

BY KAKANDE YASIN

Modesty, openness, humbleness and truthfulness are some of the key tactics given to Toronto Youth Force (TYF) members to help them raise their voices in the global war against AIDS. Discussing a theme entitled “Advocating for TYF: What does this mean? At the Faculty of Medicine university of Toronto in the AIDS pre-conference, a group of youth headed by Beth pellettieri and Joya Banerjee taught the best methods of having their messages across and the best way of approaching policy makers and likely providers of logistical support.

“In advocating for TYF, it is important for one to set goals, demands and consultation, estimate what you have and what you need and the people you wish to work with,” said Beth one of the mobilisers.

She also urged her fellow youth to identify the possibly generous people who can provide logistics for their cause.

In a rehearsal of how the youth could approach most people at the conference, youth came out with working points that ought to commit to when they meet important people at the conference.

The youth were urged to always start by thanking the individual they are meeting for the first time to share their ideas. They were also urged to tell the truth as there is no way one can lose credibility than to give a false and misleading information.

They were also urged to make their points quickly as there could not be enough time in the meeting and also do a follow up to see if the person lived to his commitment.

Nasamba Christine working for straight talk in Uganda who also happened to participate in the conference said advocacy at the times is mostly to make drugs accessible to the people living with HIV AIDS.

“It is good news that drugs have been found that can slow down the damage and prolong lives of people living with HIV AIDS. The problem at present is that these drugs are so expensive and few positive people can access them,” she said.

The biggest challenge of youth at present is to make the policy makers prioritise lives of people for profits and bring the prices of these drugs down.

“I believe the world has enough resources to do this but it's only still lacking the will. If the youth could put this on their agenda of advocacy AIDS will never be a threat again,” she added.