

ST MARY'S STUDENT WINS NATIONAL 'BOARDER OF THE YEAR' COMPETITION



Lower Sixth (Year 12) student Lina A has won her age category (Year 12-13, or Lower - Upper Sixth) in the Hobson's International Boarder of the Year competition, organised by the publishers of The Hobson's UK Boarding Schools Guide.

The awards, which are in their fourth year, have been designed to celebrate diversity in the UK boarding sector and highlight the immense contribution international boarders make to UK education. Nearly 100 students, from 40 different nationalities, submitted entries in three categories: Year 8 and below, Year 9-11 and Year 12-13.

As part of her entry for the competition, Lina was asked to write a 1,250 word essay with the title: 'Today we see a great deal of misunderstanding between people of different cultures and religions. How do you think you will be able to encourage international cultural understanding, using the experiences you have had at your boarding school in the UK?'

Lina's essay was supported by a warm endorsement from St Mary's Headmistress, Miss Charlotte Avery, who said: "Friendly, mature and outgoing, Lina relates well to both her peers and members of the boarding staff and is ever keen to participate and volunteer for duties; the boarding house would not be the same without her. She has settled into the school academically and has impressed all her teachers with her diligence, enthusiasm and willingness to take on new challenges."

Unfortunately, Lina was not able to attend the awards ceremony at The Globe Theatre in London, where the winners were presented with their awards by BBC Radio 4's Libby Purves, OBE. She sat her first AS Level public examination on the same afternoon as the ceremony.

Hobson's spokesperson Dominic Moon, who organised the competition, said of Lina's entry: "This was the most fiercely contested category, so to make the finals is an achievement in itself, and then to win ever better. Lina can take great pride in her accomplishments. She is a great example of how to take advantage of the education on offer to her. The essay she submitted was superb and looking at her grades and activities, she is a credit to St. Mary's."