

# Urdd Eisteddfod's Learners Medal winner says speaking Welsh has transformed her life

## Megan Elias from Old Colwyn decided to learn Welsh after visiting the 2014 Eisteddfod

The winner of this year Urdd National Eisteddfod's Learners' Medal was all set to study finance at university.

But a visit to the [Urdd Eisteddfod](#) two years ago led to a complete career rethink for Megan Elias from Old Colwyn.

Megan had accepted an unconditional offer to study finance at Lancaster University but after the visit to the 2014 Eisteddfod was persuaded to apply to study Welsh at [Bangor University](#) .

After being presented with the medal during a special ceremony at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Flint, Megan said: "The ability to speak Welsh has transformed my life.

### Read: [Gwynedd student wins the Drama Medal at the Urdd Eisteddfod](#)

"I use the language every day, and a door has opened to whole new world which has changed my life in a positive way."

As well as volunteering with the Urdd, Megan has also been an ambassador for learning Welsh at the Urdd centre, Glan-llyn and at her former secondary school, [Ysgol Eirias in Colwyn Bay](#) .

She added: "Since learning Welsh and embracing the culture I've had so many opportunities I wouldn't have had if I hadn't started learning the language"



Megan Elias from Old Colwyn won the Learners Medal

Urdd Eisteddfod officials have revamped the Learners' Medal competition this year.

For the first time the competition focused on communicating in Welsh rather than writing an essay and the age for competing has been extended to 19 to 25.

**Read: [Flintshire's 's voice is often ignored' says Urdd Eisteddfod president](#)**

[Flintshire executive committee chairman Jeremy Griffiths](#) , a Welsh learner himself, said 14 young people registered with officials and were invited to a day of conversations and other activities at the Urdd's Glanllyn residential centre a few weeks ago.

“The three who have come to the top were invited to the Flintshire Urdd Eisteddfod where during the morning they were asked to undertake various tasks including working in the Welcome Pavilion, speaking at the press conference and being interviewed by the press.”



Megan Elias from Old Colwyn, Bradley Jones from Llandudno and Hannah Eve Cook from Bethesda

Megan was joined in the final contest by Hannah Eve Cook, a pupil at Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen, Bethesda and Bradley Jones, a sixth former at Ysgol John Bright, Llandudno.

Adjudicator Eirian Conlon said: “We feel the competition has been transformed since the changes have been made to its structure, with the emphasis shifted from the written word to the verbal, and the ability to converse in Welsh freely and naturally judged. Hannah, Megan and Bradley have proved it is possible to learn Welsh to a very high standard and enjoy the opportunities two languages bring.

“We are confident the three of them will inspire other young people that do not speak Welsh yet, to follow their example.”