

DEFINING MOMENTS FOR UNAM CAMPUSES AS GRADUATION SEASON COMMENCES IN STYLE

A record 26 PhD graduates this year.

An "amazing feeling" that is worth the hard work - graduates react

Coloured tassels and face-tearing smiles were floating all over Safari Hotel last week as the University of Namibia (UNAM) began an on-going graduation season on Thursday and Friday in Windhoek.

Natasha Nanties and Angelique Meyer, who both graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Lifelong Learning & Community Education) Honours degree, said it was an "awesome, awesome feeling" to finally finish after years of hard work.

In his statement, UNAM Chancellor, His Excellency Dr Nangolo Mbumba, who officiated at the University congregation for the first time as titular head, expressed his delight in "witnessing the growth in the development of Namibia's most precious resource" - its graduands.

He urged graduates to register and be members of the relevant professional bodies, adding that most of the programmes at UNAM are already accredited by the relevant professional councils and associations.

"Being a member of a professional body, council or association brings together like-minded people who can network through regional groups, social media, and conferences to share experiences and learn from each other," he said.

Speaking at the ceremony, the University of Namibia's Vice Chancellor, Professor Lazarus Hangula, wished to congratulate the University's 3 830 graduates and pointed to UNAM's staggering graduation facts this year, as signs that the University, "which is the leading research institution in Namibia," has also intensified her research efforts considerably.

This year's graduation celebration saw a lot of feats reached by UNAM. A record high 26 PhD's were awarded, together with over 150 Master's degree graduates. Additionally, 76 medical doctors graduated this year, bringing the total number of Namibian trained medical doctors, for the last three years, to 166. The School of Military Science also presented Namibia's first assemblage of graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Military Science (Honours).

Also, a first for the University, and Namibia as a whole, is Bonifatius Singu, graduating with a Master of Pharmacy in Clinical Pharmacy. Currently, there are only two Clinical Pharmacists in Namibia. Among the graduands from 22 nationalities, were 7 field epidemiologists that will be instrumental in responding and containing virus outbreaks in the country, such as the Congo Fever, anthrax and Hepatitis-E.

Addressing the graduands at the ceremony, Minister of Higher



Education, Training and Innovation, Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangiri said: "I take comfort in knowing that you are not going out there empty handed. UNAM has prepared you, trained you and the love of your family and friends will sustain you." The Minister left the elated fresh alumni with advise to live life in service to others, to be humbly intelligent and always be willing to learn.

UNAM's graduation season ends on 15 May in Keetmanshoop for the first graduation ceremony in southern Namibia. The northern campuses celebrated their ceremony on the 19th of April at the Ongwediva Trade Fair Centre. The Katima Mulilo and Rundu graduation ceremonies are slated for 24 and 26 April, respectively.

