

A Passion for Compassionate Health Care

By: Allison Otero



It is one of your worst nightmares your spouse, your child or another of your loved ones has been hospitalized with a life-threatening condition and they do not have any health insurance. Sound familiar? It should. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Nevadans do not have health care insurance (LV Sun 1/4/2012). Combined with the one of the worst economy's in the United States, this medical nightmare has become a reality for many Nevadans.

But while Washington continues to debate the best way to address this issue, right here in North Las Vegas Rosalind Jamerson is determined to defeat the local health insurance crisis the only way she knows how – one patient at a time. Rosalind is the founder and Executive Director of MEMRA (Medtyme Medical Relief Association), a non-profit 501c3, which provides medical equipment and supplies as well as other services such as Emergency Assistance, Free Notary Service, Typing and Travel assistance for uninsured, low income individuals and families.

These services and supplies are provided for a minimal donation or for qualified cases, absolutely free. “We went through a nightmare,” Rosalind explained as she described caring for first her father who was dying of cancer and then her fiancé who suffered a massive stroke. After a long seven year battle, he passed away October 24, 2012. “It was a mess (medical horror) I was his 24 hour caregiver, but I had help from the medical community. Rosalind also lost her 4 year old nephew from domestic violence. I began to look around and say to myself, ‘what can I do to help other people?’” The answer to that question came in the form of a stranger who had been mugged and

suffered a slight stroke. Since she had no identity, a notary was required to complete the required forms. Rosalind, who has worked in the medical profession for twenty nine years and is a notary, heard the lady yelling at the nursing staff and she knew she had to help.

Depending solely on donations from private donors, from fundraising drives by Wendy's, and her own money, Rosalind opened MEMRA with the vision of providing the Las Vegas community medical services, emergency assistance and support. With the help of Social Workers, local hospitals and hospice-care facilities contact MEMRA with medical assistance request. Once the request has been qualified and approved, the equipment or supplies are picked up or delivered to the patient. Walk-in requests are accepted but still require professional referral, qualification and an exam by a doctor. If the Client does not have a doctor, Rosalind works with her resources to ensure one is provided.

To help fund ongoing costs, Rosalind is opening a Donation Consignment store soon adjacent to MEMRA. The store will pay a percentage of the operation costs and a large percentage to MEMRA. While still mostly dependent on donations, the proceeds from the Donation Consignment store will help offset the cost of the equipment and supplies donated to those in need. Volunteers are needed to assist in the store. Cash donations for MEMRA can be made in person or through the website donate2memra.org or memrareliefassoc.org. Medical supplies and equipment can be dropped off at MEMRA at 800 N. Rainbow Blvd, Suite 140, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107 or can be scheduled for pick up by calling 702-966-7366 or 702-634-MEDS (6337).

“My long-term plan is to have MEMRA's in Arizona, California, Utah as well as Vegas. I have to find the right people to operate them. It has to be people who have gone through this experience and have the same passion to help,” Rosalind said. “This is my passion and I care about all people” That passion for compassionate health care assistance fuels Rosalind through her non-stop day. You see, even though it is after normal business hours, she has just gotten a call that someone needs a tank of oxygen. Rosalind will not rest until that tank is delivered from the provider and one more Nevadan can breathe a little easier again. She battles through knowing that with every delivery of medical equipment, she's made someone's life a little more bearable and lessened the nightmare.