



PRESS RELEASE: 28 August 2013

Guernsey girl triumphs in world's oldest and largest essay competition

Twelve year old Guernsey teenager Tabitha Carr has been named the Junior Prize Winner of the Royal Commonwealth Society's 2013 Commonwealth Essay Competition.

Tabitha's winning entry, entitled *Is Change a Good Thing*, was chosen by a panel of Commonwealth judges from more than 6,500 Junior entries to take the top prize.

The theme of the competition was 'Opportunity through Enterprise' – this year's Commonwealth theme – and Tabitha's entry is set around a family enterprise in Botswana.

The judging panel said: *"Tabitha's entry was authentic, poignant and moving... she takes the reader on a journey into another world and leaves them wanting to read her story again and again."*

Tabith said: It is *"phenomenal to have won"*.

A pupil at Blanchelande College in Guernsey, Tabitha wrote her entry after collecting for a local charity prompted her to think about children in other parts of the world who are less fortunate than herself.

The perseverance of the main character reflects Tabitha's own determination. Being dyslexic Tabitha has found writing and reading quite difficult in the past and she now hopes that her win will inspire other children who find writing difficult.

As the Junior Prize Winner, Tabitha will be invited to attend a special award ceremony in London in November.

The Essay Competition was founded in 1883 and is the world's oldest and largest international schools' writing contest. For 2013 the competition was sponsored by Cambridge University Press and more than 11,000 entries from over 830 schools in 55 Commonwealth countries and territories were received across the Junior and Senior categories – a record for the competition.

Mike Lake, Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society said: *"As the Commonwealth Essay Competition celebrates its 130th anniversary I am delighted that the contest remains an important outlet for expression in the association. Having received a record number of entries this year, it is fantastic to see so many talented and bright young Commonwealth citizens expressing their opinions and engaging in the international community. I am grateful to our sponsors, Cambridge University Press, and to the participants for helping to make the contest the vibrant and exciting competition that it is today."*

Notes to Editors

Senior Prize winner: *"To boldy go": a letter to the lost girls*, Katherine McIndoe, New Zealand, age 19

http://www.thercs.org/youth/Filestore/Competitions_2013/Senior_Winner_2013_Essay.pdf

Senior Runner up: *The little girl in me*, Abby Wells, Canada, age 16

http://www.thercs.org/youth/Filestore/Competitions_2013/Senior_Runner-Up_2013_Essay.pdf

Junior Prize winner: *Is change a good thing*, Tabitha Carr, Guernsey, age 13

http://www.thercs.org/youth/Filestore/Competitions_2013/Junior_Winner_2013_Essay.pdf

Junior Runner up: *The clothes of sleeping giant mountain*, Catherine Yu, Hong Kong, age 9

http://www.thercs.org/youth/Filestore/Competitions_2013/Junior_Runner-Up_2013_Essay.pdf

The Royal Commonwealth Society is the oldest and largest civil society organisation devoted to the Commonwealth. Founded in 1868, it conducts a range of events, research and activities aimed at promoting international understanding. The RCS has a global membership and a presence in over 40 Commonwealth countries through a network of branches and Commonwealth societies. The RCS is a registered charity in England and Wales. (226748). www.thercs.org

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