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Wednesday Communiqué, 4/4/2012

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WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

April 4, 2012

Academic Plan Series: As a reminder, Dr. Larry Faulkner will be our fourth Academic Planning Series speaker. Dr. Faulkner was the twenty-seventh president of The University of Texas at Austin. Since January 31, 2006, he has been the President of the Houston Endowment Inc. The fourth talk titled, “Evolution or Revolution in America's Universities” will take place on Friday, April 6, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. at the Science & Mathematics Learning Center followed by an open reception. Campus participation in this event is strongly encouraged.

Rudolfo Anaya’s Bless Me, Ultima turns forty this year, and the film version of the novel is scheduled for release in 2012 as well. The Department of English and University Libraries are sponsoring a Reading Marathon of “Bless Me, Ultima” on Monday, April 23rd in the Willard Reading Room of Zimmerman Library to benefit the Rudolfo Anaya Scholarship Fund. The event will begin at 8 a.m. with a student, faculty or staff member reading the first page of the novel, and it will conclude at about 5 p.m. when the author, UNM’s emeritus professor Rudolfo Anaya, reads the last page. The reading will be followed by a reception

PCAST: A recent report by the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology makes the case for producing one million more STEM college graduates. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/pcast>. In addition, here is a video of President Obama’s impromptu comments on STEM education and innovation during the deans meeting at the White House. His remarks start at about 8:40 into the video. <http://lecture.umd.edu/detsmediasite/SilverlightPlayer/Default.aspx?peid=57ca6a2e42524cbab57d452533ef87281d>

What is more expensive than college? Not going to college: is the title of a recent article in the *Atlantic* <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/03/whats-more-expensive-than-college-not-going-to-college/255073/>. I have been making the case recently that when addressing college costs, impact, and productivity, we need to adopt a strategic view. While we need to be much more efficient at delivering a high-quality education, the value of our graduates can not be measured on their graduation date, but rather by their contributions to society over a lifetime.

The 300 Dollar House: The \$300 House was first described in a *Harvard Business Review* [blog post](#) by Vijay Govindarajan (last week’s Academic Planning speaker, Dr. Christ mentioned him during her lecture) and Christian Sarkar. Since then, many have answered the challenge as described on: <http://www.300house.com/>. The concept reminds me of a saying by my late colleague and UNM mentor, Professor Peter Dorato: the measure of a good idea is that at first it seems impossible, becomes probable, and finally obvious!

The Mighty Mathematician You Never Heard of: Amalie Noether was a German-born mathematician who contributed to abstract algebra and theoretical physics. She was considered by the likes of Einstein and Wiener as the most important woman in the history of mathematics. The NY Times recently highlighted her accomplishments in the following article: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/27/science/emmy-noether-the-most-significant-mathematician-youve-never-heard-of.html> Noether’s name, like that of Sofia Kovalevskaia, an earlier groundbreaking mathematician, is linked with the University of Gottingen: Kovalevskaia was the first European woman to receive a PhD in mathematics from there in 1874, and Noether taught at Gottingen from 1915 to 1933. **In her short life, Sofia Kovalevskaia managed to write a novel--*Nihilist Girl*--translated into English by our own Dr. Natasha Kolchevska.** <http://www.mla.org/store/CID62/PID163>

Sincerely, Chaouki Abdallah, Provost & Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs

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