L.S. Skaggs Pharmacy Complex opens at ISU Meridian this month

First-year pharmacy students will have the opportunity to begin the professional program and receive all four years of their education in Idaho’s Treasure Valley beginning this month with the long-awaited opening of the new ISU Meridian Health Science Center. Construction of the new facility is close to completion, with students beginning classes in the L.S. Skaggs Pharmacy Complex on Aug. 25.

Faculty and staff have begun moving into ISU Meridian, located near Locust Grove and I-84. In addition to the pharmacy courses, the center will house more than 20 health professions programs and ISU anticipates enrolling about 1,000 health-professions students within five years.

The facility will include a human patient simulation laboratory, clinical sciences and pharmacy compounding and research laboratories, a speech and hearing clinic, a counseling clinic and space for an advanced general dentistry clinic.

The building will also house the Meridian School District’s Renaissance High School, which offers a pre-health care track for students.

The 480,000-square-foot former manufacturing building now has a second floor addition and a skylight system offering natural lighting and high performance mechanical, electrical and lighting systems, said Ed Daniels, principal architect of designers Hummel Architects, Boise.

The $11.2 million project started with a large open high-bay warehouse, said Ron Hagen, vice president and Boise division manager for project construction manager Sletten Construction. Builders added a complete second level with the existing shell space, and “we put a lot of concrete and steel into an otherwise existing building in order to accomplish that,” he said.

A gift from the ALSAM Foundation for construction of the College’s portion of the building was a significant factor in ISU being able to expand to the new facility, said Dean Paul Cady. The new building will provide space for the College to add 20 additional seats to the Pharm.D. program, with 10 of those being added this fall. The remaining 10 seats will be added in the fall 2010, expanding the class size to 80 students. Half of the students will attend classes in Pocatello. Distance teaching technology, which the Pocatello and Meridian faculty have used for some time, allows for course instruction to be broadcast at both sites, regardless of where the faculty member is located.

An open house for the public to tour ISU Meridian will be held September 17 at 5:30 p.m. at 1311 East Central Drive.
The annual White Coat Ceremony will be held for the incoming P1 students attending classes at the ISU Meridian Health Science Center, L.S. Skaggs Pharmacy Complex on August 19, while the ceremony for students attending classes in Pocatello is slated for the following evening.

As a tradition, the College of Pharmacy welcomes first year students into the professional program each year with the White Coat Ceremony held during P1 Orientation.

The “white coat” is a powerful symbol of the awesome responsibility that pharmacists have as health care providers. The traditional presentation of the white coat to new students represents their passage into the pharmacy profession with all the opportunities and responsibilities associated with it.

At Idaho State University, the ceremony also provides an opportunity for the class to join family members and other important individuals as participants in this significant event.

As pharmacy students don their white coats and sign the Code of Ethics for Pharmacists, we inspire them to be more than a pharmacy student—but rather a student pharmacist.

Again this year, the College is offering alumni, friends, preceptors and other mentors to assist in the donation of a white coat to an incoming student pharmacist. Additional information will be mailed soon, and anyone with questions on how to make a gift towards the purchase of a coat, may contact Dan Dean, director of development, at 208 282-3655 or dandean@pharmacy.isu.edu.

P1 Orientation begins August 19 and fall semester classes start on August 25.

An open house for the new ISU Meridian Health Science Center is scheduled for September 17 at 5:30 p.m. in conjunction with the Meridian Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours.