

TUI Junior Academy Curacao: Educating Green Teachers for the future generations

- TUI Care Foundation and Greenkidz partner on Curacao to educate 120 new-generation teachers on how to inspire and motivate their students to reduce, reuse and recycle
- Teachers will work in primary public schools, teaching local children and working alongside class teachers

Berlin, 12 June 2019. *The TUI Junior Academy Curacao is an educational programme which trains future teachers on environmental issues, recycling and sustainability on the Caribbean island of Curacao. The initiative by TUI Care Foundation and Greenkidz will train 120 future teachers from the University of Curacao on how to educate, inspire and motivate primary school children to take better care of their environment.*

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At the end of the program, the trainees will undertake internships in local primary schools. This will extend the project to an additional 63 teachers on the island, who will welcome the trainees as intern teachers into their classes and observe them as they teach their environmental education programmes in an interactive and exploratory way. The trainee teachers will directly reach around 2,000 children in local schools. To further strengthen awareness among communities on Curacao, the teaching materials developed during the project will be freely accessible for all 50 primary schools on Curacao, allowing 8,000 schoolchildren in total to benefit from innovative environmental education tools.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the TUI Care Foundation, explains: "Together we are working towards greener, cleaner and healthier islands. Our aim is to inspire the youth of Curacao to become agents of change for their own communities. We cannot conceive a sustainable future without actively involving the next generation and they cannot be fully inspired and motivated if we do not include their teachers in this process."

Maya Mathias, co-founder of GreenKidz, explains: "By sharing our GreenKidz ideas and educational programs with our youth and with the next generation of teachers, we want to contribute to a sustainable, green mentality change on Curacao based on our motto: Changing the mindset of generations and the teachers that teach them."

The Dutch Caribbean islands attract many tourists to their tropical beaches, beautiful sea and swaying palms. But when travelling around the islands, visitors can also spot rubbish by the roadside, on the beaches and in the sea. The absence of an effective waste recycling system and lack of education about environmental awareness means that pollution has become a growing challenge for the islands.

Educating future generations is a core element of the TUI Care Foundation's strategy, which focuses on working together with local communities to protect the natural

environment in tourism destinations. This new initiative in Curacao builds on the success of the past cooperation between TUI Care Foundation and Greenkidz. Together, both organisations developed the “Kids for a cleaner Curacao” initiative, implementing an educational recycling program in the island’s primary schools.

These initiatives play a crucial role in changing the mind-set of the younger generation, encouraging pro-environmental attitudes, interests and behaviours amongst young people. This is especially important for Curacao where, in addition to the waste generated by the many international visitors to the island, the island’s 160,000 inhabitants produce approximately 3.7 kilograms of waste per person each day. With no adequate system of solid waste collection, this results in many aluminium cans, plastic bags and other waste ending up on the streets and ultimately in the sea. Without an effective recycling system or regulations in place for solid waste management, up to 95% of the rubbish collected was previously ending up in a landfill or in the streets. To deal with this, recycling stations have now been placed around the island to collect and separate the waste. With limited land for landfill; reducing, reusing and recycling becomes a crucial or even the only way to limit the impact of waste effectively.

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By implementing a Plastic & Recycling program in the fixed curriculum for trainee primary schoolteachers at the Teachers College for Elementary Education (LOFO) at the University of Curacao, second-year students will follow an environmental program for one semester which includes excursions, guest lectures from experts, the chance to enrich educational materials with their own ideas and the opportunity to learn about the important link between environment, a clean island and a positive economic and touristic development.

About TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects, which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving communities all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore 100% of the donations go to destination programmes with all administration costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world’s leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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