



SEA-side salon speak

ANNA LEE celebrates the industry accolade bestowed upon her at the *Scratch Stars Awards 2014*

The *Tom Holcomb Shooting Star* award that I was presented with back in May came as a huge surprise to me - so much so, that I wasn't at the awards to accept it personally!

Each *Scratch Stars* award has a list of nominees and the only award that has no nominees is the special *Shooting Star* given right at the end of the night. I never in a million years expected it to be awarded to me. I only knew that I had won when Samuel Sweet from Sweet Squared posted a photo of the award on my Facebook page to congratulate me. I stared at the photo for a few minutes before even noticing my name was on the award!

Helping the SEA nail community was something I'd wanted to do for a very long time - even before I became a CND ambassador. It's true that I feel strongly about this particular sector of our industry because I'm from a Chinese background, but I also love helping people around me learn, grow and be inspired to do better in their lives. The CND EA title gave me the opportunity to send these messages across the industry in the most positive way and in particular, the SEA community. The award is an indication that the SEA nail community is finally being noticed, recognised and accepted as a part of this huge industry. Sweet Squared is the first company in the UK to recognise the SEA community for the excellence of its skills and I'm very honoured to be a part of that vision and this mini revolution right from the start.

What the SEAs say...

Jeanette Vuong – session nail artist

As a session manicurist and nail artist, it can be very lonely and it's important to be surrounded by the right help. Anna has not only been a great support to me but has believed in my work since day one. She has stretched me to be better at what I do and pushed me beyond my comfort zone. Anna has been determined to see her vision realised and works overtime, every day. In my opinion, she's truly a *Shooting Star* and no doubt a deserved winner. As a SEA, her award inspires me to work harder

at what I love doing and I'm so proud to have her as a teacher and a friend in my journey.

Tina Pham – salon owner

SEA nail techs have always been looked down upon in the nail industry. We do not get recognition for the good work that we do, but find ourselves in the spotlight as soon as something goes wrong. SEA techs seem to get the blame for everything negative and many people in the nail industry are very judgmental. Since I met Anna, she has given SEA techs hope and inspiration because she knows and understands how it feels to be judged on the basis of one's race. I feel more confident after going to Anna's classes to qualify as a CND tech, as this helps me to be more recognised for the work I do. With Anna winning this award, I feel like she's given us SEAs a voice to speak out and I'm so grateful for all the work she has done for us. On behalf of all SEA techs, I thank Anna for everything and most of all for giving us a voice.

Anna Trieu – salon owner

When Anna won her award I couldn't have been happier and couldn't think of anyone more deserving. She's contributed so much to the nail industry so it came as no surprise that she was honoured on the night. Anna has worked so hard to get the SEAs recognised in the past few years and winning this award is her reward for how much she has helped us. Her support and passion is never ending and therefore as a community, we are so proud and this has encouraged us further. It will help us to keep doing what we're doing with confidence, to stand up and be proud of ourselves.

Rebecca Lo – hair & nail stylist

There's always some form of discrimination going on in this world and usually it's people like Anna who make these negative attitudes better. Anna completely deserves



Scratch editor Alex Fox and Anna Lee



Anna Lee and Samantha Sweet, co-founder of Sweet Squared

this award for what she's doing for the SEA nail community as changing people's attitudes is one of the most difficult things to do. It's inspiring and motivational to see the achievements Anna has made in such a short time. She has built confidence and trust in the SEA community in many ways.

As a part of the SEA community, I can see there is a lack of education due to language barriers that has caused the negative perceptions of SEA techs. This in turn affects me and my nail business directly, and this is why I think what Anna is doing is so beneficial - not just for SEA reputations and standards, but for the industry as a whole, because just knowing that you have been correctly educated to the highest level is of the utmost importance. **S**

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