



SHERRIE HINZ

RN, EMSRN

The Caregiver

Sherrie Hinz had aspired to be a nurse from the age of 14, but it wasn't until her son Isaac was born that she realized she had the courage and determination to make her wish come true. "Of all my turning points, Isaac's birth was the one motivating factor that inspired me to continue on, to obtain an education, and to pursue beyond fatigue, disappointments and divorce," she said.

Today, Sherrie's 22-year-old son is proud of a mother who works in one of the most intense areas of nursing — critical care. She not only works in ICU at Valley Hospital Medical Center in Las Vegas, she's also a fixed-wing flight nurse for Med Flight Air Ambulance, where she transports critical care patients, typically those undergoing open-heart and brain surgeries, to specialized hospitals.

Humor is what Sherrie says she gives to her patients, particularly during transport. "There's not a better place to be funny than in the air. When in these situations, patients realize what little power they actually have. I help to put them at ease," she said.

As one of the first critical care flight nurses in Nevada, Sherrie takes it upon herself to share her knowledge with those just entering the field. Nurses, she said, should leave their patients better than they found them. "Know your patients," she added. "Find out what they really need to be comfortable."

Away from work, Sherrie also leads education sessions for community organizations such as SISTA to SISTA, which promotes HIV/AIDS risk reduction to African American women in lower socioeconomic communities and encourages high-risk teens to consider nursing as a profession. "I feel it's my job to make others know how important the nursing profession is," she said.

Sherrie's inspiration wall at home features an image of Mary Eliza Mahoney, the first black professional nurse. She also is surrounded by cards, gifts, candles and treasures from patients, a testament to the impact she makes every day. "I go home each day knowing that I did the best job that I could do," added the Tennessee Titans and New Orleans Saints football fan.