

"We Are Alive ... and Thankful"

January 14, 2010 4:30 AM New Wave staff
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Their apartment building partially collapsed and all their belongings were destroyed in the Haiti earthquake, but "we are alive and we have that to be thankful for," said Tulane University employee Christine Duchatellier-Fowler on Thursday (Jan. 14) in a telephone interview from Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



Smoke rises from earthquake damage in the business sector of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
(Photos by Geoffrey Boutros)

She has lived in Haiti with her family for three years working for the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine as a project administrator, but now she is preparing to evacuate back to the U.S. with her husband, Paul Fowler, their seven-month-old baby and other family members.

When the devastating earthquake struck Port-Au-Prince on Tuesday (Jan. 12) around 5 p.m., Duchatellier-Fowler was away from home shopping. Fowler was with their baby outside in the pool courtyard of their apartment complex.

He said, "I saw the building swaying back and forth while the ground moved beneath

us. It sounded like a freight train. I don't know how else I can describe the sound, but it was absolutely horrifying."

Back on the Tulane uptown campus, Greg Southworth had tracked down the Tulane family in Haiti with the help of Paul Fowler's family members in the U.S. Southworth, assistant vice president in charge of emergency management, is arranging to fly the Fowler family out of Haiti within coming days.

"We are very, very appreciative that we have a family at Tulane taking care of us," Duchatellier-Fowler said.



The building in the background, once multi-storied, slopes dangerously to the street in a devastated section of the Haitian capital.

She has led the University Technical Assistance Project in Haiti as the country project director, coordinated through the Tulane Center for Global Health Equity.

All Haiti-based staff have been located and are safe, said Carl Kendall, professor in the Department of International Health and Development.

Kendall posted a [wiki](#) site to organize information about the earthquake.

Another Tulane employee, Dr. Peter Meade, was in Haiti on a voluntary medical mission when the earthquake happened. Meade and his girlfriend, Mary Jackson, a nurse at Tulane Medical Center, are working in a rural clinic and are both safe.

Meade is an assistant professor of clinical medicine in the Department of Surgery, section of trauma and critical care.

A Tulane graduate student, Monica Carlson, also is safe at the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, where she works. She is affiliated with the Payson Center for International Development and intends to stay and help with response efforts.

University Communications staff members Carol J. Schlueter, Fran Simon and Keith Brannon contributed to this article.