

## Polished Girlz

A manicure is an easy way to lift spirits. Alanna J. Wall's volunteer group, Polished Girlz, is doing all that and more by providing manicures to those who need it most. The opening of its new Los Angeles chapter raised awareness for its cause. BY BETH LIVESAY

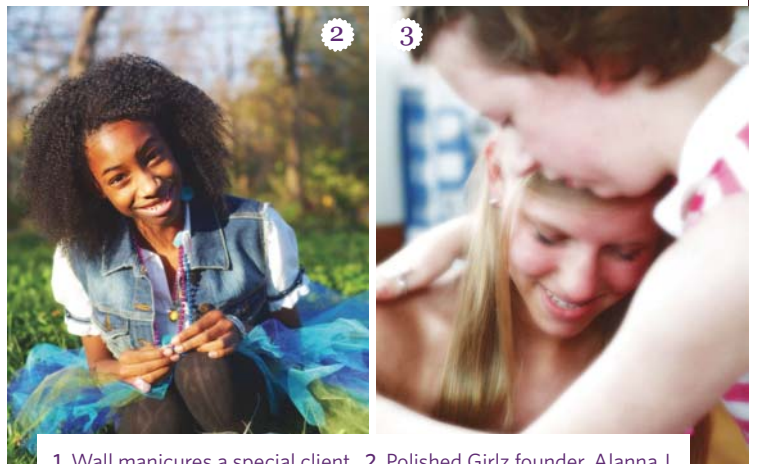
**Alanna J. Wall has done more to help others at the age of 12 than many have in their lifetimes. And she is using the power of polish to do it.**

The love she has for designing and drawing on her nails was fueled by visits she would take to see her nana. Her memories of bonding with her mom and nana over a nail date made nail art all the more therapeutic for her.

When she was 10 years old, she decided to start Polished Girlz, a volunteer organization that treats children with special needs to manicures — and her client base grew rapidly. “Every organization we went to requested that we return forever, so I know that I was on to something great,” remembers Wall. The excitement Wall felt for making a difference was embraced by others who wanted to help, and soon Polished Girlz grew. Before long, special-needs directors began referring clients from hospice at home to be polished and pampered. What started as a few family members and friends helping out has grown into a database of over 100 volunteers in several states, and the organization has already served over 1,000 clients. Currently, there are chapters of Polished Girlz in Dayton, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Rhode Island, and New York (come 2013).

October 18 marked the opening of the Los Angeles chapter of Polished Girlz. The opening party was a huge success, drawing in nail professionals and celebrities alike. Among those who attended were celebrity nail artist Naja Rickette, Brian Garces, Skye Townsend, and Kate Linder. The following day, Polished Girlz polished at the Ronald McDonald House in Los Angeles in a partnership with 7 For All Mankind. The event was sponsored by Orly, who provided all the color and glitter any girl could ever dream of. At the moment, Wall's favorite polish is one of those sparklies, aptly named Be Brave. It's a pink color with a cancer awareness charm. Recently Wall painted the nails of a little girl who was diagnosed with a rare bone cancer with that color.

Being brave and polished is what Wall's mission is all about. Polished Girlz serves organizations that take care of children with special needs including hospitals, support groups, Ronald McDonald Houses, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Sickle Cell Association, Down Syndrome Association, Mended Little Hearts, as well as serving clients in the privacy of their homes. “The best part about volunteering is not only getting to make others feel good but getting to make new friends. I feel like it's not work if it is something that you love to do and



1. Wall manicures a special client. 2. Polished Girlz founder, Alanna J. Wall started the organization when she was 10. 3. Two Polished Girlz in the Chicago chapter share a special moment.

what I have learned the most is that you are never too young to serve,” says Wall.

Wall not only serves clients in need of some pampering, but she also gets an important message out about sanitation. Hand washing and infection reduction can save lives, and that message is not only aimed at clients, but at volunteers, parents, nurses, and everyone else who gets excited about nails as much as the Polished Girlz do.

The excitement for Wall's non-profit continues to grow. Her dream is to have a nail stylist in every city available to volunteer for Polished Girlz so that more girls who are ailing and terminally ill can get the polish they deserve. Wall hopes to partner with more nail companies who want to give back directly. So far, Orly, OPI, Minx, Deborah Lippmann, Lex Cosmetics, and Caboodles have teamed up with Polished Girlz to make sure volunteers look great and are well stocked when providing those much needed manicures. The website, [www.polishedgirlz.com](http://www.polishedgirlz.com), will give you more information on making donations or you can visit its online shop.

Wall's personal mission to make nail art a powerful healing force in the lives of young girls has touched the hearts of many. Since the age of 10 she has proved that you are never too young to volunteer. “I have been the first mini mani for a little girl in the hospital and also the very last mini mani for a little girl that passed away only days after my visit,” she says. But the bonding time these girls had with their moms while getting their nails done together allowed for them to have a peaceful and fun moment, one that Wall was happy to provide and be a part of. Polished Girlz reminds us of the power and positivity that is possible in every polish. 