



JAMI GEE

Locals may recognize Jami as a talented guitarist whose music fills some of the finest restaurants and events in our region – but lately her biggest gig is that of advocate. Though representing the transgender community through her physical transformation was never her prerogative, Jami has taken to this new mission as she did to playing the guitar as a child: on her own, dedicated, with a fierce spirit and treating everyday as a gift. “Although the medical phase of my journey is relatively recent, the emotional journey began at six or seven years old. To feel that you are living the wrong life is a terrible thing to wish on anyone.” Doctor Melinda Lacerna of LA Plastic Surgery and Dermatology in Bradenton ensured that Jami’s medical needs were taken care of, while carefully listening to what mattered the most to her. As a public figure in our community, Jami has realized her potential for good. She travels throughout the region, from Tampa to Orlando, attending meetings, church gatherings and conferences to get involved with the transgender community. “Everywhere I went and played in Sarasota, people started to open up to me about their personal struggles. I know what it is like to lose everything to gain who you really are.” That honesty and bravery shines through Jami. While she is an unintended champion for acceptance and self-love, she lives each day with an appreciation for her new life that she only dreamed was possible. But every interaction isn’t easy. Serving as a shield and a voice for a cause that many do not understand certainly comes at a high emotional price. “Knowing that I was there for one person who needed to be encouraged and realize that they’re not alone is worth a whole year of hardships.” Through every performance, speaking engagement or guitar class she teaches, Jami shares her life, struggles and newfound joys to embrace the moment. “You don’t go into this expecting little moments to mean so much—but when I overheard a student tell his mother ‘Girls can rock, too’ I felt so accomplished!”