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**Section:** Kent Sussex

**Page:** 1X

### **Teen volunteer wins national recognition**

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*Special to The News Journal Special*

*CR=Delmarva*

By NANCY E. LYNCH, Special to The News Journal

GEORGETOWN - With a third of her life already invested in selfless pursuits, teen Angelyn Tinsman earned an unexpected dividend last month when she was named National Outstanding Young Volunteer of the Year.

"The full effect of the award didn't sink in at first," Tinsman says of the title she received March 12 at the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary Joint National Community Service **Conference** in Washington, D.C.

"I didn't believe I was the only national winner," remembers the volunteer who, at 16, oversees a countywide benefit she established five years ago, argues persuasively before Teen Court and serves as president of Georgetown's Clover Knights **4-H** club.

Tinsman, along with brothers Christopher and Brian, is home-schooled by her mother, Colleen Hogan-Tinsman. She's in 10th grade and supplements her curriculum with Academic Challenge Program English and math classes at Delaware Technical & Community College in Georgetown.

Academic Challenge is an accelerated program for gifted Sussex County students in grades eight-12.

A competitive swimmer and ballet, tap and jazz dancer who finds time to be a lifeguard at the Howard T. Ennis School in Georgetown, she's set her sights on a career in family law.

Volunteering, she says, comes naturally. "My parents always encouraged me to go above and beyond, and I enjoy the good feelings that come from helping others." Her father, Jeffrey Tinsman, is a marine biologist with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

Angelyn Tinsman received the Governor's Youth Volunteer Award in 2000 and was a state finalist in the Prudential Spirit of Community competition the same year.

"Angie is a wonderful, wonderful human being and a unique young lady," says Michelle Rumble of Lewes, an Academic Challenge English instructor.

"I taught Angie two years ago, and we've stayed in touch," Rumble adds. "She's very caring and conscientious, and I'm not surprised she won this award."

Through Rumble, Tinsman learned about the VFW's Outstanding Volunteer contest. "The VFW sponsors wonderful contests, and I really push them. Kids need to be more aware of patriotism," Rumble says.

Her timing was perfect. "I was looking for scholarship money, and the opportunity presented itself," Tinsman recalls.

After preparing a list of her volunteer activities, gathering three letters of recommendation and penning a 250-word essay on volunteering, she submitted her entry to the VFW's Broadkill Auxiliary Post 6984 in Milton last fall.

"I heard I won the district and the state contests in January and the national contest in early February." At the March **conference**, she accepted a \$5,000 savings bond for her

win.

Tinsman's most proud of her volunteer effort for the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia. When she was 12, she canvassed the county for recyclable aluminum-can pull tabs to support the program, which provides temporary housing for families of children undergoing medical treatment.

She's still collecting today. Organizations she's gotten on board include fire departments, day-care centers, **4-H** clubs and the Sussex Correctional Institution. Tinsman takes a vanload of pull tabs to Philadelphia twice a year.

As an "attorney," the Georgetown native argues before Teen Court, a collaborative effort between Family Court and the Attorney General's office. "It's a fairly new court in Sussex County and tries teens for misdemeanors. It's a court of peers, except for the judge,"

Tinsman says.

Her strength, she says, is her focus. "When I establish a goal, I tend to keep with it until I've fulfilled it."

And that includes volunteering.

Photo Caption:

The News Journal/GARY EMEIGH

Home-schooler Angelyn Tinsman of Georgetown makes a difference in her community with her volunteer activities.

#### PROFILE

Angelyn Tinsman

Age: 16

Residence: Georgetown

Family: Father, Jeffrey and mother, Colleen Hogan-Tinsman brothers, Chris, 18, and Brian, 13, at home.

Position: VFW Ladies Auxiliary National Outstanding Young Volunteer of the Year

Education: Home schooling and Academic Challenge Program at Delaware Technical & Community College, Georgetown

Interests: **4-H** activities and competitive swimming