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GOVERNMENT AND TUC SUPPORT NASUWT'S 'ARTS & MINDS' AWARDS

Pupils from across the country have gathered at an awards ceremony in London to receive prizes for their entries in a national competition organised by teachers' union NASUWT to celebrate cultural diversity, identity and respect in Black History Month.

The competition, launched in October 2003, called on pupils to create poems, short stories, music, songs, artwork or photography based on the themes of identity, respect, diversity or citizenship. In total, there were 300 primary and 500 secondary school entries from six regions.

From the 12 regional winners, two pupils from schools in London and Derry were presented with £1,000 national prizes at the ceremony at the Carlton Tower Hotel in Knightsbridge by **Chris Keates**, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT, **Estelle Morris**, Minister for the Arts, and **Kay Carberry**, Assistant General Secretary of the TUC.

Congratulating the winners, **Chris Keates** said:

"The 'Arts & Minds' competition encouraged young people to think about the rich cultural diversity of the society in which they live. It helped them explore their own sense of identity whilst, at the same time, promoting creativity in a range of subjects.

"I warmly congratulate the winners for their creative entries which demonstrate some exceptional talents.

"NASUWT believes the 'Arts & Minds' competition will contribute towards a greater understanding of cultural diversity."

National winners Jessica Acquah from Kingsley Primary School in West Croydon created artwork entitled 'Not All is Black and White' while Roisin McNaney from Lumen Christi College in Derry, Northern Ireland produced an Aboriginal-style piece of art called 'The Creation of the Sun and the Moon'.

Their schools also won a £1,000 prize to go towards books, computer equipment or arts and crafts materials.