

# The voice of African physics

✍ N. Chetty, J.E. Gubernatis 📅 29-07-2019 ↗ <http://www.primapagina.sif.it/article/982>

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At the beginning of the year, the American Physical Society (APS) began publishing the African Physics Newsletter, a quarterly email newsletter devoted to physics in Africa. The third issue is scheduled for dissemination in late August. This type of international newsletter is a new endeavor for the APS. It was launched in response to a survey of African physicists that revealed a need for a Pan-African communication vehicle. It is also a novel one as the news items are being gathered, selected, and composed by a volunteer editorial board of African physicists.

The launch of the newsletter is timely. A lot is happening in the African physics community. Publication rates have increased. Several successful schools, such as the African School on Electronic Structure Methods and Applications and the School on Fundamental Physics and Applications, are approaching their tenth anniversaries. In the past three years, the number of African national physical societies has increased from nine to fifteen. The Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) recently opened its first institute in Africa, the East African Institute for Fundamental Physics in Rwanda. However, large communication gaps often exist among physicists within a nation, between nations, and between African and non-African physics communities. For example, of the 15 African physical societies, it appears that only two regularly publish a newsletter. Bridging these communication gaps was a prime motivation for starting the newsletter. As a result, the newsletter is becoming the voice of African physics.

A number of published articles have been noteworthy. Sekazi Mtingwa's, Chair of the Commission on Development of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics, article entitled "Physics on the Move in Africa" highlights how over the past twenty years the groundwork was laid for new organizations, collaborations, and large infrastructure projects. Cairo University celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the National Institute of Laser Enhanced Science (NILES). Physicists in Tanzania reported on a successful program for high school girls that improved the performance in STEM training at the university. In addition, there have been numerous reports and announcements of various schools, workshops, and conferences.

With each issue, the newsletter news sources have become more diversified and inclusive. The editorial board now has at least one editor representing each of the North, South, East, West, and Central regions of Africa, and a network of contacts (news reporters) is being established to source the news. The present Editor-in-Chief is Igle Gledhill, Wits University in South Africa.

Subscribership is also growing with each issue. Subscriptions are free. A tab at the top of the newsletter connects you to past issues. The coming issue will have information about how you can contribute news articles. Whether you are from Africa or just interested in African physics, we encourage you to subscribe and emphasize that by reading and especially by contributing, you will be strengthening the voice of physics in Africa.

