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Brave young souls speak their minds



■ **OUTSPOKEN:** Ealing mayor Barbara Yerolemou with Hannah Warsame, Anna Black and Haroon Shah

Photo by Michael Russell

BRAVE youngsters took to the stage to see who would represent the borough in a capital-wide public speaking competition.

The 15 pupils from schools across the borough faced the crowd gathered at Cardinal Wiseman RC School, in Greenford Road, Greenford, and gave three-minute speeches on a wide range of topics.

Subjects as diverse as animal testing, racism, Facebook and forgiveness were covered by the 14 and 15-year-olds on Tuesday evening. Each had only a day of training for the regional final of Jack

Petchey Speak Out Challenge, run by SpeakersBank.

The judges included acting borough commander Ian Jenkins, Julie Lewis, the town hall's assistant director for school improvement, Ealing councillors Patricia Walker, Phil Greenhead and Seema Kuma, and Ealing Gazette reporter Michael Russell.

Featherstone High School came out on top with its two representatives, Hannah Warsame and Haroon Shah, taking first and second prizes.

Anna Black, from The Ellen Wilkinson

School, was placed third.

All three won iPods for their efforts, with Hannah Warsame securing a place in the grand final with her talk entitled Don't Judge Me. She could win £2,000 for herself and £3,000 for her school at the Mermaid Theatre in central London in July.

The trophies were handed out by Ealing mayor Barbara Yerolemou, who said: "Every single participant deserves a huge medal for taking part, putting their head above the parapet, facing their peers and giving a speech. I know how difficult that is."

