When she arrived in Haiti in February, Dr. Jennifer Seeley was struck by the devastation that remained more than a month after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook the country.

The Idaho Falls pharmacist and Idaho State University alumna was in Haiti with the Orem, Utah-based International Aid Serving Kids, setting up an ambulatory clinic at the epicenter of the quake for those in need of medical care.

Although many with major trauma had been treated, thousands were still in need of critical medical care. ISU alumna Dr. Jennifer Seeley, above, dispensed some medications from field clinics in the jungle where she and other health care providers cared for patients.

Seeley oversaw the makeshift pharmacy at the clinic in Leogane, Haiti, about 18 miles west of Port au Prince. She dispensed medications and organized medicine packs for the team’s daily field trips to outlying rural areas.

In addition to seeing patients in makeshift clinics, the medical teams had other obstacles to overcome. Lack of cold storage for medications requiring lower temperatures, no air conditioning in a hot, humid climate and treating patients in a country where Voodoo is widely practiced are issues many medical teams in the relief effort face, she said. Although the team traveled to Haiti with medications and supplies donated from area health care facilities, Seeley said she also bartered with other medical teams, trading different classes of antibiotics to ensure each team was equipped with their needed supplies.

“It was an interesting barter system,” she said, “but everyone was willing to help out where they could.”

Seeley, who was named the 2005 Outstanding Pharmacy student when she graduated from ISU in 2005, is a longtime volunteer and health care professional who has treated patients suffering from various diseases. A pharmacist with Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, she has also served on medical missions to Honduras.

She said the mission to Haiti had a significant impact on her and she was moved by the gratitude of the Haitian people.

“It is such a privilege to work with an amazing, talented and compassionate group of people, and I must include our Haitian patients,” she said. “It was an honor to serve them.”

Medical Mission Cont. on page 2...
Medical Mission Cont.

volunteers,” she said. “I was a little taken aback when I went to thank them for their help and they expressed such gratitude for letting them help. I found this quality surprising, considering the state of living conditions.”

The 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on Jan. 12 is described as one of the worst catastrophes in modern history—claiming the lives of about 200,000 people.

Most of the buildings in Haiti no longer stand, Seeley said, and the country has considerable repairs to make to its infrastructure.

“To say conditions are poor is an understatement,” she said. “In Leogane, more than 80 percent of the structures are complete rubble and if any structure is still standing, it is most likely condemned and uninhabitable. Pictures can’t even describe the overwhelming, massive destruction.”

Another College of Pharmacy alumna, Dr. Alisa Stewart, ’06, joined IASK for another medical mission to Haiti just prior to Seeley’s trip. Seeley said she was looking to volunteer for a medical mission, and had contacted Stewart before the earthquake struck Haiti. Stewart posted the need for pharmacists to join the IASK team on Facebook.

“Medical missions allow me to see other parts of the world, other cultures and work with amazing and talented teams of health care professionals, all while helping improve someone’s health,” she said. “It was an extraordinary experience.”

This story first appeared in the ISU Magazine. To read online, go to http://www.isu.edu/magazine/

Pharmacy Recruiting Fair slated for October 2010

The Idaho State University College of Pharmacy and the Professional Pharmacy Student Alliance (PPSA) will host the 2010 Pharmacy Recruiting Fair Oct. 21 and 22 in the ISU Earl Pond Student Union Building Ballroom.

More than 80 health care recruiters representing about 50 companies from Idaho and across the United States typically attend the fair to interview students one-on-one for potential employment.

Each year the college makes a special effort to ensure that fourth-year students performing clinical rotations in Pocatello, Boise, Coeur d’Alene and other Western sites return to campus to participate in interviews during the pharmacy recruiting fair, said Andrew Gauss, fair coordinator.

“Several of the top pharmacies in the United States send recruiters to campus each year seeking ISU graduates who are well-educated, professional pharmacy practitioners,” Gauss said.

Currently, about 60 pharmacy students serving rotations anticipate graduation in May 2011.

In addition to the 2011 graduates, first-, second- and third-year pharmacy students will be able to discuss internships and employment opportunities with recruiters.

The fair allows students to increase their knowledge of career pathways in community, hospital, research and other pharmacy career opportunities.

In addition to recruiter interviews, participating companies will display exhibits from 10 a.m. to noon Oct. 21 in the ballroom.

For more information, contact Gauss at 208-282-3393 or andrew@pharmacy.isu.edu.

Staying connected with alumni and friends

Dr. Paul Cady, interim dean, left, visited College of Pharmacy alumnus Frank Gray ’75, in March while in the Scottsdale, AZ area.