

30 YEARS

OF EDUCATING TALENTED INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.



Advertorial

University of Namibia is proud to be celebrating its 30-Year Anniversary in 2022.

It is a significant age to celebrate the University's history and acknowledge the vital role it has played in the social and economic transformation of a growing ambitious African region.

Formally constituted on 31 August 1992, the University has grown to be one of the world's leading and the largest university in Namibia. With over 28 000 students, 2 500 local and international staff, and a cohort – both locally and globally – of more than 60 000 alumni.

Penetrating new industries

Sharing her career journey, University of Namibia (UNAM) alumnus Alisa Amupolo was recently appointed as Namib Desert Diamonds' (Namdia) CEO.

She is pivoting to a new career and penetrating new industries, which she said is about repositioning herself as a value adding citizen to intentionally contribute in a more impactful way.

Amupolo narrated that she was a typical, shy, rural girl who migrated to the capital city in search of tertiary

education in the communications and technology industry at non-executive or board level of various private sector entities and national bodies, both on pro bono and professional bases.

It is against a backdrop of serving in fairly male-dominated industries and, in some instances, novelty industries that have not matured yet where she laid her foundation and got her hands dirty. It meant learning, failing fast and forward and adapting to the local context post an international postgraduate

"I am feeling excited about my future prospects, and I'm filled with enthusiasm about the opportunities UNAM has unlocked for me,"

education after graduating from Oshigambo High School in northern Namibia.

Her interest was in communication and technology. "I knew I wanted to explore that space more, whatever it was called. The nearest course offering was a Bachelor of Arts degree in media studies, which also paved my way to corporate communications as my journey unfolded," she added.

UNAM was much more affordable and was also where she could secure Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) funding.

Amupolo said she is currently in a career transition which is a growth journey she is excited to embark on, with current endeavours entailing effectively deploying her skills

studies and stunt working career in London in the United Kingdom (UK).

All thanks to UNAM's credibility, admission to internationally recognised universities like Leeds, which is part of the Russell group, was easy to access," she said.

Amupolo is most proud of successfully completing her five-year tenure as CEO at PowerCom in 2021 and passing on the baton to her successor, leaving the company in a sound financial position and poised for success. As the first female CEO in that industry, it meant transcending barriers and breaking glass ceilings amidst single parent responsibilities.

She is currently working towards her doctorate in business administration (DBA) and is



Alisa Amupolo

seized with her thesis at her alma mater's business school. She sees it as a springboard to a career transition in a quest to broaden her horizons and add value to new industries from a commercial perspective.

"We all know that many - if not all - freshers arrive at the university not only with their baggage, but the well wishes and prayers of their parents," she said.

I wish I had known to been more mindful of the city fast life and that naivety is not always your best friend. The fresher's gullibility, especially for those hailing from villages, makes them vulnerable and easy targets of social ills and not to rule out peer pressure, particularly for hostel students," she said.

She added that it was by the grace of God that she - along with others - were spared from worse crises students face, and that the wisdom and teaching of parents and caretakers kept them grounded throughout their academic journey, as challenging as it was.

Confidence and work in new environments

University of Namibia (UNAM) alumnus Faghma Absalom Coetzee shares her career journey and life experiences after UNAM.

Living in the United Kingdom (UK) for almost 21 years, Faghma Absalom Coetzee is making great moves and changes related to her career.

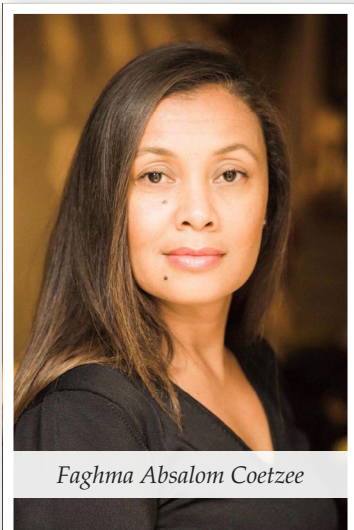
She works for a High Court judge at the Royal Courts of Justice in that country. Absalom Coetzee said there is a lot of uncertainty in the UK at the moment, but she remains positive about the future. When her partner at the time was offered an opportunity to work in the UK, they decided to make it their home and get married there.

Going back to work proved quite challenging as all the years of staying at home, taking care of the children, made her feel less confident in the workplace.

"Going back full-time has been a game-changer for me. Specifically working for the Ministry of Justice. I had no experience with the courts in the UK before this.

Absalom Coetzee registered at UNAM in 1993 but could only register for two subjects at the time. Taking the opportunity to work part-time in retail, to pay for her studies. Absalom Coetzee played for the UNAM Wildcats women's basketball team and became the chairperson of the club. Thereafter, she was appointed the public relations officer of the Namibian Basketball Federation when it was established.

Other posts she occupied include the UNAM Student Sports Representative.



Faghma Absalom Coetzee

In 1996, she was crowned Miss Namibia. During this time, she took off from her studies to focus on her responsibilities.

Absalom Coetzee believes university education should be made available to all. She also urged students to pace themselves and work towards a work/play balance.

"University years are like no other years in your life. The transition from high school is a very big step and a different environment."

"There are certain things I wish I had done better during my time at university, but my overall outlook on life is that everything we do is a learning experience. I'm very grateful for the wonderful lecturers whose classes I loved going to. I am inspired by their knowledge in the subjects they teach. I appreciate the university staff who keep the institution's wheels in motion," she added.

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THREE DECADES OF ACHIEVEMENT:

- 30 years of educating talented individuals to make a difference in the world.
- 30 years of embracing internationalisation in education.
- 30 years of promoting academic excellence.
- 30 years of meaningful academic research.
- 30 years of expansion across Namibia.
- 30 years of giving back to society.



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The University of Namibia: The 'Olupale Square' at the Globe

UNAM has been both a social glue and an economic engine. It is the most important public higher education institution in Namibia, and the quality of the students it has trained has impacted the world. As the Class of 2001, my reflection is a valuable tool for looking both backward and forward. It calls our attention to the values, personal and professional interactions at UNAM, which highlight several universal qualities of a premier institution at its best, as well as the unique value of the UNAM experience – the Olupale Square (meeting place) of the Globe.

everything I needed to be a publicly engaged scholar and a collaborative and independent critical thinker at UNAM. In a nutshell, my UNAM experience prepared me for the world.

Following my UNAM work experience and impressive professional development and personal growth, I was hired by the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM) to be one of the founding senior researchers and directors in charge of public sector research and training. Let me draw your attention to key aspects of my time at UNAM that have impacted my life.

Leadership: UNAM cultivated a democratic environment in which student voices were reflected in decision-making by the University Council as well as the University Senate. As a student leader who served the Student Representative Council as Secretary General and Vice President for two consecutive years under the servant leadership of UNAM's most renowned President, Mr. Edwin Kamatoto, (my brother from another mother with the same father), I vividly recall our fee negotiation in the Council, UNAM's highest decision-making body, and the diplomacy of our former Vice Chancellor, Hon Peter Katjavivi, which will serve as the guiding principle for our discussions. He would always say, "Colleagues, we are all going to the same destination but using different roads. Let us try to understand each other and find common ground." Those moments stayed with me and inspired my leadership style to be based on consensus instead of confrontation.

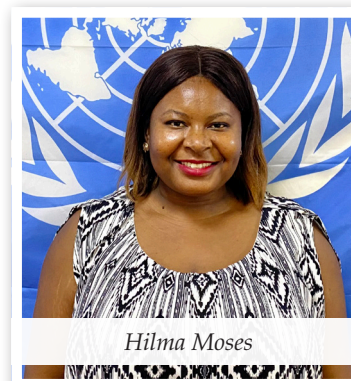
Relationships: UNAM provided an unrivaled international education and taught us that relationships with people from different countries are as

meaningful as the education and skills we receive from our respective disciplines. Through our annual UNAM cultural festivals, various events, and learning workshops sponsored by our caring Dean of Students office, we learned how to form those relationships by example. Those experiences were not taken lightly by some of us. Because of our shared UNAM experience, I secured my life-long partner, whom I am proud to call my wife. My circle of friends includes many people I met during my time at UNAM and with whom I have maintained strong relationships. Thank you very much, UNAM.

Global Citizen: My UNAM experience taught me that our different social, economic, national, and family backgrounds should not get in the way of brotherhood and sisterhood, which are essential to functioning in a complex global village. That image of oneself as a global citizen and fellow human being created in the image and likeness of God is something my UNAM experience instilled in my psyche and prepared me to thrive as a local Namibian citizen in a global world. In short, my UNAM experience has significantly impacted me and, ultimately, the world due to the diversity of perspectives.

This reflection not only commemorates UNAM's 30th anniversary but also serves as a gift on many unexpected levels: UNAM will continue to be an engaged university, collaborating across cultures and national boundaries, engaging its vast international alumni base, and fostering global networks and partnerships to advance learning, innovation, and human welfare.

From UNAM Law School into International Development



Hilma Moses

I enrolled at the University of Namibia in 2012. My initial interest in law started in the seventh grade when Mr. Tony Britz, my former Deputy principal told me, "Hilma Moses, one day you are going to be my daughter's lawyer." A casual phrase that sparked my interest in law and marked the beginning of my passion for international law. Apart from being a student, I also served as the Vice President of the Students Representative Council (SRC), Secretary for Academic Affairs, and Representative for the Faculty of Law. These roles were fulfilling since I was able to serve students through servant leadership. Overall, my time as a law student at UNAM has been extremely fruitful, it laid the groundwork for my future career in the International Development Space. It prepared me for the Diplomatic settings ahead, that required me to work in multicultural, multidimensional, and very diverse environments.

I work as a Human Rights Lawyer within the International Development Space where I have served amongst others with the United Nation Mission South Sudan (UNMISS), United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Pretoria, South Africa, and the African

Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I have expertise in the African Human Rights System, international human rights law (IHRL) instruments and mechanisms, international humanitarian law (IHL), transitional justice, and peace and security. I am also the founder of Namibian Opportunities, a digital educational impact initiative that strives to empower young people by enabling them to access and secure opportunities for personal and professional advancement.

I had to navigate the international career settings and roles with the help of outstanding leaders and mentors. Accordingly, I had to acquire tremendous knowledge and skills quickly. My profession has been extremely rewarding; it has allowed me to not only work and address critical regional and global issues in several countries, but travel around the world and acquire a national, continental, and global perspective on various affairs. While International jobs are highly rewarding, they often require extensive time away from family.

I wish I had known there were numerous opportunities for Namibians who want to further their careers outside of Namibia. When I began my work at the African Union, I founded Namibian Opportunities in 2016 because I saw that there were so many opportunities for young Namibians and that Namibia was underrepresented in both the African Union and the United Nations System.



Michael Conteh

I will not attempt to reflect on all the experiences that shaped my career path and prepared me for our global village because the pages would be too numerous to print. But first, let me say that I was born in Sierra Leone, raised in Namibia, traveled extensively in Africa, and studied in The Netherlands, Hague (the International City of Peace), before coming to the United States to pursue my doctoral work.

I was privileged to work at UNAM for twelve years in a variety of capacities. UNAM has a perfect track record of hiring its graduates. My story at UNAM is filled with challenges, successes, failures, and losses, all of which contributed to my personal growth. I learned