



Malta House of Care

Mobile Medical Clinic

Wonder Women Class of '18
Rosa Morales of Hartford
Neighborhood Activist, Caring Citizen

After moving to her home on Grafton Street in Hartford in 1988, Rosa Morales, 82, took a look around her Behind the Rocks neighborhood – and did not like everything she saw. She especially did not like the trash-filled space – a former dump site – that was right on her corner.

So, as she would do for decades to follow, Rosa picked up the phone and made some calls. She called city officials. She called her neighbors, coaxing them to join forces with her to help clean up their community. And she *kept* calling!

Eventually, after years of nudging and many, many lobbying walks throughout the community, that garbage-filled lot was transformed into the leafy and beautiful Alexander Goldfarb Memorial Park. And even after the park was well-established, Rosa still kept a watchful eye, offering tips to the landscaping team from [Knox Inc.](#), which maintains the space. She also pitched in herself, watering flower beds and picking up every piece of litter she'd find during her frequent walks.

Over the years, “Miss Rosa” became one of the most well-known and well-respected activists in the city, using her voice as a member of Hartford Areas Rally Together and the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance to speak up constantly for what was right. [In 1996, Hartford Courant columnist Tom Condon named Rosa as one of his heroes for the year](#), for the way she helped her new neighbors – former residents of the Charter Oak Terrace housing project – acclimate to the area.

And just this past December, she [received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Maple Avenue Revitalization Group](#).

“Rosa is a great example of the impact that one person can have,” said Rep. Matt Ritter, for whom Rosa once babysat. “There are a lot of ways to contribute to public life, some involve ballots, others don't. But the biggest impacts to the city are people who have big hearts and the discipline to keep calling City Hall to get things done. Those are the people who embody what it means to be a caring citizen.”