Ida Saito departs at year’s end
Operations chief led during major growth

Chief Operations Officer Ida Saito, who helped guide 13 years of vigorous growth for La Clinica, will retire at the end of 2018, closing her second career serving people in southern Oregon.

She had worked for the state Department of Human Services for nearly 30 years before taking a new operational leadership post at La Clinica in 2005, promising to spend three years at it.

“I wanted to know that the work I did was meaningful and had an impact on people and the community,” Saito said.

And that’s exactly what she found and enjoyed most at La Clinica: being part of a dynamic organization with the ability to steer its destiny and create what the community needs. During Saito’s tenure, patient visits rose to more than 147,000 in 2017 from about 46,200 in 2005 and employees climbed to 374 from around 106.

“What warms my heart is knowing what a great group of leaders we have,” she said, pointing out that many La Clinica managers started as medical assistants or wellness coaches.

Jillian Robinette was among them.

“She saw every early challenge and hurdle in my leadership as an opportunity, never losing focus and always supporting what could be potential learning and leadership opportunities,” said Robinette, who now manages the Wellness Center. “Ida has an approach that informs and educates, and a wonderful supportive and nurturing way that makes you feel empowered and engaged to lead to our mission. She is truly remarkable.”

The search is underway for Saito’s replacement.
La Clinica recognizes donors in inaugural event

Donors Jerry and Jeanne Taylor and S+B James Construction Management have helped La Clinica bring health services to the community many times over in recent years—and this spring they accepted official recognition of the organization’s gratitude.

La Clinica thanked both and everyone else who has given to improve services during an Evening of Gratitude, its first donor recognition event, in May. The Taylors and S+B James were singled out because of their long and consistent generosity.

The Taylors have been involved in several capital campaigns, are big boosters at La Clinica’s annual fundraiser, and support struggling La Clinica families with a holiday donation each year. S+B James has helped La Clinica with numerous remodeling projects and gives annually at the fundraiser.

“We are grateful for every single donation that comes our way, and we can’t thank our friends enough,” said Maria Ramos Underwood, La Clinica’s chief development officer. “This will be an annual event, and our deepest hope is that our supporters all will join us so we can say thank you face to face.”

Watch for a date for the second annual event in fall 2019.

La Clinica’s Birch Grove Health Center will move into the Central Avenue building now occupied by the Family and Women’s Health Center, above, while that center’s staff will move to a new location.

Two health centers will move as part of plan

As it makes way for more patients in coming months, La Clinica will move two health centers that are key to the effort.

Birch Grove Health Center, now located in 1,375 square feet inside Jackson County’s Health and Human Services building, will move to 910 S. Central Ave., now the home of the 12,000-square-foot La Clinica Family and Women’s Health Center. That center’s staff will move to a new location to be announced this fall.

La Clinica and several community partners serve many mental health and addictions patients at Birch Grove, and space for the operation has been tight in the county building almost since the center opened in 2015, said Chief Operations Officer Ida Saito. “This will finally give Birch Grove the room it needs to thrive.”

The moves are expected to be complete by early 2019.

La Clinica is once again partnering with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for an evening of exceptional entertainment that includes dinner and wine, fun with friends, games and prizes, the ever-popular dessert auction, and more.

Raise Your Heart for Health

When: Sunday, Oct. 7, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Where: Ashland Hills Hotel & Suites, 2525 Ashland St., Ashland
Tickets: $100. Learn more or buy tickets now at laclinicahealth.org/raiseyourheart.

La Clinica’s annual party to benefit services will raise money this year to help some of the community’s most vulnerable residents—those who use mobile health, school, and dental outreach services.

Schools Continued from the cover

The center will be the 11th in La Clinica’s network of school-based health centers, which in 2017 served 2,776 children who made 12,936 visits for services that ranged from immunizations and treatment of minor childhood ailments to well child/adolescent visits and mental health counseling.

The center at Kids Unlimited Academy will serve students first, then expand care to all family members, with the goal of eventually serving 500 patients, La Clinica Outreach Director Ed Smith-Burns said. It will have two medical exam rooms and two mental health therapy rooms and be staffed with a full-time nurse, a part-time primary care provider, a mental health provider, and an office specialist.

La Clinica is grateful for major contributors to the project including these foundations: Carpenter, Cheney Family, Cow Creek Umpqua Indian, West Family, Gordon Elwood, and Anna May Family.

Thank you!

As always, we appreciate you and your generous support of programs that help our community.