



Funmi's story

Sixteen year old Funmi Abari, from Tottenham in London, took part in Jack Petchey's SpeakOut Challenge in 2008. It was an experience that set her off on an inspiring personal journey, and saw her make history by becoming the first member of the UK Youth Parliament to address the House of Commons.



In 2008, as part of a group of 30 pupils from the Hornsey School for Girls, Funmi took part in Jack Petchey's SpeakOut Challenge, where she learnt the structure of a perfect speech, how to make the most boring things sound interesting, and how to present herself as a confident young person. She won the regional final and went on to compete in the Grand Final.

As a result of that experience, Funmi went on to take part in the BBC2 series, 'The Speaker', and in January 2009 she was elected as the Member of the UK Youth Parliament for Haringey, having won a majority of the 3,500 votes cast by young people in the borough.

In 2009, her role as an MYP (Member of Youth Parliament) saw her lead the first Youth Parliament debate in the House of Commons.

Funmi says: "The SpeakOut Challenge has helped me to not only be a confident person and a positive role model for other young people, but also to be an individual thinker. It really opened my eyes to the world."

"After my address in the House of Commons, the Guardian newspaper suggested I could be the first ethnic Prime Minister of the UK. Before, if anyone had ever said anything like that to me I'd laugh my head off. But now in a strange way it seems almost possible."

"The saying 'anything is possible' is cheesy, but taking part in the SpeakOut Challenge has shown me no reason not to believe it."

For more information or to arrange an interview with Funmi, please contact Amazon PR on 020 7700 6952 or email jackpetcheyfoundation@amazonpr.co.uk

You can watch a video of Funmi's speech at the SpeakOut Challenge Grand Final at <http://www.speakoutchallenge.com/pages/granfinaltwo>