

Second Supercomputer arrives at UNAM

The University of Namibia received a second High Performance Computing (HPC) rack from the Centre of High Performance Computing (CHPC), South Africa. The delivery was facilitated by the National Commission on Research Science and Technology (NCRST). CHPC is responsible for the distribution and deployment of decommissioned HPC hardware as mid-tier systems to research institutions within Africa under the HPC SADC Ecosystems project.

Initiated in the context of astrophysics, the current focus of the project is to support development of HPC in the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) and African Very Long Baseline Interferometry Network (AVN) partner countries across Africa, by enabling computational research initiatives and developing human capacity in HPC, both for administration and data- and computing-intensive research.

HPC (also referred to as supercomputing), generally refers to the practice of aggregating computing power of several computing nodes in a way that delivers much higher performance than one could be achieving by a typical desktop computer in order to solve large problems in business, science, or engineering.

The first HPC rack, code-named "Ranger", was delivered to UNAM in 2016 and is operational ever since. It has 768 CPU cores with 1.5 Terabyte of RAM and 384 Gigabyte of storage. The newly received HPC rack, code-named the "Stampede" comes with a total of 640 CPU cores, 1.2 Terabyte of RAM and 10 Terabyte of storage. The Stampede HPC rack will be set-up and configured in the near future, effectively doubling available computing resources.

The Supercomputers are hosted by the Department of Physics in UNAM's Faculty of Science building, but also cater for interdisciplinary computational research needs beyond astrophysics. Since its inception in 2017, the Ranger HPC rack has been used for various projects like the "Land Degradation Assessment Baseline report: Omusati Region" by the Department of Geography, History and Environmental Studies Geo-Information Science (GIS) unit in



conjunction with GIZ and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry.

In the Department of Physics, PhD and MSc projects on modelling the broadband emission of globular clusters and analyses of gamma-ray data of active galactic nuclei, recorded with the H.E.S.S. telescopes, are conducted. The Ranger HPC rack has also been used by masters and honours students in the School of Computing, undertaking final year projects which require greater computational power than an average laptop or desktop computer. The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is in the process of migrating some of the computation that the department is currently running on CHPC's Lengau cluster to the UNAM HPC cluster.

To date, the Ranger HPC rack has

run close to 500 jobs by more than 50 active users.

The Faculty of Science plans to host various trainings and workshops geared towards creating awareness in HPC. The HPC unit further encourages researchers who are already undertaking computational research at other HPC sites like CHPC's Lengau cluster, to make use of the UNAM HPC site.

For more information or viewing the HPC racks, contact: Dr Michael Backes mbackes@unam.na | Anton S. Limbo alimbo@unam.na | Jimmy Shapopi jimzashapopi@yahoo.com | Meinolf Simbenda msimbenda@unam.na

Association of Namibian-German Alumni (ANGA) launched



Alumni of German Universities met at UNAM under the theme "Joining Hands for Sustainable Progress". One of the key outcomes of the meeting was the establishment of a new alumni association, called the Association of Namibian-German Alumni (ANGA).

ANGA will serve as a platform to network, interact and engage with anyone in Namibia who received German funding for their education or research.

At the official opening, UNAM Vice Chancellor Prof. Kenneth Matengu, delivered his welcoming remarks in

which he narrated the parable of African children holding hands, while running in a competition all in the spirit of Ubuntu.

With this analogy, Prof Matengu conveyed the vision of the DAAD Alumni of joining hands for sustainable progress in Namibia and connecting with fellow Alumni worldwide.

The outgoing German Ambassador, Christian Schlaga, in his remarks outlined that annually, 130 Namibians are funded by DAAD and urged the Namibian alumni to join the global alumni network, as there are countless benefits like co-operation with highly skilled experts in any part of the world.

Dr Libertine Amadhila donates books to UNAM

Former Deputy Prime Minister and accomplished Namibian Physician, Dr Libertine Amadhila, recently donated portions of her long-acquired personal library to the University of Namibia.

Speaking to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Kenneth Matengu, she explained how she would like to see Namibian youth more actively engaged in reading. "Over the course of my life, reading has been able to take me places I never imagined, and the youth must be made aware of this", she remarked.

Professor Kenneth Matengu welcomed the generous gesture of adding more collections to the UNAM library. However, his first word of welcome praised Dr Amadhila for her various efforts to solve internal



differences between various groups. "As a child growing up, I really appreciated the work you did", said Matengu. Dr Amadhila was then given a scope of the university's size in terms of staff and student numbers, along with the vast geographical presence that covers almost every corner of the country. The books donated are a combination of both academic and non-academic text.