

Thomsons endow new HEDCO Clinic director position



A HEDCO clinic worker with a child

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Imagine the educational and social services equivalent of a modern teaching hospital on the UO campus — a place where families get the help they need, students get practical experience and researchers make discoveries that become new clinical solutions. The UO’s College of Education is closer to realizing this ambitious vision for its HEDCO Clinic, thanks to a \$2 million gift from Julie and Keith Thomson. The couple’s endowment will establish a new clinic director position in perpetuity.

“We are very grateful to the Thomsons,” said Michael H. Schill, UO president and professor of law. “This gift marks an important milestone for the HEDCO Clinic that will help make an even greater impact in our community.”

With a new director at the helm, the HEDCO Clinic can reach its full potential, helping more Oregon families and helping them more effectively, College of Education Dean Randy Kamphaus said. It will also accelerate teaching and research, create new learning opportunities for students and help close the translational gap, the time it takes to transform research into practice.

“Recruiting and retaining an accomplished, experienced leader is an important step toward fulfilling a dream that’s been years in the making,” Kamphaus said. “It’s fitting that this important new position will be forever named in honor of Julie

and Keith, a couple of loyal Ducks who have given generously to the university over the years through their financial contributions, as well as their time and leadership.”

The director will accelerate the clinic’s efforts to provide low-cost educational services to the Eugene-Springfield community through the work of four centers at the College of Education: the Center for Healthy Relationships, the Speech-Language-Hearing Center, the Center on Teaching and Learning, and the Autism Applied Behavior Analysis Clinic.

However, the endowment is about more than simply consolidating these four, said donor Julie Thomson. “This is a great opportunity to help create a whole collaborative clinic that exceeds the sum of its parts. Each of the centers has demonstrated success, and this will accelerate their work.”



The new director will serve as an advocate for the families who visit the clinic, helping them navigate different services and get the best care possible. Creating the ideal client experience isn’t just good for families, she said. It will also help UO researchers share information and coordinate their work more effectively.

A second-generation alumna and member of the college’s advisory council, Julie Thomson graduated from the College of Education in 1965 and went on to become a grade school teacher. She helped lead the fundraising initiative to construct the college’s new facilities, which opened in 2009.

Keith Thomson is retired vice president and Oregon site manager for Intel Corporation. A pioneer for Oregon’s high-tech industry and an advocate for education, he has served as chair of the UO Foundation Board of Trustees and the Governor’s School Transformation Advisory Committee. He was appointed by the governor to the OHSU Governing Board and chaired that board until becoming chair of the OHSU Foundation Board of Trustees.

“Based upon my experience at OHSU we are confident that a collaborative teaching hospital model will be successful at the COE, and that our investment will benefit the community while advancing the UO’s mission,” he said. “Researchers will help families lead better lives as they develop innovative therapies for some of society’s most vexing problems. But the potential impact isn’t limited to the local community or even Oregon. These discoveries will lead to new treatment methods that will be used across the nation and perhaps even around the world.”

—By Ed Dorsch, University Communications