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Dina's freedom in speech wins over judges

A YOUNG North Paddington student has scooped top prize in a public speaking competition.

Dina El-Deeb, 15, of Paddington Academy, in Marylands Road, won the Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea regional final of Jack Petchey's Speak Out! Challenge.

Her chosen subject was 'freedom for our land', in which she raised awareness of the effect which the situation in the Middle East has on Palestinians.

She won a trophy and an iPod Touch, and a place in the grand final of the Speak Out! Challenge on July 9.

Dina said: "I really didn't expect to win. I can't believe I did so well and I'm so proud of myself."

Oli Tomlinson, principal of Paddington Academy, added: "Everyone at the academy is thrilled by Dina's success and we look forward to supporting her at the grand final next summer."

In second place was Ilhem Boulrhaoui, 15, of St George's RC School, in Lanark Road, Maida Vale, who spoke about 'motivation'.

Jamal Jules, 15, of Quintin Kynaston School, in Marlborough Hill, St John's Wood, came third with his subject of 'stereotypes'.

Run by SpeakersBank, part of the SpeakersTrust charity, Jack Petchey's Speak Out! Challenge is the biggest public speaking event of its kind in the world.

Ten schools in the boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea took part, and each pupil received a full day of training in public speaking and effective communication.

The strongest speaker from each school goes forward to the final.

