After more than 10 years working at the Moab Valley Multicultural Center, founder Leticia Bentley is ready for new adventures.

Bentley’s dream of a multicultural social services and education center began in late 1999, when she was a teacher with the Grand County School District.

It became clear that there were immense needs in the Hispanic community as she was receiving more and more requests for help from parents and her students. Bentley knew firsthand about these struggles, having come to Moab several years earlier from Mexico without speaking any English.

She quit her job with the school district to begin the long and difficult process of forming the multicultural center with the help of many good friends. By
April 2007, the Moab Valley Multicultural Center received its official 501(c)3 status.

The center that Bentley and her friends dreamed about is now a thriving and active asset to the Moab community, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations. Its youth programs, crisis intervention services, life skills support and bilingual interpretations assist more than 2,000 people per year.

Bentley’s background as an educator made her a natural advocate, a skill which is central to the MVMC’s vital work in the community. Many clients still come to the center today looking for “la maestra” or, “the teacher.” “Leti has influenced everyone who has been involved with the center in many ways,” Moab Valley Multicultural Center Executive Director Rhiana Medina said. “She has taught me the value of advocacy, determination and fearlessness. We will miss her, but I know she will always be in our corner and lend her advice and talents whenever she can.”

Bentley said she would like to thank everyone who has helped her on her journey for all these years, as well as those who have supported the center.

“None of this could have been possible without all of you,” Bentley said. “I am very grateful that I had the chance to get to know all of you. Muchas gracias a todos. As an immigrant, I also feel very honored to have been able to contribute something to this community. I wish the center all the best as they continue with the work that we started.”