



The Grand Master cuts the ribbon to launch the new project; The apartment before and after transformation; Volunteers for the GIOIA project

Joy and inclusion

Ambassador Zanardi Landi heads up a new programme launching in central Rome

In a sunny apartment in a quiet quarter of Rome, a small group of young people with disabilities are busy with their first training sessions in a course in tourism hospitality. The course, which will run over 2-3 years, will give them professional skills to work in the tourism/hotel sector. The group are cheerful, and purposeful, as they go about learning skills that will enable them to find gainful employment and become self-reliant. Their training venue is one of the four apartments assigned to this project and owned by the Order; the planned renovations for the interiors will ensure that there is wheelchair access, and that the apartments will be equipped for young disabled to live and study there.

A training model to teach employable skills to disabled young

The project – *Progetto Gioia* (JOY in English and an acronym for Youth Commitment Employment Inclusion Hospitality) – is the inspiration of the Order of Malta’s Ambassador to the Holy See, HE Antonio Zanardi Landi and Sabina, his wife. The Ambassador explains:

“Only 47 % of those with disabilities can find employment in Italy, and accommodation for young disabled is hard to find. In Rome it is a barrier to independence for frail young people. So by identifying these apartments, restoring them, and working together with the Order’s CISOM volunteers and the Diversa Arte Social Cooperative,

who are experts in working to train young disabled, we aim for the project to become a model, a training hub to enable these eager young people to work in the tourism industry, and be independent.”

FIND OUT MORE

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