Friends and alumni pledge $36,200 on first night of annual ISU Phonathon

ISU College of Pharmacy students gathered pledges of $36,200 from alumni and friends on the first night of the annual ConnectionISU Phonathon on January 29.

Students will continue to make calls to meet the $72,000 goal when they resume contacting alumni and friends on the evenings of February 6, 7 and 8, according to Dan Dean, director of development.

“I arrived at the first night of calling a little late and while the posted goal for the evening seemed ambitious, looking around the room at the students who were participating, I was sure it was very obtainable,” Dean Joe Steiner said. “This is a great event for the College, it allows our alumni and students to speak directly with each other and it brings necessary funding. I ask that the students, alumni and friends of the College enjoy the event.”

Funds from the annual fund-raiser are used to support existing scholarship endowments, student organization projects such as Operation Diabetes, and assist with long-term projects such as the renovation of the pharmacy practice laboratory. Donors also may form a new endowment with the minimum of a $5,000 pledge, Dean said. The pledge may be paid over three years.

Six teams consisting of four students per team competed the first night of the fund-raiser with the team garnering the highest pledges winning a catered Super Bowl XL party.

The team of Jolie Jantz, (P3), Asem Sarameh, (P2), Josh Gehrke, (P1) and David Nguyen, (P1) won the contest, earning $16,595 for the scholarship drive. The students will hold the Super Bowl party at the Phi Delta Chi house, inviting all pharmacy students to attend.

Gehrke was the nights high-caller, obtaining pledges of $9,393.

“The Phonathon creates and environment which helps bridge the gap between the best of the College of Pharmacy’s past and present,” Gehrke said. “Students are able to interact with alumni, which not only brings in vital dollars, but more importantly, is essential in building relationships for future years to come.”

If students miss you during the Phonathon, or if you plan to be away from home, donations to the 2006 campaign may be made to:

ISU College of Pharmacy - ISU Foundation
Campus Box 8050
Pocatello, ID 83209
Why do you want to be a pharmacist?

By Jennifer Athay, PharmD

"Why do you want to be a pharmacist?"

This is a question pharmacy practitioners have faced most likely many times, on that you will be asked all through school and will stay with you even after you graduate. You will discover that your choice of profession and people will consider it appropriate for small talk. Once in practice, the question will become, "Why did you choose to be a pharmacist?"

My answer to the question "Why do you want to be a pharmacist?" is something that has evolved as I went through school and then embarked on my career as a pharmacist. It began with the idea that I could relate well to the pharmacists I worked with as a technician. As I gained experience in the pharmacy, I felt that I was ready for the added responsibilities of being a pharmacist. This later evolved when my pharmacy school faculty advisor asked me why I wanted to be a pharmacist and made me justify my answer. I found my previous answer was not really good enough. I was investing too much of my life in pharmacy school to do it just because I thought I could relate to pharmacists. This was when I had to figure out for myself why I was really there and putting so much effort into getting a pharmacy degree.

Learning what's important to patients

After much introspection, I came to the conclusion I am sure many of you have also reached. I really wanted to be able to help people and to make their lives better. I wanted to help patients understand their drug therapy and their disease states in such a way that they would see an improvement in their quality of life. I also came to understand that I would have to build relationships with each of my patients so I would know what an improved quality of life meant to them. This was not something that I could decide for them and teach them, rather, it was something I had to learn – what was important to my patients.

This realization carried me through the rest of pharmacy school. Whenever I felt overworked and frustrated this was what kept me going.

Since graduation, my answer to the question "Why did you choose to become a pharmacist?" has evolved further from the answer that I gave in school. In some ways, the answer is the same. I still want to help people, but I have redirected my focus. While I am still a pharmacist and have a desire to help patients, I now have the opportunity to help student pharmacists from all across the country come to a similar realization about the needs of patients. I also have the opportunity to help each of you develop professionally through programs offered by APhA so that you can become good representatives of the profession. Rather than counsel patients on a daily basis, I have chosen a career path in pharmacy that allows me to have a broader impact on the profession by helping you learn to help your patients.

I have heard many people talk about apathy within the profession, and I will admit that I have seen it. However, I have also seen an outpouring of support from student pharmacists who want to know how to help colleagues affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. I have seen student pharmacists take the lead when there was a flu vaccine shortage and educate millions of people about who needed influenza vaccine and what to do to avoid the flu. I have seen hundreds of thousands of patients educated by student pharmacists about diabetes and heartburn. I have seen student pharmacists practice their patient counseling and communication skills through local and national competitions. I have seen student pharmacists identify and meet patient needs in their own communities. Through your actions, I have seen the reasons why you want to become pharmacists.

Find your own motivation

Each of you has to draw on your own strengths to come up with your own justification for why you want to become a pharmacist. You need to find your own motivation to carry you through pharmacy school, and through the day-to-day life of your career following graduation. Each of you has a responsibility to build this great profession that allows you to help people improve their quality of life.

So, why do you want to be a pharmacist?

Jennifer Athay, PharmD, is APhA senior manager of student development. She also is a 2004 graduate of the ISU College of Pharmacy. Editorial first printed in Student Pharmacist. Permission for reprint granted by APhA Student Pharmacist.
Tell us a little about yourself, family, career. Have you received a recent promotion, awards or changes jobs? Has your family expanded, adding future Bengals to the pack? What are some of the exciting experiences you have had the opportunity to explore. What have you been doing since you left the College of Pharmacy? Any fond memories of ISU? May we help you find a former classmate? We want to keep in touch with our esteemed alumni, so let us know how you have been doing so we can share with other alums in an upcoming Refill e-letter or Pharmacy Bulletin.