describe the number and role of volunteers in the program or agency's operation.

BPSF currently has a volunteer Board made up of nine positions. In FY2025, volunteers and Board members reported over 1,900 hours of volunteer time. The BOD spends most of that time seeking funding by organizing and staffing community fundraising events, creating marketing for online fundraising campaigns, and communicating with potential and consistent donors to nurture long-standing relationships. Between FY2025 and FY2026, BPSF expanded its board by two positions, based on the need to increase the capacity of the board and build a dedicated ambassador program under the newly created and filled Volunteer Coordinator Director role. The ambassador program will enable BPSF to access enthusiastic local volunteers to train and assist with a variety of short-term projects and special events expanding BPSF's visibility and outreach in the community – thus ensuring more residents know about the important resources BPSF provides.

## COUNCIL PRIORITIES - 30 POINTS

1. How long has this program served San Marcos residents? (10 points if at least 2 years)

BPSF has been serving San Marcos LGBTQIA+ residents for 15 years.

2. Does the agency have an office in San Marcos? (10 points if it does)

To keep the organization's overhead low, BPSF does not pay for office space. Board members do in-person outreach at events in San Marcos and on the Texas State University campus but utilize phone and online technology to vet and meet with eligible San Marcos funding recipients.

3. Describe how this funding will create an increase in services or an increase in the number of people served. (10 points if creates an increase)

For the 2025 calendar year award received from HSAB, BPSF was able to provide 18 San Marcos residents emergency stabilization funding. This represented 25% of total funds awarded to San Marcos residents during BPSF's 2025 fiscal year. Please see a detail breakdown in the table below of emergency stabilization award data and the number and percent awarded to San Marcos Residents for the last five fiscal years.

In response to growing need and rising costs, BPSF increased its JOTESF award amount from \$300 to \$400. If the City Council awards BPSF the full amount requested, \$10,000, that will support up to 25 individuals in San Marcos at \$400/emergency stipend, an increase of (at least) 7 individuals at the full \$400 amount, or a 38.89% increase from calendar year 2025 to calendar year 2026.

Funds from HSAB allow BPSF to direct non-HSAB, or otherwise undesignated funds, to recipients who live in Hays County, the majority of which reside in San Marcos. The partnership between HSAB and BPSF reduces the need for reliance on government assistance and allows individuals to remain productive residents of our community.

| Year        | Total Awards Given | Total San Marcos | % San Marcos Recipients |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| FY 2022     | 60                 | 60               | 100.00%                 |
| FY 2023     | 65                 | 65               | 100.00%                 |
| FY 2024     | 63                 | 61               | 96.83%                  |
| FY 2025     | 77                 | 72               | 93.51%                  |
| FY 2026 YTD | 42                 | 41               | 97.62%                  |

## RISK - 10 POINTS

1. How many years experience does the agency have in implementing a program of this size and complexity? (5 points if more than 5 years)

The Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund was the first established program under BPSF. The program has been operating and providing emergency funding to San Marcos and Hays County residents since 2019, six years.

2. What percentage of the program's funding is non-City? (5 points if at least 50%)

79.1%.

Each year the need for emergency stabilization funding has outpaced what BPSF has budgeted (see the table below), however, donors consistently meet the need. As a result, the percentage of funding from the city has represented a decreasing proportion of the program's funding overall, despite the increasing need. Though BPSF is asking for more funding this year than in previous years, the request represents a small portion of the program funding overall due to the increase in our donor base.

| Year    | Amount Awarded | Award Amount Budgeted | Total Awards Given | Total # San Marcos Awards | % HSAB funds |
|---------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| FY 2023 | \$12,936       | \$9,400               | 65                 | 65                        | 38.65%       |
| FY 2024 | \$17,800       | \$16,000              | 63                 | 61                        | 28.09%       |
| FY 2025 | \$21,750       | \$18,000              | 77                 | 72                        | 22.99%       |

## III. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

By signing this application I certify the following to be true:

1. All Human Services Grant funding will be spent on San Marcos residents, except for school-based programs, in which case it may be spent within the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District boundary.
2. Funding requested is not more than 50% of the total funding for the agency.
3. Funding will not be used to fund more than 20% of a full time position.
4. Agency has been in existence for at least 2 years. (This can include serving communities other than San Marcos.)

**SUBMITTAL APPROVED BY:**

Heather Aidala

Signature

07.21.2025

Date

Heather Aidala

Printed Name

Executive Director

Title



# HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD GRANT

## QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

**Agency Name:** Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF)

**Program Name:** Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund

**Program Year:** 2024

**Reporting Period: (check one)**

January through March (due April 30)

X April through June (due July 31)

July through September (due October 31)

October through December (due January 31)

**Submit report to:** [REDACTED]

### PROGRAM STATUS

**Please provide a written description of actions taken this period and how they helped achieve your program goals.**

BPSF manages the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund, which provides monetary support to emerging adults (18-25 years of age) who have minority sexual and gender identities (LGBTQIA+). During an unforeseen crisis the one-time emergency stipends allow applicants to cover necessary expenses such as rent, transportation/gas/car repairs, mental health and medical bills, etc. Our Program Director provides referrals, connecting them to other community resources for utility and grocery assistance. During the second quarter of the 2024 calendar year BPSF conducted extensive marketing efforts to reach eligible applicants. Marketing is achieved through social media, e-mail newsletters to supporters, participation in community outreach events, and by placing marketing materials in local businesses and public facilities.

The HSAB total funding of \$5,000 provided emergency stipends to 17 City of San Marcos residents between January 1, 2024 and March 31, 2024. HSAB funding provided \$300 in emergency stabilization funding for 16.66 of these 17 recipients and BPSF covered the remaining .34 with funds from other income sources. 16 recipients reported extremely low (30% AMI) annual household income, 11 had intersecting historically marginalized identities as people of color, and 12 were single female heads of household. By providing this emergency funding, BPSF assisted these 17 LGBTQIA+ young adults to be able to continue to be productive members of the San Marcos community and reduce their need for any government assistance. No HSAB funds were spent during the second reporting period of 2024.

## PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

For the program that received HSAB funding, please report either number of unduplicated individuals served or number of unduplicated households served.

Check one:      X   Unduplicated Individuals                   Unduplicated Households

|                             | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sep | Oct-Dec | Year to Date |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Total Served                | 17      | 0       |         |         | 17           |
| San Marcos Residents Served | 17      | 0       |         |         | 17           |
| % San Marcos Residents      | 100     | 0       |         |         | 100          |

## PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

**For the final report of the year, please provide a bulleted list that briefly summarizes how the HSAB funding was spent.**

- All HSAB funding (\$5000) was spent to provide emergency stabilization funds to eligible applicants. Eligible applicants are emerging adults (18-25 years of age) who have minority sexual and gender identities (LGBTQIA+) who live in San Marcos.

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### Certification:

***I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information reported in this Quarterly Performance Report is factual and accurate.***

Stacie McGee – Electronic Signature

Signature

July 1, 2024

Date

Stacie McGee

Printed name

Operations Director

Title

|                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF)</b><br/><b>Fiscal* Year 2026 Annual Agency</b><br/><b>Budget March 1, 2025 to Feb 28, 2026</b></p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Revenue**

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Donations and Fundraisers | \$27,700.00       |
| Grants                    | <u>\$5,000.00</u> |
| Total                     | \$32,700.00       |

**Expenses**

|                                                                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Fixed Overhead                                                                     | \$600.00           |
| Supplies, marketing, and other overhead expenses                                   | \$3,400.00         |
| Internships (4 per year at \$575 each)                                             | \$2,300.00         |
| Scholarships (6 per year at \$1,000 each)                                          | \$6,000.00         |
| Financial awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients (68/yr. at \$400 each) | <u>\$27,200.00</u> |
| Total                                                                              | \$39,500.00        |

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Net Income (Loss)</b> | <b>\$0.00</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|

**Program Budget Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund**

**Revenue**

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Donations and Fundraisers | \$22,200.00       |
| Grants                    | <u>\$5,000.00</u> |
| Total                     | \$27,200.00       |

**Expenses**

|                                                                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Financial awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients (68/yr. at \$400 each) | <u>\$27,200.00</u> |
| Total                                                                              | \$27,200.00        |

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Net Income (Loss)</b> | <b>\$0.00</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|

**Requested HSAB funds will be used to provide direct awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients. These are one-time awards of up to \$400 for those who meet the program criteria and are residents of San Marcos. Requested HSAB funds will not be used for any other expenses.**

**\*BPSF operates on a Fiscal Year that runs March 1 - February 28. The HSAB funds for calendar year 2025, are reflected in this budget, FY 2026, as that is when funds were received for the reimbursement of emergency stabilization funds distributed.**

|                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF)</b><br><b>Calendar* Year 2026 Agency Budget</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Revenue**

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Donations and Fundraisers | \$50,150.00        |
| Grants                    | <u>\$10,000.00</u> |
| Total                     | \$60,150.00        |

**Expenses**

|                                                                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Fixed Overhead                                                                      | \$600.00           |
| Supplies, marketing, and other overhead expenses                                    | \$3,400.00         |
| Internships (4 per year at \$575 each)                                              | \$2,300.00         |
| Scholarships (6 per year at \$1,000 each)                                           | \$6,000.00         |
| Financial awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients (120/yr. at \$400 each) | <u>\$47,850.00</u> |
| Total                                                                               | \$60,150.00        |

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Net Income (Loss)</b> | <b>\$0.00</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|

**Program Budget: Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund****Revenue**

|                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Donations and Fundraisers | \$37,850.00        |
| HSAB Grant                | <u>\$10,000.00</u> |
| Total                     | \$47,850.00        |

**Expenses**

|                                                                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Financial awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients (120/yr. at \$400 each) | <u>\$47,850.00</u> |
| Total                                                                               | \$47,850.00        |

|                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Net Income (Loss)</b> | <b>\$0.00</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|

**Requested HSAB funds will be used to provide direct awards to Emergency Stabilization Fund recipients. These are one-time awards of up to \$400 for those who meet the program criteria and are residents of San Marcos. Requested HSAB funds will not be used for any other expenses.**

**\*BPSF operates on a Fiscal Year that runs March 1 - February 28. The HSAB funds will be utilized in the organization's Fiscal Year 2027.**

## BPSF Board of Directors

| <b>Position</b>                               | <b>Name</b>          | <b>Place of Residence</b>                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Executive Director/President                  | Heather Aidala       | Kyle, TX                                                             |
| Operations Director                           | Kennedy Stonehawk    | Durham, NC (formerly San Marcos, recently relocated)                 |
| Marketing Director                            | Todd Papke           | Wimberely, TX                                                        |
| Internal Communications Director              | Briana Hacksisombath | Fort Worth, TX (recent Texas State graduate and San Marcos resident) |
| Community Engagement Director                 | Morgan Bennett       | San Marcos, TX                                                       |
| Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director | Rickie Fleck         | Kyle, TX                                                             |
| Financial Director/Treasurer                  | Shanequa Terrell     | Converse, TX (Texas State employee)                                  |
| Volunteer Coordinator Director                | Lesley Islas         | San Marcos, TX                                                       |
| Academic Scholarship Director                 | Courtney Bauman      | Wimberely, TX                                                        |

## BPSF FY 2025 Board Meeting Attendance Record

BPSF hosts board meetings on the second Tuesday of every month. Twice a year the board hosts a 4-hour planning retreat, March 8th, 2025, was the first retreat of the fiscal year. BPSF fiscal year is March 1 – February 28.

### **March 8, 2025 (Retreat in lieu of monthly meeting.)**

Heather Aidala, *Executive Director/President*  
Kennedy Stonehawk, *Operations Director*  
Shanequa C. Terrell, *Financial Director/Treasurer*  
Briana Hacksisombath, *Internal Communication Director*  
Rickie Fleck, *ESF Program Director*  
Morgan Bennett, *Community Engagement Director*  
Todd Papke, *Marketing Director*

### **April 8, 2025**

Heather Aidala, *Executive Director/President*  
Kennedy Stonehawk, *Operations Director*  
Shanequa C. Terrell, *Financial Director/Treasurer*  
Briana Hacksisombath, *Internal Communication Director*  
Rickie Fleck, *ESF Program Director*  
Morgan Bennett, *Community Engagement Director*  
Todd Papke, *Marketing Director*  
Lesley Islas, *Volunteer Coordinator Director (new position, first meeting)*

### **May 13, 2025**

Heather Aidala, *Executive Director/President*  
Kennedy Stonehawk, *Operations Director*  
Shanequa C. Terrell, *Financial Director/Treasurer*  
~~Briana Hacksisombath, *Internal Communication Director*~~  
~~Rickie Fleck, *ESF Program Director*~~  
Morgan Bennett, *Community Engagement Director*  
Todd Papke, *Marketing Director*  
Lesley Islas, *Volunteer Coordinator Director*  
Courtney Bauman, *Academic Scholarship Director (new position, first meeting)*

### **June 10, 2025**

Heather Aidala, *Executive Director/President*  
Kennedy Stonehawk, *Operations Director*  
Shanequa C. Terrell, *Financial Director/Treasurer*  
Briana Hacksisombath, *Internal Communication Director*  
Rickie Fleck, *ESF Program Director*  
Morgan Bennett, *Community Engagement Director*  
Todd Papke, *Marketing Director*  
Lesley Islas, *Volunteer Coordinator Director*  
Courtney Bauman, *Academic Scholarship Director*

### **July 8, 2025**

Heather Aidala, *Executive Director/President*  
Kennedy Stonehawk, *Operations Director*  
Shanequa C. Terrell, *Financial Director/Treasurer*  
Briana Hacksisombath, *Internal Communication Director*  
Rickie Fleck, *ESF Program Director*  
Morgan Bennett, *Community Engagement Director*

Todd Papke, *Marketing Director*  
Lesley Islas, *Volunteer Coordinator Director*  
Courtney Bauman, *Academic Scholarship Director*

## BPSF Org Chart



## **BYLAWS OF BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

### **ARTICLE III –BOARD of DIRECTORS**

**Section 1: Board Role, Size, Compensation.** The Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for overall policy and direction of the Fund. The size and composition of the BOD are designated based on the approved organizational structure (see Appendix A). The BOD receives no compensation for services.

**Section 2: Qualifications.** The BOD shall consist of adults interested in the welfare of LGBTQIA+ emerging adults (ages 18 and 25) residing in San Marcos or Hays County.

**Section 3: Residency.** The state of Texas does not have a residency requirement governing operating non-profit 501(c)3 organizations. BPSF reserves the right to determine the appropriate residency status of Directors on a case by case basis, and residency in Hays County is not a prerequisite for directorship.

**Section 4: Conflicts of Interest.** BPSF maintains a Conflict of Interest policy that all BOD must complete in order to protect the interest of the BPSF when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

**Section 5: Meetings.** The BOD shall meet at least once a month, at an agreed upon time and place.

**Section 6: Terms.** The term for BOD positions is three years. During term, members will serve until self-resignation or removal by vote of the remaining BOD members. The BOD can nominate members reaching the end of their term to be invited for re-appointment. Members are eligible for re-appointment, one additional year at a time.

**Section 7: Elections.** BOD members will solicit self-nominations via a public online application process. Any nominations from current board members will be required to submit the same online application. The new BOD member will be elected by a majority vote of the current BOD members.

**Section 8: Quorum.** A quorum must be attended by at least sixty percent (60%) percent of the BOD before motions are made or passed.

**Section 9: Voting.** Each BOD is allowed one vote per action item. Sixty percent (60%) of the BOD must agree for motions to be passed. Votes on items outside of board meetings are acceptable and must be made via email or the project management platform. All e-votes will be recorded in the minutes of the appropriate meeting by the Internal Communications Director.

**Section 10: Notice.** An official BOD meeting requires that each member have written notice two weeks in advance.

**Section 11: Officers and Duties.** There shall be at least nine BOD member positions, consisting of Executive, Operations, Internal Communication, Financial, Marketing, Program, Academic Scholarship, Community Engagement, and Volunteer Coordinator Directors. Complete position descriptions will be kept by the Internal Communication Director for review and use in recruitment. The nine main officers' duties are as follows:

**Executive Director (ED)** is the key management leader of BPSF. The ED is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs, and strategic plan of the organization in order to execute and expand its mission. This includes providing leadership to the BOD and team members. Other key duties include fundraising, communications, marketing, and community relationships.

**Operations Director (OD)** shares responsibilities with the ED for overseeing the administration, programs, and strategic plan of BPSF to execute and expand its mission. This includes providing leadership to program operations and planning. The OD develops and implements policies and procedures for effective communication within the organization. Other key duties include fundraising, communications, marketing, community relationships, strategic planning, and regular community needs assessments.

**Internal Communication Director (ICD)** assists with the function and operations for BPSF. This position occupies a wide range of responsibilities including fostering communication through management and utilization of records, meetings, materials, website, resource sharing, and research. The ICD ensures that daily operations run smoothly and that organizational efficiency is maintained. Based on experience, the ICD may also assist the MD with external communication tasks.

**Financial Director (FD)** is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing all accounting for BPSF. This includes fiscal record keeping and ensuring that all accounting activities are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, legal, regulatory, and organizational procedures. The FD will support the overall goals of the organization and ensure that all finance services are delivered professionally and efficiently.

**Marketing Director (MD)** will set and guide the strategy for all external communications, social media, and public relations messages to consistently articulate the mission of BPSF. The MD will ensure that BPSF is viewed as the primary source, disseminator, and conduit of information to all constituents, including applicants, donors, and recipients.

**Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director (ESFPD)** oversees all aspects of the emergency stabilization fund. This includes responsibility for maintaining the continuity and integrity of the application and award process. This position also works with community members to promote awareness of the fund.

**Community Engagement Director (CED)** actively recruits, develops, nurtures, and engages with sponsors, donors, and Hays County partners to better understand the community's needs and expand the reach of funding. They will also assist in developing fundraising strategic planning, including developing giving themes and fundraising programs, events, and campaigns. In collaboration with the Financial Director and other Board Members, they identify, draft, and submit grants for funding and coordinate funding documentation and record keeping.

**Academic Scholarship Director (ASD)** oversees all aspects of the academic scholarship program. This includes responsibility for maintaining the continuity and integrity of the application and award process, including coordinating the Scholarship Subcommittee. This position also works with community members to promote awareness of the fund.

**Volunteer Coordinator Director (VCD)** is responsible for the overall delivery of services by non-board volunteers who provide unpaid support to BPSF in the community. The VCD responsibilities include recruitment, orientation, training, timely updates, scheduling for events, appreciation initiatives, retention, and evaluating volunteer satisfaction.

**Section 12: Vacancies.** When a vacancy on the BOD exists, the application process for new members will be announced and made available online. Applications for new BOD members will be collected until filled, sent out to BOD to review in advance of the next scheduled BOD meeting, and voted upon at that meeting.

**Section 13: Resignation and Termination.** Resignation from the Board must be in writing and received by the BOD members. Three to six months notice of planned resignation is preferred. A BOD member may be removed by a sixty percent (60%) vote of the remaining BOD members. To maintain nine BOD members, the Board has one month from the date of the resignation to post the vacancy.

**Section 14: Member Transition - Overlap.** In the event that BOD members overlap and an incoming member begins their term prior to an outgoing member's effective resignation date, the outgoing board member becomes a member Pro Tem. During such cases, the pro tem member and incoming member may not both vote on any actions or resolutions, and which member votes on specific items will be decided at the beginning of each board meeting where both the pro tem and incoming members attend.

**Section 15: Special Meetings.** Special meeting of the BOD shall be called upon the request of the Executive Director. Notices of special meetings shall be sent out, via email, by the Executive Director or Internal Community Director, to each BOD member, at least one week (seven days) in advance.

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

for Tax-Exempt Organization not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ

2024

Open to Public Inspection

A For the 2024 Calendar year, or tax year beginning 2024-03-01 and ending 2025-02-28

B Check if available

☐ Terminated for Business☒ Gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less

C Name of Organization: BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

207 Hiver St. Kyle, TX, US,  
78640

D Employee Identification

Number 30-0622176

E Website:

<https://bobcatpridescholarship.com/>

F Name of Principal Officer: Heather Aidala

207 Hiver St. Kyle, TX, US,  
78640

**Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice:** We ask for the information on this form to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. You are required to give us the information. We need it to ensure that you are complying with these laws.

The organization is not required to provide information requested on a form that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form or its instructions must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. The rules governing the confidentiality of the Form 990-N is covered in code section 6104.

The time needed to complete and file this form and related schedules will vary depending on the individual circumstances. The estimated average times is 15 minutes.

**Note:** This image is provided for your records only. Do Not mail this page to the IRS. The IRS will not accept this filing via paper. You must file your Form 990-N (e-Postcard) electronically.



## Manage Form 990-N (e-Postcard)

[Home](#) | [Security Profile](#) | [Logout](#)

| EIN        | Organization Name             | Tax Year | End Date   | Created On | Status   | Submission ID                        | Action |
|------------|-------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|----------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 30-0622176 | BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND | 2022     | 02-28-2023 | 06-15-2023 | Accepted | <a href="#">10065520231666765003</a> |        |
| 30-0622176 | BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND | 2023     | 02-29-2024 | 06-27-2024 | Accepted | <a href="#">10065520241798001486</a> |        |
| 30-0622176 | BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND | 2024     | 02-28-2025 | 03-18-2025 | Accepted | <a href="#">10065520250778636820</a> |        |

««« Prev Page 1 Next »»»

CREATE NEW FILING



# BYLAWS OF BOBCAT PRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

## ARTICLE VIII - MISCELLANEOUS

**Section 1:** Fiscal Year. The Fiscal year of the Fund shall be from March 1 - last day of February.

**Section 2:** Provision for the Distribution of Assets upon Dissolution. In the event of the dissolution of the BPSF, the remaining assets will be distributed in accordance with the Texas Business Organizations Code (section 22.304).

**Section 3:** Non-Discrimination/Inclusion Policy. BPSF values all board members, volunteers, applicants, clients, and/or donors as unique individuals and welcomes the variety of experiences they bring to our organization. As such, BPSF does not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination. It is our intention to be an accessible, affirming, emotionally safe, and respectful environment for all members of the BPSF community. We believe everyone should be treated equally and strive to provide quality services that are sensitive to and inclusive of diversity of all kinds including race, ethnicity, national origin, language of choice, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability.

Any board member, volunteer, or client who believes that they or any other affiliate of BPSF has been discriminated against is strongly encouraged to report this concern promptly to the Executive Director or another board member.

**Section 4:** In accordance with the Johnson Amendment, BPSF and its employees, Board members, volunteers, and interns "will not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office." Similarly, assets of BPSF will not be provided as a campaign contribution to a candidate for public office. BPSF may engage in advocacy. "Lobbying and legislative activities, a small subset of advocacy, are not the same as political campaign activity and are treated separately under the law. Lobbying is: (1) communicating with decision makers (2) about existing legislation and (3) urging a vote for or against." Additionally, in accordance with the IRS, BPSF may engage in "certain [non-partisan] voter education activities (including presenting public forums and publishing voter education guides).....as well as other activities intended to encourage people to participate in the electoral process, such as voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives." Furthermore, BPSF agrees that no funds provided, nor personnel employed under this Agreement, shall be in any way or to any extent engaged in the conduct of political activities in violation of Chapter 15 of Title V of the U.S. Code (The Hatch Act).



## Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund

### Policies and Procedures for awarding BPSF Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Funds

#### **POLICY:**

The BPSF Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund (BPSF JOTESF) provides emergency financial support to LGBTQIA+ emerging adults (between the ages of 18 and 25) residing in the greater San Marcos, Texas area.

- Applicants provide sufficient information via the online or PDF application, to establish sexual and gender identity, age (birthdate), residence (address), and unforeseen financial need.
- Applicants provide government issued photo I.D. to verify date of birth.
- Each application is reviewed by the Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director on a case-by-case basis.
- Applicants seeking assistance with food or utilities are provided appropriate community referrals.
- Eligible applicants are provided up to \$400 in emergency stabilization funds.
- Ineligible applicants are notified via phone call from the Emergency Stabilization Fund Program Director.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

- Upon receipt of the completed online or PDF application, ESF Program Director reviews application.
- ESF Program Director reviews previous applications to ensure applicant has not previously received funding.
- ESF Program Director prepares interview questions during application review process.
- Upon completion of the review process, applicants who meet the qualifications for funding receive a text to request phone interview from the Program Director within 48 hours. Verification of details related to the application may be discussed for clarification.
  - In most cases, the applicant has provided sufficient information about their emergency situation via the online or PDF application. However, if sufficient information is not received, refer to interview questions prepared during application review.
  - If applicant has not provided government issued photo I.D., the ESF Program Director requests the applicant email a copy of the government issued photo I.D. to BPSF.
- During the applicant interview, the ESF Program Director tells the applicant that funds from BPSF are only available once and limited to an amount up to \$400.
- Due to these limitations, the ESF Program Director provides the applicant other resources in the community that may be of support to the applicant. These resources may include, but are not limited to:
  - Hays County Food Bank
  - SNAP Application
  - Community Action, Inc. Utility Assistance
  - City of San Marcos Rent, Mortgage, & Utility Assistance
  - Workforce Solutions (If trouble finding employment)

[www.bobcatpridescholarship.com](http://www.bobcatpridescholarship.com)

Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund, a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, is private and independent from Texas State University and any of its organizations

- If Texas State Student, Texas State Dean of Students Office
- If Texas State student, Texas State University Resources (Bobcat Pantry, counseling center, etc.)
- If ESF Program Director has asked all questions and the individual is ineligible to receive funds, ESF Program Director informs applicant before the end of the phone interview.
  - If ESF Program Director believes the applicant might be eligible or is sure applicant is eligible, ESF Program Director asks applicant if they have Venmo/PayPal information or if they would need a physical check if award is provided.
    - If applicant does not have Venmo/PayPal, ESF Program Director inquires if applicant would be able to set up an account.
- Upon completion of phone interview, ESF Program Director allows applicant to share any questions or concerns.
- ESF Program Director informs eligible applicants of final review of application and to expect a text from ESF Program Director with final decision.
- ESF Program Director informs recipient via text of approved funding award. ESF Program Director requests Venmo/PayPal information or if applicant will need a physical check.
- Once Venmo/PayPal information is received, ESF Program Director provides the following information to the Financial Director:
  - Venmo/PayPal Account Name (Or if applicant is in need of physical check)
  - Recipient Name ○ Recipient Phone Number
  - If recipient is a Texas State Student
  - Award Amount
- ESF Program Director informs applicant via text to request payment via Venmo (@HELP-BPSF) or PayPal ([REDACTED])
- Applicants who complete this process receive JOTESF funds via online payment platform within 24 hours and as soon as two hours, (depending on payment platform), from the time their payment information is submitted to the Financial Director by the ESF Program Director.
- The ESF Program Director asks applicants to contact them via text IF funds are not received within 24 hours.
- Once applicant receives JOTESF funds, ESF Program Director sends text to the recipient including discussed resources along with reminder of one-time-award policy.
- Applicants are texted a link to our Client Satisfaction Survey Monkey within a month post-award, to provide feedback about their experience with the BPSF Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund, the data from which is used for continuous quality improvement of policies and procedures.

7/11/2025

To the San Marcos Human Services Advisory Board,

My name is Blaze and I am writing a letter in support of funding for the Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF). In March of 2024, I reached out to BPSF for financial support. I needed support because I had experienced an unexpected medical emergency that was both terrifying and expensive. At that time, I found myself unable to afford the cost of the diagnostic process and continued care I needed. Because of the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund, I was able to afford to pay for a medical procedure and maintain both my health and my financial stability.

I believe that BPSF is an important organization because it directly supports my community. LGBTQIA+ individuals have a harder time getting and keeping jobs, largely due to discrimination, which means many of us are unable to prepare financially for an emergency. Without the job stability necessary to build an emergency fund, we are left vulnerable to losing access to healthcare, housing, and the means to meet our basic needs. Having an inclusive local non-profit in the Greater San Marcos community that cares for, affirms, and supports individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community allows me to feel safe. It is a safety net that many LGBTQIA+ individuals do not otherwise have access to, and grants like the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund can make a world of meaningful difference in recipients' lives. For me, it meant I could seek medical care when I needed it most, and not have to worry about missing a payment on other important bills to make ends meet. Help from organizations like this allow me to advocate for myself when I need support.

I am writing this letter to express my gratitude and appreciation for BPSF and their aid for me and my community. I fully support this organization receiving their full funding request through the San Marcos Human Services Advisory Board so they can assist even more LGBTQIA+ San Marcos residents like me. LGBTQIA+ San Martians deserve to feel supported and safe in our community, and BPSF is doing important work to make that a reality. The Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund provides aid and assistance that our community struggles to find elsewhere. BPSF deserves the funding to continue their mission of providing monetary support to emerging adults in the LGBTQIA+ San Marcos community.

Sincerely,

Blaze Turley

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

June 10, 2025

To the San Marcos Human Services Advisory Board,

My name is Robin Galvan and I am writing a letter in support of funding for the Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF). In February of this year, I reached out to BPSF for financial support. I needed support because I had an unexpected medical expense come up in my life. At that time, I found myself unable to afford rent and groceries as I was unemployed. Because of the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund, I was able to afford paying for my daily medications, my medical bills, and rent.

I believe that BPSF is an important organization because they help and support a struggling demographic and have helped me personally through a financially difficult time. Having an inclusive local non-profit in the Greater San Marcos community that cares for, affirms, and supports individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community allows me to feel safe. Support from organizations like this also allow me to advocate for myself when I need support.

I am writing this letter to express the greatest of gratitude for BPSF, and their aid for me and my community. I fully support this organization receiving their full funding request through the San Marcos Human Services Advisory Board, so they can assist even more LGBTQIA+ San Marcos residents like me. The Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund provides aid and assistance that our community struggles to find elsewhere. BPSF deserves the funding to continue their mission of providing monetary support to emerging adults in the LGBTQIA+ San Marcos community.

Sincerely,

Robin Galvan



July 10, 2025

### **Letter of Support for the Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF)**

My name is Johnny Vasallo, and I am writing in strong support of full funding for the Bobcat Pride Scholarship Fund (BPSF).

Just a few months ago, I found myself at one of the lowest points in my life. Due to unexpected budget cuts, I lost my job. Since January 2025, I struggled to make ends meet—even while working long hours in retail and sales. In fact, despite holding a Master's degree, I was caught in the frustrating paradox of being “overqualified” yet not “experienced enough” to secure stable employment that I am more than adequate for. Additionally, I applied to countless positions, only to be passed over each step of the way. It was discouraging, disheartening, and lonely.

With limited options for help, I humbly reached out to BPSF for support. As a first-generation, queer Cuban man, I have witnessed poverty firsthand, but I never imagined being so close to losing everything. What I needed was a meaningful financial lifeline, a push to regain stability. Thanks to the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund, I received that lifeline—and it made all the difference.

Within a month of receiving support, I managed to secure a new job with a steady income, an advising position where I have the privilege of helping new faces in our town acclimate to the next era of their lives. For the first time in months, I felt hopeful, as if I could breathe again. I am finally beginning to climb out of the debt and financial hardship that have been weighing on me, and BPSF is the reason why I am still standing.

Words cannot fully express my gratitude for this organization. BPSF is a lifeline for so many in our community—especially LGBTQ+ individuals who face such a disproportionate amount of hardship. I've seen young adults being disowned by their families, left to navigate adulthood completely alone simply for being who they are. Many of them are also facing barriers in accessing traditional financial aid for college, particularly due to familial ties that would deem them as “financially sound,” disqualifying them from grants despite being abandoned by those

With tears of joy and gratitude, I respectfully and passionately urge the San Marcos Human Services Advisory Board to approve BPSF's full funding request. The support they offer is critical, life-changing, and often unavailable anywhere else. Most importantly, the Jeremy O. Torres Emergency Stabilization Fund saves lives. It saved mine.

With the deepest gratitude,  
**Johnny Vasallo**