

METRO & NM

SECTION C | WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2014 | ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL ••

Ranchers vs. mouse

A consortium of ranchers is seeking an order to keep the U.S. Forest Service from fencing off areas in the Lincoln and Santa Fe national forests to protect the habitat of the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse. **Page C2**



Study: Get a degree and earn more money

Value of bachelor's or associate degree higher than high school diploma

BY MIKE BUSH
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

A new study that compares the lifetime value of a high school diploma with associate and bachelor's degrees — and examines the divergent earnings of 80 different college majors — proves that it pays to

go to school and that the field of study can be all-important.

Researchers with the Hamilton Project, an affiliate of the Brookings Institution, examined data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey in reaching the conclusion that, regardless of a student's major in college, a bachelor's degree means that the typical graduate will earn considerably more than someone with an associate degree and a lot more than a high

school graduate.

The median career earnings for graduates with four-year degrees is \$1.19 million — \$335,000 more than the holders of two-year degrees and twice as much as those with only a high school diploma.

However, the study also found that the top tenth of high school graduates earn more than the bottom tenth of college graduates, regardless of the college major.

The earnings were gathered

from the weak labor market during and after the Great Recession. Earnings profiles include part-time workers and those who may have experienced layoffs. The data were analyzed and the study written by Brad Hershbein and Melissa Kearney of the Hamilton Project.

University of New Mexico Provost Chaouki Abdallah responded to the findings via email, noting that a college degree "is proven to be benefi-

cial to both individuals and to society at large." However, he said, it is often the case that the rewards of a higher education are not reflected in salary.

"Many of the societal benefits (healthier, more engaged citizens) cannot be measured in the short term nor can they be reduced to financial metrics," Abdallah said. "The value of an artist or a philosopher may not be in their earning potential but in their impact on humanity. It is, however,

absolutely true, based on the data, that college graduates earn more than those with less education.

"The important caveat here is to focus on graduation rather than simply on college attendance," he said. "Leaving college without earning a degree may actually set someone back financially."

Depending on a university graduate's major, the median

See **STUDY** >> C2

'BLESS ME, ULTIMA' AUTHOR HONORED



Author and University of New Mexico professor emeritus Rudolfo Anaya gives a thumbs up after being inducted into the Albuquerque Wall of Fame at the Alvarado Transportation Center on Tuesday. He is applauded by Mayor Richard Berry, left, and others.

Ethics charge for maverick legislator

Complaint claims Democrat Jeff double-dipped on expenses

BY DAN BOYD
JOURNAL CAPITOL BUREAU

SANTA FE — A Democratic Party of New Mexico staffer has asked Secretary of State Dianna Duran's office to investigate whether a Democratic member of the Legislature violated state laws governing elected officials.

In an ethics complaint filed Tuesday, DPNM Executive Director Jon Lipshutz cited at least three instances that he said appear to show state Rep. Sandra Jeff, D-Crownpoint, receiving similar payments — one from the Legislature and one from her campaign account — for legislative travel expenses.

Jeff, a three-term lawmaker, denied the allegations and blasted them as politically motivated.

"There is absolutely no truth to these lies," she told the *Journal* in an email. "I have receipts and documentation to prove no double-dipping occurred."

Other legislators of both political parties have used campaign funds to pay for expenses while also receiving a legislative per diem payment. It's unclear whether such practice



JEFF: Says charge is politically motivated

MARLA BROSE/JOURNAL