

Taking the initiative...for the environment!

Other students might say that they have been lucky to go on a foreign exchange to Poland but what they do not know is the hard work and initiatives the duo Kurt and Lenard have taken throughout these four years while at secondary school....all in the name of the environment.



It all started in Form II when Lenard saw a poster about the annual school Exhibition on 'The Cottonera'. This sparked an idea in Lenard's mind. He quickly contacted his friend Kurt and told him about the idea of making a documentary video. Considering Lenard's reporting capabilities and Kurt's ability in filmmaking the short documentary proved to be a hit featuring the beauty of 'The Three Cities'. People visiting the exhibition showed great appreciation of what they had done.

Two teachers were particularly enthusiastic and so encouraged them to participate in other initiatives by using their reporting skills especially to raise awareness on current environmental issues. These teachers assisted Kurt and Lenard to take part in different exhibitions, competitions and activities both in and out of school. Lenard was more on the writing part making scripts and speaking publicly while Kurt was on the visual side of things that is on filming and shooting photos.

Time passed by and exciting times came by when they were invited to speak and show their work in Poland, as one of the participating countries together with Romania, in the 'Forests of the World' project organized by the NGO 'KOPIN'.

This exchange was a great experience and helped both Kurt and Lenard to improve their filmmaking and reporting skills. Speaking and working with foreigners from other countries also helped them to improve their English.

When they returned from the exchange visit they were told that they had won the photo story competition related to the project. They had focused on creating awareness that wooden items



as furniture, doors, boats, balconies can be restored and not destroyed. By obtaining the first prize the school of Kurt and Lenard was awarded 500 Euro to be spent on educational resources.

By scholastic year 2015 Kurt and Lenard were in Form V. During November of this year Malta hosted the CHOGM. The school was invited to send student representatives to participate in the People's Forum event during which they could ask questions to the three candidates running for the post of Commonwealth Secretary General. The amazing thing was that this debate was being held in the new House of Parliament. The teachers

chose Kurt and Lenard for the task and Daniel a junior student. This was another great opportunity for the students...an opportunity just too good to miss even if it was held after school hours! They prepared several environmental questions to ask. As they were the youngest people asking



questions after the debate many people came to congratulate the students for having the courage to speak their mind in front of so many people, coming from across the Commonwealth countries, in the Maltese Parliament. Truly, an experience that they will treasure throughout their lives!

Down the road both Lenard and Kurt in fact remark that their secondary education has been a great adventure for them and that the exciting moments came about for they took their first initiative. Now they have become active 'Young Reporters for the Environment'. This article is meant to encourage other junior students to overcome their initial shyness and take the plunge by taking the initiative and speaking their mind in favour of the environment. This can be done through the various school projects, as that of YRE, that may come their way.