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Now the clinic finds itself in another time of transition – this time due to the unexpected bankruptcy of one of two umbrella organizations coordinating Medicaid plans in the Portland area. Last December, FamilyCare announced it would be closing its doors at the end of January.

PHOTO BY CHRISTEN MCCURDY

Mardica Hicks became CEO of the Children's Community Clinic 10 years ago.

While the Children's Community Clinic is open to all children — from birth to age 21 — its focus is to serve lower-income patients and more than 90 percent of its patients are covered by Medicaid, Hicks said, meaning in recent years the clinic has relied on Medicaid reimbursement funds to operate. The abrupt transition — Hicks said clinics were given no more notice than the general public — threw into question how the clinic would be funded.

"We had already planned our year with the expectation that those funds would be there," Hicks told *The Skanner*.

Health insurance providers like Care Oregon have been working to ensure Medicaid-eligible patients continue to get care, and the Children's Clinic was able to raise funds to replace some of the missing revenue. The clinic is registered as a public benefit corporation with the Oregon Secretary of State's office and is able to accept donations. But fundraising has not been its focus, Hicks said, and after the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 its focus was on compliance and providing care.

In addition to the other changes, the clinic has a new home: it's located on the third floor of Lloyd Center Mall, in a part of the shopping center increasingly devoted to medical and dental offices. Previously, the clinic was situated on Northeast Killingsworth Street just east of North Vancouver. The new location is more central and easier for people from around the metropolitan area to get to, due to its proximity to the freeway, increased parking and proximity to more public transit lines, Hicks said.

Hicks said the clinic has a "three-pronged focus" on care: getting kids healthy, helping kids stay healthy and teaching families and kids how to stay healthy.

It's the last item — the focus on education — that Hicks sees as crucial. Children leave health fairs with an individual health plan. The clinic is also engaged in outreach projects like a student group for young women that started last year at Roosevelt High School and that it hopes to expand to other high schools in the Portland area. Funded partially by the Children's Clinic and partly by Multnomah County, it's part of teacher S. Renee Mitchell's Black Girl Magic program and focuses on sexual and reproductive health.

The clinic's patient mix is more diverse than that of the Portland area – Hicks said about one-third of its patients are White, one-third are Black and one-third identify as Hispanic or Latino, and a large number of patients speak languages other than English and need language assistance. Of the clinic's seven medical doctors, some are paid and some are volunteers, and all also practice at other facilities.

Beatrice Morrow-Cannady Building Opens

Building will offer 80 affordable housing units and community-serving retail space

PHOTO BY JERRY FOSTER

On Nov. 8, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiative held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Beatrice Morrow-Cannady Building, a mixed-use commercial and residential building that will provide 80 residential homes prioritized for residents displaced from North and Northeast Portland and for community-serving commercial retail space. Pictured here, from left to right: Hermann Colas, founder of Colas Construction, Inc.; Portland City Commissioner Dan Saltzman; Maxine Fitzpatrick, executive director of PCRI; Chelsea Bunch, housing integrator, Oregon Housing and Community Services; former Oregon legislator Avel Gordly; Stacy Dodson, U.S. Bank president for Portland and Southwest Washington; former Oregon legislator Margaret Carter; Mayor Ted Wheeler; Dr. Bishop Steven Holt, N/NE Affordable Housing Oversight Chair.

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their lives.

In a recent press release from the organization, attorney Jason Kafoury cited a 2017 Oregonian report that showed 52 percent of arrests by Portland Police were of homeless people – a population that represents less than five percent of the city. Eighty-four percent of those arrests were for non-violent crimes.

The New Avenues for Youth Legal Clinic is hoping to better those outcomes through a partnership with the Criminal Justice Reform Clinic at Lewis & Clark Law School.

Among several projects that focus on parole, clemency, and complex cases within the criminal justice system, the Reform Clinic also runs the Community Law Division, based out of the Metropolitan Public Defenders office.

Through the work of lawyers and law students, Community Law partners with local organizations – including Home Forward and Veterans' Project – to help reduce legal barriers for people living in poverty. It was through such a collaboration that the New Avenues for Youth Legal Clinic was born.

"For people who live in poverty, or on the edge, one of the things that keeps them there are legal issues," said Aliza Kaplan, law professor at Lewis and Clark Law School, director of its Criminal Justice Reform Clinic, and co-creator of the Community Law Division.

"Poverty and criminal justice go hand in hand," she continued. "And when I say criminal justice, I mean it in the broadest sense.

> "Poverty and criminal justice go hand in hand

Someone could have a traffic fine, which could end up being thousands of dollars, so we can work with that person to get rid of the fines and fees."

Other common legal hurdles young people face include record clearing and expungements, name and gender marker changes, restraining orders, accessing benefits and housing and family-related issues.

While other legal services exist for at-risk youth in Portland, Kaplan said they're likely piecemeal and not accessible through an established clinic.

That said, the New Avenues project is a first-of-its-kind for the city.

"There is definitely no other way for New Avenues' clients to receive legal services in any meaningful way in Portland," said Kaplan. "This is why we needed to act when we learned of the tremendous need."

Since its pilot phase, the clinic has assisted 153 youth experiencing homelessness and currently has over 90 active cases of youth facing a number of legal challenges.

"Without the people at the New Avenues Legal Clinic, I do not know if I would be here today," said Kat, a youth served by New Avenues. "They believed me and helped me get the protection I needed to get stable, feel safe, and see myself as the strong person that I know I am today."

A youth can connect to the legal clinic through a referral from a New Avenues case manager or social worker. The clinic – made up of a full-time lawyer from Community Law, alongside law students and a handful of lawyers at the Metropolitan Public Defender office — can then work directly with the youth on his or her legal issues.

"Whatever it is that is preventing the person from moving forward in their lives – getting into housing, finding a better job and getting off the streets – the case manager at New Avenues and the Community Law (team) can all work together to advance this person and remove the barrier," said Kaplan.

The New Avenues for Youth Legal Clinic also offers drop-in hours at the organization's headquarters in downtown Portland, where a youth without a referral can ask for legal advice.

Read more at **TheSkanner.com**

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response to a growing number of violent demonstrations in Portland since 2016, where right-wing and left-wing protesters clash.

Outlaw has said those protests are difficult to police.

She and the mayor contend new so-called "time, place and manner" restrictions on public gatherings would keep the public safer.

Eudaly said she believes Wheeler and Outlaw are well-intentioned and want to curtail political extremism. Yet Eudaly said she cannot "vote to expand their powers" in light of her view that significant police reforms are necessary.

Wheeler on Wednesday called his proposal legal, reasonable and necessary and criticized news coverage that called into question whether his proposal was constitutional.

> "I've been firm because I believe that this ordinance was a step in the right direction

The mayor also expressed exasperation and weariness. He said he tried unsuccessfully to keep right-wing agitators away from Portland by making public pleas. And he noted that the federal government declined his request to deny the right-wing Patriot Prayer group a protest permit, a request that drew condemnation of Wheeler because it was seen as an effort to curtail free expression.

"While I am disappointed that City Council did not pass our Protest Safety Ordinance, I am encouraged that this has sparked a necessary and hard look at protest safety in our city. I want to thank our vocal critics, who made us better - through the engagement of rigorous debate. I've been firm because I believe that this ordinance was a step in the right direction," Wheeler said in an emailed statement Wednesday afternoon. "Our administration will continue to look for ways to prevent protest violence, while supporting and upholding the First Amendment. We will also continue to talk with community leaders, to look for alternative ways to tackle this very issue."