



PAINTING & CREATING SMILES

Nail fairy crowned Citizen of the Year

BY HALEY HAMILTON

It doesn't take a million bucks to make someone feel like a million bucks. Martina "Tina" Ngo does it with a smile, a pinch of fairy dust, and a swipe of nail polish.

She often can be seen donning a tutu and wings, twinkling her way from room to room at Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and Health Center in Tacoma, where she paints patients' nails.

"Martina makes your day with a warm smile and greeting. The most surprising thing is that she is only in her 20s and yet is so dedicated. She takes from her own free time to volunteer. I have never met someone with such a big heart. She's a true modern-day Samaritan," said Kimberly Benoit, one of her co-workers.

Ngo is the 2015 *South Sound* magazine Citizen of the Year. Several people nominated her for the award, pointing out that she is selfless, creative, and inspiring. Ngo received the award in front of hundreds of people at the Best of South Sound magazine celebration in May at LeMay — America's Car Museum in Tacoma.

Seven years ago, Ngo started Tina's Traveling Nails, an at-home and mobile nail salon for the Tacoma market and beyond. Carrying only regular and gel/shellac nail polishes — because they're way better for your nails than acrylic

— Ngo set out to educate her clients on maintaining strong, healthy nails. She added her volunteer visits to the hospital to spread cheer and hope.

She is spreading her fairy wings further by enlisting other "nail fairy" helpers. She hopes more nail fairies will spring up in hospitals beyond Tacoma.

"Tina is genuine, honest, hard-working and, most of all, an inspiration for following your dreams and helping others," said Katie Keely, who nominated Ngo for the award.

Patients who get their nails painted get to keep the bottle of polish as a gift (and for sanitary reasons), so Ngo goes through a lot of polish.

Make donations at P.O. Box 363, Tacoma, 98402, or check out the Nail Fairy page on gofundme.com to make a donation online. »



Ngo accepting her award, with South Sound magazine publisher Josh Dunn