Institutional Models, Challenges, and Opportunities

Anthony Mezzacappa
Newton W. and Wilma C. Thomas Chair in Theoretical and Computational Astrophysics
Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy
Director, JICS

Joint Institute for Computational Sciences

Oak Ridge National Laboratory

The University of Tennessee
Knoxville
Joint Institute for Computational Sciences (JICS)

- **Plugged in at the level of the Vice Chancellor/Vice President at UT and the ALD/Deputy Director at ORNL.**
- Significant UT/State investment.
- **14:1 ROI relative to Kraken investment.**
- Foundation for other major UT awards.
- Significant State commitment moving forward.

**National Institute for Computational Sciences (NICS)**
- First academic petaflop supercomputer (Kraken).
- 3 billion core hours delivered.
- Served 6000-7000 users across 1500 projects.
- Delivers 50-60% of NSF compute cycles.

**Application Acceleration Center of Excellence (ACE)**
- UT Faculty, Postdocs, Students in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Engineering, Applied Mathematics, Computer Science
- ORNL Staff

**Exploration of new, disruptive technologies.**

**What keeps me up at night? Sustaining all of this.**
- At this scale, federal, state, and, likely, private resources will be needed.
Why sustain JICS?

Role JICS has played for the national user community (unprecedented track record).

Role JICS has played for the State of Tennessee.

Role JICS has played for the University of Tennessee.

Unique
• Components at all levels, university to national.
• Partnership across a university and a national laboratory, across federal agencies.

JICS is positioned to serve the UT community, to serve as a regional catalyst for academe and industry, and to serve the national user community because it serves on all three levels already.
Tennessee Institutions Benefiting from NICS/Kraken

- Oak Ridge High School and the Tennessee Governor's Academy
  - high school students exposed to HPC computing

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) such as Fisk University and Tennessee State University

- Private universities such as Vanderbilt University and Belmont University

- Tennessee Board of Regents universities such as Middle Tennessee State University and East Tennessee State University

- The University of Tennessee system members such as UTK, UTC, and UTHSC
Vision and Challenges

Industry
• Recruiting each partner is labor intensive, and not scalable.
• Establishing the business case is not easy for industry.
• Staffing is a challenge.
  o Need a sizeable staff pool from which to draw on short notice.

Academia
• Crossing state lines.
• Each academic partner wishes to establish its own identity/leadership.
• Shrinking state dollars.

National Centers
• Way centers are competed.
  o Competed every few years.
    ➢ Counter to long-term stability needed.
    ➢ Process may not capture complexity of/dimensions to such centers.
    ➢ Budgets fluctuate.
    ➢ Significant institutional investments made.
• Coordination of center opportunities.
Federal agency support for *Regional Centers* – i.e., an I/UCRC for states – wherein states, state industries, and federal agencies could partner would have significant benefits.

This could be the vehicle by which we are able to address much more effectively the challenges previously mentioned.

- *Federal support could incentive these partnerships.*

- Rice, UNM, UTK, Wyoming, …