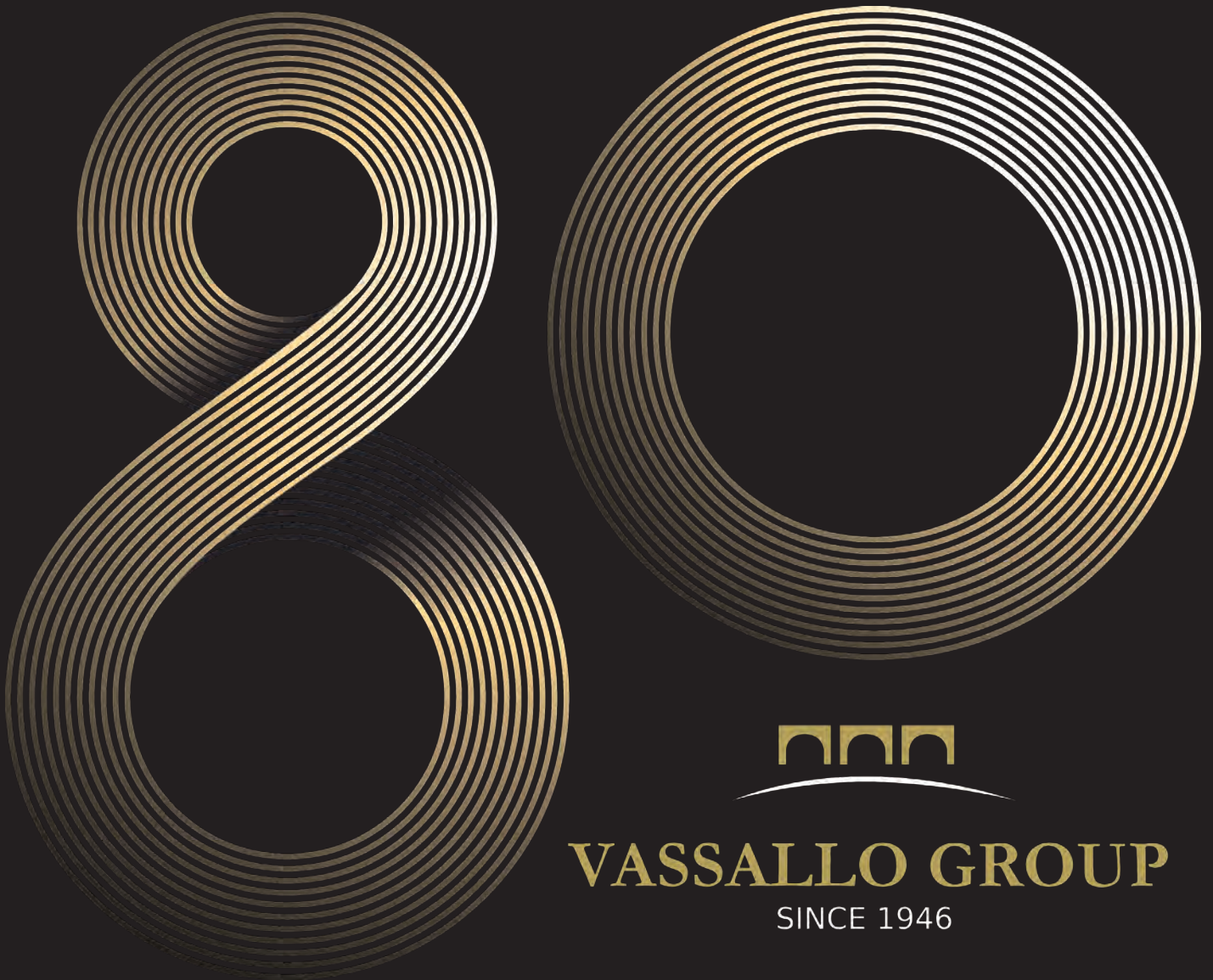
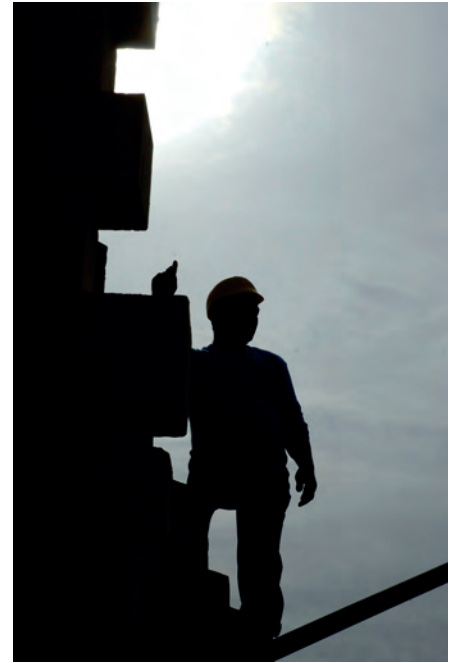


ARKATI

THE VASSALLO GROUP PUBLICATION 2025



**PIONEERING PROGRESS.
CONNECTING GENERATIONS**



TRADITION. INNOVATION. DIVERSITY.

Honouring our past while building a future shaped by progress, people and purpose.

| CONSTRUCTION | HEALTHCARE | PROPERTY MANAGEMENT | HOSPITALITY | BESPOKE FURNITURE | ENERGY | EDUCATION

 www.vassallogroupmalta.com

 Vassallo Group Malta




VASSALLO GROUP
SINCE 1946

IN THIS ISSUE

ARKATI

DECEMBER 2025

- 4** Chairperson's message – Natalie Briffa Farrugia
- 6** Group CEO's message – Pio Vassallo
- 8** Built on vision, strengthened by trust
- 10** Driving the family's ethos to leave a mark that matters – Chris Vassallo
- 12** 'We dream, we create' – Ruben Vassallo
- 14** Humility in service, boldness in vision – Charlene Vella Vassallo
- 16** Builders of a legacy
- 18** A legacy in motion – Stephen Borg
- 20** Built on passion, driven by innovation, defined by people – Jonathan Buttigieg
- 22** Driving a 'transformative' future in energy, water and technology – Alex Tranter
- 24** Shaping Malta's future through education and sport – Charlo Bonnici
- 26** CareMalta is shaping the next generation of care – James Sciriha
- 28** 'As a Group we can turn limitations into opportunities' – Noel Borg
- 30** Being an 'Extended Family' is not just a slogan – Janet Silvio
- 32** 'Everything starts with a dream' – Nazzareno Vassallo
- 34** Company news
- 40** The Arkati Foundation Financial Statements
- 42** Vassallo Group's human touch keeps pace with change – Lee Xuereb
- 43** Building a digital, sustainable future – Carlo Aquilina
- 44** Shine Awards
- 46** Service Awards
- 48** Appointments & Promotions
- 50** Celebrating outstanding contribution
- 52** The supervisors who help others shine
- 54** Leading with heart

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this year's edition of *Arkati* Magazine, where we revisit our roots, honour those who shaped our journey, and look ahead to the next chapter of the Vassallo Group story.

Our cover highlights a remarkable milestone: in 2026, the Group celebrates 80 years; an anniversary that is more than a number. It is a testament to our heritage, resilience, and evolution.

Throughout these pages, we pay tribute to the individuals who have served as the Group's "guardians of a legacy", upholding the values that have guided us since the very beginning. The leadership principles passed down from our founder Nazzareno Vassallo – humility, respect, and a deep sense of family – remain embedded in every corner of the organisation. Eight decades on, the Vassallo Group story continues to be written with the same spirit.

In this edition, our Chairperson, Group CEO, and shareholders share personal reflections and early memories that shaped their connection to the Group. We also feature insights from our CEOs across the Group's diverse sectors – from construction, where Vassallo Builders, the founding company, marks its own 80-year anniversary, to the expanding healthcare sector, which this year saw the opening of Dar Sant'Anna in Senglea, a new addition to the HILA family.

Education remains another pillar of growth, with Campus Hub thriving and the Mediterranean College of Sport reaching new milestones, including the introduction of Years 1 and 2 in its Primary School. Meanwhile, Powerezi continues its dynamic evolution, expanding beyond energy into innovative water solutions and smart technologies for a more sustainable future. We also celebrate the return of the Shine Awards, recognising outstanding team members whose dedication enriches our community.

As we close 2025 and step into a landmark year, we invite you to enjoy this special edition of *Arkati*. We wish all our readers a joyful Christmas and a prosperous New Year filled with hope, love, and good health.

The Editorial Team

ON THE COVER

Vassallo Group showcases the logo marking its 80 anniversary.

EDITORIAL TEAM: Natalie Briffa Farrugia, Pio Vassallo, Carlo Aquilina, Maria Christine Pillow

GENERAL COORDINATION: Maria Christine Pillow **EDITORIAL CONTENT COORDINATION:** Media Insiders

INTERVIEWS: Adriana Bishop, Coryse Borg, Emma Borg, and Ariadne Massa

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION: Joseph Schembri **PHOTOGRAPHY:** iCam Studios, Bernard Polidano **PRINTING:** Print It

A legacy that connects generations

NATALIE BRIFFA FARRUGIA

CHAIRPERSON, VASSALLO GROUP

One day, so the story goes, a young Vassallo family was driving towards Burmarrad in a blue Mazda. One of the children spotted a building with the word *GIRNA* written across it and asked what it meant.

“It’s a *kamra f’ghalqa* (a room in a field),” replied their father, who proceeded to share a lesson that would become a guiding principle for generations of Vassallos.

“As my grandfather used to say, if you have Lm100 buy property, even if it’s just a room in a field. When you pass by, you can say it belongs to you. On the other hand, if you have Lm100 and you put them in the bank, you can’t say you own the bank when you pass by.”

This story has become part of Vassallo family lore. For Natalie Briffa Farrugia, Chairperson of Vassallo Group, it planted the first seed of the family’s lifelong appreciation for property, a passion that remains central to the business today. From a “*kamra f’ghalqa*” the Group today boasts an asset base of more than €460 million.

Another family story, often told by her father and Group founder Nazzareno Vassallo, is a lesson about the value of money.

As a boy, Nazzareno’s class was invited to join a piggy-bank scheme at school. When he asked his mother for some coins, she

explained she had none to spare as she had 11 other children to feed. The next day, he was the only child with an empty piggy bank. That moment spurred him to take on a summer job to earn his own money. And the rest is history.

These anecdotes reflect the principles on which the business was built – prudence, hard work, and ownership.

“If you look at the Group’s DNA, with its very diverse portfolio, our core essence is property,” Natalie says. “That *GIRNA* has grown into a legacy and is still the backbone of all our investment decisions.”

Every property developed by the Group, she explains, is built “to perfection and with pride”.

“Whatever the service, we take as much pride in the building, as in the operation it houses,” she adds.

That respect for architecture and craftsmanship also shaped the Vassallo family home. When Natalie was born, the family lived in *Dar Ghalija* before moving to *Ionica* in Mosta, a house distinguished by its Ionic columns and intricate stonework.

“The workmen spent so much time working on the house that they became an extension of our family,” Natalie recalls. “My mother would cook for them while they worked with great care and skill.”

‘It’s vital for the business to continue flourishing, and for us to keep dreaming of new perspectives’

That appreciation for people remains deeply ingrained in the business, now home to an increasingly international workforce counting 2,096 people from 55 countries. Each and every employee is important, as every staff member is a complete individual.

Some employees have been with the company for decades, often joined by their relatives.

“The family spirit still exists within the Group,” Natalie says. “We connect deeply to this value because that’s how we were brought up; it’s what formed us.”

As the eldest of five siblings, she naturally assumed responsibility early on, always looking out for others. Compassion, she says, runs in the family.

“Empathy and generosity came from my mother’s side, especially my grandmother, who always helped others, even cooking for a neighbour who was a single mother with seven children. If you gave her something, she’d immediately think of who else might need it more.”

Natalie sees her role as chairperson as that of a “bridge”, connecting the past with the future and steering the Group towards new horizons.

The Group has already evolved beyond its traditional property-ownership model, finding success with long-term lease projects, such as Campus Hub and the Mediterranean College of Sports.

“These two projects show we can embrace business models where it makes more sense not to own the property.”

Achieving positive results from the Group’s traditional business pillars remains as important as the increasingly significant contributions from its newer ventures, possibly exceeding expectations. By the end of this year, the Group is projecting €98 million in aggregated revenue, reflecting the solid performance of its diversified portfolio.

Natalie points out that fostering environmental stewardship and aligning the business to global sustainability standards “remain a priority”.

“The scale of our operations and the significant revenue they generate, amplifies our responsibility. In a global climate where ESG principles are increasingly challenged, we believe that genuine progress must be driven by individual and corporate conscience towards the environment. Hope for a better world comes from personal actions and engagement. It’s up to us to save the world for tomorrow; it’s up to you and me.”

She quotes the late environmentalist Jane Goodall who famously said: “You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you.”

These inspiring words resonate with Natalie and guide her leadership of this 80-year-old family legacy as it looks to the next 80 years and beyond.

“Every action makes a difference, and you must decide what kind of difference you want to make,” she insists.

Preparing the next generation through succession planning and good governance remains her top priority.

“We need to not only ensure the present succession, but also the next,” she says. “It’s vital for the business to continue flourishing, and for us to keep dreaming of new perspectives.” ■



Describe the Group’s next decade in one word: Authentic.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

If the Group continues to be authentic, it will always do the right thing.

Early values pave the way for an enduring legacy

PIO VASSALLO

GROUP CEO, VASSALLO GROUP



Describe the Group's next decade in one word: Evolution.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

I would love to leave behind a family business that remains guided by our founding values, using business as a force for the common good, while future-proofing our business to ensure a smooth, clear and sustainable succession for generations to come.



When Pio Vassallo describes his role as CEO of Vassallo Group, his words are rooted not in hierarchy, but in legacy.

“I see myself as a servant leader,” he explains. “I try to persuade and empower, rather than enforce. I want people to come to me for advice... and that is how you build trust, through honesty and openness.”

That philosophy has deep roots. Founded in 1946 by his grandfather Piju, whom Pio was named after, Vassallo Group has grown from a construction company into one of Malta’s most diverse and respected enterprises, spanning real estate, hospitality, healthcare, education, and catering.

Yet, despite its size and scope, the spirit of family remains at its heart.

“I was literally brought up in the business,” Pio recalls with a smile. “As children, we would visit sites with my grandfather, known affectionately even by employees as ‘Nannu Piju’. The people in the office and on site were treated like family. Respecting one another was always very important.”

Those early lessons instilled in him a lifelong appreciation for hard work and responsibility. “I did different jobs from around the age of 10, helping out in the office, spending time in the design department, and learning on site. The site teaches you a lot about dealing with people and difficult situations.”

He also remembers with fondness the family summers at the Vassallo Holiday Flats in Ghadira.

“We lived on the ground floor, and we were told not to make too much noise, or we would disturb the guests. It was the first experience in tourism for me and my siblings,” he recounts.

“Then came the Bugibba Holiday Complex in 1982, which we still own today. I can still recall watching the first guests arrive after construction... it’s the same feeling I get to this day when tourists check into our hotels.”

Of course, there were challenging decisions, such as when his father, Nazzareno, considered selling the complex. “We were devastated when we heard,” Pio admits. “But in the end, it never happened and we still own it today.”

They also owned one of the very first pizzerias in Malta: *Tas-Sienja*. “I remember my father walking up to the head waiter and asking how many covers there were that day,” he recalls. “It was my first real exposure to key performance indicators. I also recall him signing the bill afterwards, reminding us that nothing comes for free, even if you own the business.”

The Vassallo family’s entrepreneurial spirit continued to evolve, with ventures that marked milestones not just for the Group, but for Malta’s economy. One very important milestone in the early 1990s was when his father purchased the land on which Casa Arkati was eventually built.

“When the project was completed, I was responsible for carrying out the ‘snag list’. This entails going from room to room, checking every detail, to ensure nothing was missing. I still remember the excitement of welcoming the very first elderly residents. The respect shown towards them reminded me of the way we were taught to respect our own grandparents.”

In the early 1990s, his entrepreneurial father formed Novità, a consortium of Maltese companies that decided to collaborate instead of competing to stand stronger against international players.

“I remember the day they were completing the tender for the Malta International Airport project; the entire team worked through the night at the office, and I brought them food to keep them going,” he reminisces.

Pio recalls the day he and his siblings became shareholders at the age of 18, a moment that reinforced the weight of responsibility that comes with legacy.

His parents were adamant that their children had to study before joining the family business.

“Before going to university, I spent almost two years working on different sites, gaining hands-on experience and learning the practical side of the industry from the ground up. I then joined full-time in 1999 after completing my university degree,” he explains.

His first major assignment was the restoration of the Malta Stock Exchange. “I worked alongside John Schranz for many years, and when he left, I had to dive into the deep end. It was a defining period for me.”

By 2004, Pio had become Group CEO, while still managing the construction arm until 2018, when Jonathan Buttigieg took over, allowing him to focus on being Group CEO full-time.

“I have seen the Group develop from strength to strength. We diversified, but our purpose remains clear... to leave a positive impact on society.”

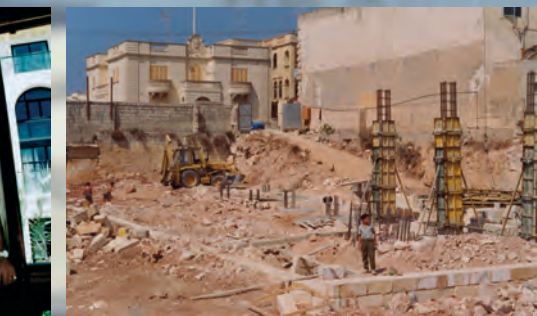
That mission is evident across Vassallo Group’s recent ventures, including in education, with the Mediterranean College of Sport combining athletic and academic excellence to nurture Malta’s next generation of student-athletes.

“Preparing for the next generation is one of my biggest responsibilities,” he adds. “Ensuring a smooth, clear, and sustainable succession is vital. I want to leave behind a family business that remains guided by our founding values, using business as a force for the common good. You are a guardian of the business, and you owe that to the next generation.”

It is a vision that reflects the values handed down from his grandfather: hard work, respect, humility, and service.

“A family business has many challenges,” Pio admits. “This is something you have to work on every day... if you keep the common good at the heart of every decision, success will follow.” ■

‘You are a guardian of the business, and you owe that to the next generation’



Built on vision, strengthened by trust

The vision of Nazzareno Vassallo, founder of Vassallo Group, has been instrumental in cementing trust and securing loyalty from those who worked alongside him. Arkati speaks with three individuals whose dedication and leadership played an important role in the Group's continued growth.



Tonio Depasquale

TONIO DEPASQUALE

For nearly four decades, Tonio Depasquale built a distinguished career in banking, with Vassallo Group among his clients. This professional relationship flourished when he retired in 2012 and was invited to join the company as an independent non-executive director.

Although he now contributes from a distance, Tonio continues to closely observe the Group's steady growth.

"I saw the Group achieve organic growth, while diversifying into various sectors of the economy, strengthening their investments and seeing them grow steadily," he said.

He attributes the company's resilience to its ability to take "calculated and well-researched risks". To illustrate this, he points to two ventures in particular, the Mediterranean College of Sport and Campus Hub.

"Opening MCS was in itself a risky venture, but Campus Hub was entering entirely new ground," he said.

"There was no business like it locally, so it was a big challenge. From a business point of view, it was quite a risk as we didn't have any model to follow. It's not like opening a hotel," he said.

Tonio speaks highly of the Group's leadership team and the new generation driving the company forward.

"They are intelligent, disciplined risk-takers... committed young people who are prepared to work hard, eager to

learn, and willing to consult before making decisions," he said.

Looking ahead, Tonio is excited to see where Vassallo Group will expand next, confident that its careful approach to growth and willingness to embrace calculated challenges will continue to guide its success.

ALDO VELLA

Fresh out of university, a 25-year-old Aldo Vella embarked on a long career with Vassallo Group, a professional relationship that has now spanned more than five decades. He first joined the company as its lawyer, before taking on the role of legal advisor and director.

"I was there from the first day of my career," Aldo recalled. "I graduated and, as luck would have it, started with Vassallo Group almost immediately."

The opportunity arose in the early 1970s, when a vacancy opened up, and Aldo was recommended for the role. He seized the opportunity, setting in motion a career that would grow alongside the company itself.

During his 50 years with Vassallo Group, Aldo witnessed its evolution from Vassallo Builders to a diverse enterprise spanning elderly care, hospitality, joinery, and beyond.



Aldo Vella



Edgar Rossignaud

“The key to making bold decisions is unity within the company,” he explained. “To ensure the company thrives for another 80 years, the people at its core must remain united.”

For Aldo, his connection to Vassallo Group has transcended the professional, evolving into a deep personal friendship. At 78, he considers Zaren (as Nazzareno Vassallo is fondly referred to), his long-time colleague, and one of his closest friends.

“The working relationship has transformed into a beautiful friendship,” he said, adding that to this day they continue to travel and socialise regularly.

As the next generation of the Vassallo family takes the helm, Aldo takes pride in seeing his son Massimo providing legal counsel to the Group, continuing the family’s long-standing connection to a company.

EDGAR ROSSIGNAUD

Edgar Rossignaud describes himself as fortunate to have spent the first half of his career working with “Malta’s best architect”, Richard England, and the second half with one of Malta’s “best contractor”, Vassallo Group.

“I had two amazing jobs in my life. One was with the best architect and one was with the best contractor,” he said.

After 16 years in architectural practice, Edgar joined Vassallo Group on June 1, 1988, a date he remembers well, as it also coincides with his wedding anniversary.

“I will never forget it. My wife still complains that I didn’t skip work for it. I made sure not to make that mistake again,” he joked.

Between 1988 and 2006, Edgar served as Group architect and later as partner and CEO of Building Consultancy Services Ltd, leading some of Malta’s most significant developments.

His portfolio includes landmarks such as Baystreet, the Malta International Airport, and the original Casa Arkati, Malta’s first purpose-built residential home for the elderly.

Looking back, Edgar takes great satisfaction in knowing his work helped shape the country’s skyline and community spaces. “Those buildings aren’t just projects,” he reflected. “They’re part of Malta’s story and I’m proud to have had a hand in building it.”

“You need to keep in mind, there were no manuals or standards for us to go by, so we had to make our own. We had to design everything from scratch, and I can proudly say our projects are still there,” he reflected.

He credits his success to his collaborative relationship with Nazzareno Vassallo, who always listened and supported his ideas. Looking back, Edgar is proud of the legacy he helped create and the projects that continue to define Malta’s architectural and construction landscape. ■

Driving the family's ethos to leave a mark that matters

CHRISTIAN VASSALLO

CEO, CAMPUS HUB



*“The past has shaped
not only who I am
today but also the
future I hope to build
for my family”*



When Christian Vassallo speaks about Vassallo Group, his words carry the warmth of legacy and the focus of leadership.

“Vassallo Group has always been more than a business to me; it’s a living story of people, purpose, and perseverance,” he says.

“I remember visiting building sites with my father as a child and seeing how every building carried a sense of responsibility, not just to deliver, but to leave a mark that mattered. That same spirit continues to guide us today.”

Christian also vividly remembers his father taking him to see the construction of Malta International Airport, which at the time was the largest project ever undertaken on the island, built by Novità, of which Vassallo Group was a part.

“He asked me to run from one side of the departures lounge to the other to help me understand the scale of what we were building as a nation,” he reminisces.

Those formative experiences instilled in him not only an appreciation for the built environment, but also a sense of duty towards the people behind every project and a realisation that small decisions at the planning stage can ripple into people’s daily routines.

Growing up surrounded by conversations about integrity, quality, and care, Christian absorbed the idea that every structure carries a social responsibility. The Group’s projects were about creating places that enhanced people’s lives; a principle that continues to guide his own work today.

The belief that buildings should do more than simply exist sits at the heart of every Vassallo Group project. But according to Christian, a project’s real success lies in its soul.

“Whether in our care homes, schools, or new ventures like Campus Hub, the heartbeat of the Group remains the same: a deep belief that what we build must improve lives,” Christian says.

Beyond the architectural achievements, projects carried out by the Vassallo Group carry something deeper: a continuation of the Vassallo family ethos.

For Christian, of course, that ethos was formed early. The memory of visiting construction sites still drives him today, a reminder that every project is, at its core, a promise.

Watching his father engage with employees, clients, and suppliers taught him that leadership is most effective when grounded in humility and respect. It is all about responsibility to the people who will live, learn, and grow there.

This sense of duty has guided Christian through every stage, from concept to realisation. The sense of belonging he felt as a child within the Group continues to drive his vision for what it can become.

His memories of those early days – of teamwork and shared achievement – are now being translated into projects that embody progress without losing sight of purpose. What begins as an ambitious idea grows into a thriving destination that defies expectations.

“Today, as CEO of Campus Hub, I see that same pioneering spirit come to life in new ways; blending education, hospitality, and innovation into one integrated destination. For me, Vassallo Group is not only about what we build, but why we build: to create lasting value for people and for Malta,” he says.

Looking ahead, of course, the Vassallo Group’s story is still being written. For now, Christian remains focused on maintaining momentum, deepening Campus Hub’s impact and continuing the legacy of those who came before him. His motivation comes from his family, his team, and the young people who bring the place to life.

“The past has shaped not only who I am today but also the future I hope to build for my family,” he admits. “As a father of five, that legacy feels deeply personal. I want my children to grow up with the same sense of pride and purpose, to know they, too, can carry this story forward, perhaps on a global scale.”

His vision is not limited to the company’s continued success, but to ensuring that the legacy of care, courage, and innovation endures for generations to come.

Looking ahead, Chris sees the next chapter of the Group’s journey as one of transformation guided by continuity.

The focus remains on expanding with purpose: identifying opportunities that align with the Group’s ethical foundations and contribute to Malta’s long-term growth. That means remaining agile enough to evolve, while staying true to the values that have sustained the business since its inception.

One thing remains constant: the belief that every foundation laid today carries the potential to shape tomorrow, not just for the company, but for the people and families it touches along the way. ■

Describe the Group’s next decade in one word:
Transformative.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

A culture that blends courage with compassion, where innovation always serves humanity.



‘We dream, we create’

RUBEN VASSALLO

CEO, VASSALLO GROUP REALTY

There is an old saying that goes, “find a job you enjoy doing and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

For Ruben Vassallo, CEO of Vassallo Group Realty and the fourth of the Vassallo siblings, working in the family business doesn’t feel like work at all.

“When you’re born into a family business, it never really feels like work,” he says, recalling his close bond with his father, Nazzareno, and how he continues to follow in his footsteps. “I don’t do anything without my father’s blessing.”

Ten years younger than first-born Natalie and the youngest of the boys, Ruben was, and still is, “very close” to his father. “I was always the kid running around with my father,” he smiles.

Saturdays were special. Those were the days when his father would take him around construction sites. Those weekend excursions sparked a lifelong passion for the business.

“It was fun and exciting. For me it was like play. Children use toy blocks, but my father was building real buildings. That’s where I got my love for this job,” he recalls.

In the Vassallo household, work never really stopped. Even Sundays were spent around workmen helping on Nazzareno’s personal projects. “I grew up running around their feet, ‘helping’ them. I knew all the workers and their families. That’s where the love for the job deepened.”

That creativity and curiosity rubbed off on Ruben. “My father is very creative. He was always changing plans, sketching ideas on paper or walls; brainstorming.”

Many of their best ideas still come on quiet weekends, driving around sites and discussing new projects over coffee. “I’m the architect; my father’s the businessman. The real feeling of a project is formed in those quiet moments.”

For Ruben, the Group has always been about “creativity, dreams, and ideas”.

“At heart, we dream and we create,” he says. “Every project must be completed in time, and at the right time”; another of his father’s lessons that still guides him today.

Despite their different personalities, the Vassallo siblings share one defining family trait that runs through the Group’s DNA: respect for



Describe the Group's next decade in one word:
Exciting.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind? I'd like to be part of a strong group that continues to serve the country, for the good of the people; a group with a social conscience.



people. And it all comes with passion. "We always put our heart into whatever we do. We're passionate people, and we're passionate about our work."

When Vassallo Group Realty (VGR) was founded, Ruben began his first presentation with a story that has become part of the family's lore – a lesson his father learned from his grandfather: It's better to have a room in a field than a million in the bank. The room is yours, but you will never own the bank."

That simple wisdom inspired the family's enduring love for property and tangible value.

VGR represents the culmination of 80 years of Vassallo Group experience, bringing together everything learned from construction, care, hospitality, and education to create spaces that are practical, timeless, and people-centred.

Now, after a successful eight-year run, the company is entering a new and "exciting" phase with two landmark projects next year that will reflect Malta's identity and architectural heritage, while reinforcing the company's ethos of quality over quantity.

'Children use toy blocks, but my father was building real buildings'

"Our future buildings will reflect more of who we are as a nation," Ruben explains.

Just as his father taught him, every VGR development is designed with the end user in mind, with a focus on high standards of execution, finishes, and maintenance. This philosophy has already shaped landmarks such as Casa Arkati in Mosta, which now stands as a lasting testament to thoughtful design and longevity.

Respect for heritage is another core family value. "We don't just demolish and start over. Wherever possible, we preserve and restore. We upgrade old structures to meet today's needs, while respecting their legacy," Ruben says.

Have we built enough?

"Not enough," he smiles, "but we need to be wise about our next steps. We don't go for quantity but always for quality in our developments. That is what defines us." ■



Humility in service, boldness in vision

CHARLENE VELLA VASSALLO

DIRECTOR, CAREMALTA GROUP

Charlene Vella Vassallo's earliest memory is a vivid flashback of when she was eight, standing beside her mother on the day Casa Arkati, Malta's first home for the elderly, was officially inaugurated.

"I remember the excitement in the air, smiling faces, ribbon-cutting, speeches, and the warm welcome extended to the first residents and their families."

That day's lesson, she says, wasn't in ceremony but in the visible dignity offered to the elderly, an ethic that still guides CareMalta's approach to care services today.

"That day, I understood, even if only through a child's eyes, that our work was not just about buildings and business. It was about people.

"Casa Arkati was a home, not just a residence, and its purpose was to give comfort, security, and respect to those who needed support in their later years. Today, knowing how it has grown into a cornerstone of our care portfolio fills me with deep pride," she smiles.

Charlene says she sees Vassallo Group as being inseparable from her own life.

"From when I was very young, the Group has been more than the company my family built; it's been the backdrop to my personal story, shaping the way I understand entrepreneurship, service, and legacy. When I think about what it means to me, the images that come to mind are moments of curiosity, pride, and a growing sense of responsibility."

As Charlene grew up, so did her involvement in the family business. When the Group acquired the Tagliaferro Centre in Sliema, while she was in her third year of a law degree, textbook concepts such as due diligence and commercial leases leapt from paper into practice.

"The conversations around the dinner table shifted to complex decisions involving regeneration, investment, and the role of the private sector in revitalising urban spaces," she reminisces.

"I began to see how decisions made by the Group shaped communities, supported businesses, and strengthened the Maltese



‘Our legacy will not be measured in profits, but in lives we support and opportunities we create’



Describe the Group’s next decade in one word:
Purposeful.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?
A legacy where our growth continues to uplift our people, our communities, and the generations who follow.

economy. Watching a landmark building become infused with new purpose helped me understand that progress is not accidental, it is designed, negotiated, and earned.”

Her narrative deepens when she speaks of partnership and purpose. The agreement with the Church to establish Dar Sant’Anna in Senglea stands out as a formative experience for her.

Charlene says the collaboration shows true legacy is about improving lives, not profits.

“I was older then, involved enough to appreciate the significance of collaborating with longstanding local institutions to address socially important needs.

“Dar Sant’Anna, like Casa Arkati decades before, was a reaffirmation that the Group is at its best when we work for others’ wellbeing. It taught me that our legacy will not be measured in profits, but in lives we support and opportunities we create.”

Through these milestones, Charlene grew from the little girl observing from the sidelines to someone who understands her role

within the Group’s 80-year legacy; a legacy built on innovation, resilience, and the willingness to care.

Charlene is very clear about what anchors her leadership.

“What the Group means to me today is a profound sense of purpose: a commitment to honour the work of previous generations while ensuring we continue to evolve, serve, and lead responsibly.”

This is a guiding philosophy that informs governance, investment choices and how CareMalta thinks about care delivery in Malta’s ageing society. She ties stewardship to humility and to an obligation to future residents and communities.

Charlene also reflects on identity and expectation; being the youngest shareholder brings pride but also pressure.

“It is a privilege and a promise. I carry with me those childhood memories and the lessons they represent – humility in service, boldness in vision, and the belief that family business can be community business.

As Vassallo Group looks ahead to the next decade and beyond, Charlene is inspired to contribute to a future where the Group remains not only a leader in industry, but a champion for people, building not just structures, but trust, dignity, and a lasting impact. ■

Builders of a legacy

From the construction sites of the 1970s to Malta's modern landmarks, three employees dedicated decades of their lives to Vassallo Group. They share their stories of craft, commitment, and collaboration with *Arkati*.



Fredu Portelli

FREDU PORTELLI

Fredu Portelli's career at Vassallo Group spanned more than 40 years, a journey that took him from construction sites for care homes and villas, to the formidable project of building a prison.

Now retired, Fredu recently chose to give something back to the company that shaped so much of his life. He donated his impressive collection of Vassallo memorabilia - including branded clothing, bags, and magazines - which he had carefully gathered over the years to the company.

"Once I retired in 2017, I wanted to give this collection back so that the rest of the staff could enjoy them as much as I did," he said.

Fredu began his career at Vassallo as a 21-year-old labourer and steadily rose through the ranks to become foreman, a position he held for decades.

"I was always proud of my projects," he reflected. Among his most memorable assignments was the prison in Paola, which he worked on from 1997 to 2005.

"Admittedly, that project felt a little risky at times, if not a bit exciting too. We sometimes had to pass by the prisoners themselves. Thankfully, we never had any issues with them... it was certainly interesting working there," he recalled.

While the prison project presented its own challenges, Fredu admits that the toughest part of the job was keeping up with Nazzareno Vassallo's famously strict deadlines. Even so, his words

for his employer are full of respect and gratitude, thanking him personally for helping to build his own home.

Reflecting on the company's longevity, Fredu believes Vassallo Group's 80-year success story is rooted in the "determination and vision" of Mr Vassallo. He is confident that same spirit is what will keep the company moving forward for years to come.

JOE BORG *IL-GROSS*

Joe Borg, fondly known as *Il-Gross*, began his career with Vassallo Group on Good Friday 1974 and retired exactly 43 years later, on Good Friday 2017.

"I began on Good Friday and I ended on Good Friday," he reflected with a smile.

Joining the company straight after finishing school, Joe quickly became the first carpenter in the Joinery. His love for the craft began with woodworking classes, followed by stints in construction before devoting himself fully to joinery.

"When I started, the department was just beginning," he recalled. "They gave me a saw and a hammer and that's all I had. I still use them today... and cherish them."

As the Joinery grew, so did Joe's leadership. Over the years, he built a team much like Vassallo had built him, nurturing young apprentices straight out of school and helping them find pride in their work.



Joe Borg



Paul Pace

“I feel proud that I found employees who joined us right after leaving school, just like I did,” he said. “But I take even more joy knowing that those I hired are still here all these years later,” he said, fondly mentioning John Sammut, Louis Zammit, and Charlie Borg.

Joe’s craftsmanship left its mark on many projects, including the Mellieha Bay Hotel and the Buġibba Holiday Complex. Yet one project remains closest to his heart: Roseville.

“I was very happy with Roseville,” he said. “I worked on that from beginning to end. It taught me that doing good work isn’t easy, but with the right team, anything is possible.”

Reflecting on a career defined by dedication and mentoring, he added: “When you are a foreman you have a lot of responsibilities. You always need to be in the know of what’s happening and what could happen.”

Now retired, Joe enjoys a quieter rhythm of life... fishing, enjoying family life, and embracing his favourite role: being a *nannu*. After more than four decades of building and leading, he’s content simply crafting memories instead of furniture.

PAUL PACE

Paul Pace may have served as partner and CEO of Vassallo Joiners Ltd, but he likes to think of himself as a translator, not of language, but of plans.

Throughout his 30-year career with Vassallo Group, which began when he joined as a draftsman, Paul became the essential link between architects and builders.

“I would do anything to find solutions and make sure everyone understood the work as much as possible,” he explained.

“Once I figured out how to draw for the builders, everything fell into place. That was one of my greatest achievements. We all respected each other because we all ended up speaking the same language.”

Paul joined Vassallo Group in 1981 at the age of 30 and by the time he concluded his tenure in 2007, his commitment and skill had seen him rise through the ranks to become partner and CEO of the joinery division.

Among the many projects he worked on, one remains particularly close to his heart, the TGI Friday’s restaurant in Sliema. “That was my favourite project,” he said with a smile. “We did all the woodwork inside and if you remember, there was quite a bit of wood in there,” he adds with a laugh.

Other notable projects included the Buġibba Holiday Complex, the Malta Stock Exchange, and Nazzareno Vassallo’s personal villa. “I have incredible memories of working on all these projects,” Paul said.

Looking back on his long and varied career, Paul credits much of his success to the vision of founder Nazzareno Vassallo. “All of this was possible thanks to the genius and confidence of Mr Vassallo,” he noted.

Reflecting with fondness, Paul added, “I’m deeply grateful that people not only understood me but also trusted me.” ■



A legacy in motion

STEPHEN BORG

FINANCE DIRECTOR & COMPANY SECRETARY,
VASSALLO GROUP

As Vassallo Group continues to evolve and expand its footprint across diverse industries, the role of the finance team has become increasingly dynamic, not just as guardians of the Group's financial legacy, but as active enablers of innovation and sustainable growth.

For Stephen Borg, Group Director of Finance and Company Secretary, this balance between financial discipline and forward-thinking vision has defined much of his 25-year journey with the Group.

"The finance team is evolving to support innovation across the Group," he explains. "We understand that new ventures and technologies require sound financial planning to flourish. By integrating financial insights into the early stages of project development, we ensure all initiatives are underpinned by sustainable and sound financial practices."

The finance department works in close collaboration with the IT team to identify opportunities and manage risks, ensuring innovation is not only encouraged but also implemented responsibly.

"This proactive approach, together with our IT team, allows us to mitigate risks while fostering a culture of innovation," Stephen says.

For him, success is not just measured in numbers, but in the Group's people and principles.

"The strength of Vassallo Group lies in its people and shared values. Personally, I am guided by the principles of integrity, transparency, and teamwork. These values are foundational, as we manage the Group's financial wellbeing, ensuring our strategies align with our long-term vision."

This philosophy is deeply rooted in the Group's culture where trust and collaboration take centre stage. He believes that cultivating a sense of openness within the team encourages collective responsibility and long-term stability.

"Fostering a culture of trust and open communication is essential for our collective success," Stephen adds.

Trust has been a guiding principle for Stephen since the first day of his 25-year career within the Group. For Stephen, his journey has taught him lessons, not just in finance but in leadership, responsibility and personal growth.



‘Fostering a culture of trust and open communication is essential for our collective success’

“Looking back on my journey, several experiences have profoundly shaped my outlook on leadership and responsibility,” he says.

One early memory stands out vividly and has since become a guiding principle in his life. “I particularly recall how in my first days at the office, Group founder Nazzareno Vassallo told me that trust was either zero per cent or 100 per cent and that he had 100 per cent trust in me. I have since lived by that mantra and I have felt that trust reciprocated by all shareholders,” Stephen says.

That simple but powerful lesson continues to influence how Stephen leads his team and manages the Group’s financial strategy.

As the financial landscape continues to evolve rapidly in an increasingly digital and interconnected world, Stephen sees both opportunities and challenges ahead. He expects “significant shifts” in how businesses operate over the next five to 10 years, highlighting the “rise of digital currencies and a growing demand for transparency” as key issues.

But the Group is already gearing up to adapt and thrive in this changing scenario. “Vassallo Group is positioning itself to continue

Describe the Group’s next decade in one word: New horizon.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind: My role is not just to focus on finance; it’s about ensuring the decades of success we have achieved as a Group translate into a sustainable future. This involves maintaining a balance between preserving our corporate heritage, maximising shareholders’ value and embracing innovation that drives growth.

to be a leader in the various industries it operates in by investing in technology and embracing data-driven decision-making,” he adds.

Beyond innovation and technology, sustainability is another key pillar shaping Vassallo Group’s future. For Stephen, sustainability is not a passing trend but a business imperative.

“Sustainability is at the heart of our financial and investment planning. We are committed to integrating sustainable practices across our diverse sectors to ensure long-term growth,” he says.

This means not only evaluating the environmental and social impact of the Group’s investments but also striving for responsible resource management at every level.

As Vassallo Group approaches its 80th anniversary, the focus is to build on its legacy while embracing the future with confidence, purpose and “a disciplined approach”.

Stephen believes the same guiding philosophies that have sustained the Group this far will continue to serve it well in the decades to come.

“Our financial philosophies, centred around governance, innovation, and sustainability will continue to guide our success,” he says.

“Maintaining a disciplined approach to financial management, while being open to new ideas and opportunities, will ensure Vassallo Group remains a leader in the various industries we operate in for decades to come.” ■



Built on passion, driven by innovation, defined by people

JONATHAN BUTTIGIEG

CEO, VASSALLO BUILDERS

Describe the Group's next decade in one word:
Energised.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind? Just like the Group, I believe I still have my best years ahead of me and I plan on serving them in the way I have served over my past 33 years... with loyalty, integrity and professionalism; I leave behind my humble service.

At the core of Vassallo Builders' enduring success lies a simple yet powerful belief: craftsmanship is more than the act of building. It is a discipline of care, detail, and integrity.

"It's what sets us apart in the industry," says Jonathan Buttigieg, CEO of Vassallo Builders Limited.

"I am proud to continue leading the founding company as it enters its 80th year and ensuring that at Vassallo Builders, craftsmanship is defined by precision, passion, and lasting quality."

This commitment extends far beyond the physical construction process. It is embedded in how the company nurtures its 200-strong workforce, placing significant emphasis on professional development and continuous learning to maintain and improve their standards.

Through regular training, certification and deep industry experience, Vassallo Builders ensures that every individual, from site workers to project managers, upholds the same rigorous standards of quality.

Balancing tradition with progress has long been a defining characteristic of Vassallo Builders; respecting its roots while embracing new technologies and methodologies.

"We honour time-tested practices and values, yet we are always seeking smarter, more sustainable solutions that push boundaries and improve efficiency," Jonathan explains.

This approach enables Vassallo Builders to maintain the integrity of its expertise and lead the way in meeting the demands of a modern and dynamic construction landscape.

This philosophy is clearly reflected in the company's major projects. Over the years, Vassallo Builders has been deeply involved in infrastructure developments that directly contribute to Malta's broader sustainability agenda.

These include significant achievements in waste management and energy recovery, such as the Aerial Emissions project at Maghtab, the Organic Plant in Sant' Antin, and the MBT Plant at the Ecohive Complex, which produces compost and energy.

In 2026, the company will embark on a new Waste Management project and begin a Water Management project in the north of the island.

Internally, Vassallo Builders continues to prioritise collaboration, precision, and safety as fundamental pillars of its operations.

"Nurturing talent and maintaining quality is at the core of our operations. We place great value on skilled employees at every stage of the construction process, ensuring continuous development through regular training and certification. We foster a culture of collaboration, where knowledge and expertise are shared across all levels," Jonathan stresses.

This emphasis on teamwork is supported by the company's robust health and safety framework, which adapts swiftly to evolving regulations, including new health and safety regulations introduced in September.

Furthermore, Vassallo Builders has established regular Safety Committee meetings that include worker representatives, management, and safety consultants to ensure open dialogue and continuous improvement.

Every employee holds a White Site or Safety Card and receives ongoing role-specific certification, securing full compliance and a culture of accountability across the organisation.

Jonathan acknowledges the crucial role of the Building Construction Authority (BCA) in maintaining standards and minimising risk, but he also advocates for greater efficiency through integration.

"Work cannot begin without clearance from the BCA," he explains, "but beyond compliance, our goal is to genuinely care for



'We are always seeking smarter, more sustainable solutions that push boundaries and improve efficiency'



the people on site, to ensure they go home safe, healthy, and proud of the work they do."

He noted that the process could benefit from being aligned more closely with the planning permit system to streamline approvals without compromising safety.

Vassallo Builders' strength lies not only in its legacy but also in its ingrained ability to diversify. The company's various divisions – ranging from Scaffolding Solutions and Vassallo Joiners to its Prefabricated Building Section – have each contributed to a dynamic and balanced performance.

One recent project is the two-storey primary school in Selmun, constructed using prefabricated units. This project, completed and commissioned within just four months, includes classrooms, offices, and full infrastructure systems. The school will temporarily house students while their existing school undergoes a complete rebuild.

Meanwhile, both Scaffolding Solutions and Vassallo Steel outperformed their budgets this year. Vassallo Joiners and the Plant Section also gained momentum in the second half, which is expected to continue into 2026.

As for what lies ahead, Jonathan says the future holds exciting opportunities. The company has invested heavily in tendering and proposals across multiple sectors, from residential to educational, industrial, and infrastructural, with several major projects set to begin in 2026.

Among them, one stands out as an absolute highlight: "The new wastewater treatment plant in Mellieha has particular requirements in structural design, value engineering, and reinforced concrete structures, which align with the team's areas of expertise," he says,

Vassallo Builders continues to evolve, not by abandoning its foundations, but by reinforcing them with modern solutions and an unwavering focus on people. This approach ensures the company's work continues to embody what true craftsmanship means: building not just for today, but for generations to come. ■

Driving a 'transformative' future in energy, water and technology

ALEX TRANTER

CEO, POWEREZI

For over a decade, Powerezi has built a strong foundation in renewable energy, delivering successful photovoltaic projects and helping Vassallo Group establish its credentials in sustainable and green electricity.

Now, under the leadership of CEO Alex Tranter, Powerezi is entering what he describes as its most exciting phase yet – a “transformative” new era of growth and diversification built on three pillars: energy, water and technology, making it the new “activity engine” for Vassallo Group.

“Since the beginning of this year, I’ve been fully focused on Powerezi to grow a renewables-focused initiative into ‘renewables plus plus’ venture, a broader vision that goes beyond electricity generation to address an evolving infrastructural need to ensure all systems are integrated, sustainable and future proof,” Alex explains.

The vision of what he dubs “Powerezi version 2.0” is a fusion of renewable energy, a focus on Malta’s water scarcity, and a strong digital infrastructure to create “a base for smarter, connected solutions”.

Energy remains the foundation of Powerezi’s work, but the company is now stepping into larger-scale energy infrastructure projects. Alongside energy, water is also becoming a second strategic pillar.

Powerezi is actively getting involved in water treatment and recycling technologies, including reverse osmosis for seawater and advanced treatment of municipal wastewater. In fact, two milestones have already been achieved: Powerezi has spearheaded the creation of two joint ventures, ‘PowerFix JV’ and ‘AquaNova JV’, which won two very important national infrastructure projects in the energy and water treatment sectors.

As a result of Powerezi’s ability to link up with leading international technology suppliers and strategic partners, PowerFix JV will supply and install a €5.7 million variable shunt reactor for the Maghtab interconnector terminal station, which connects Malta to the Sicilian grid.

This project is expected to take 18 months to be completed. Aquanova JV will design, build, test and commission a €32.3

‘We aim to leave the Group with a more sustainable and intelligent ecosystem, which hopefully will be a legacy worth leaving’





One word to describe Vassallo Group's next decade:
Transformative.

Your legacy to the Group: To ensure the Group continues to operate sustainably in a smart way, while promoting the empowerment of those around us to build new skills and develop new activities that will thrive for generations to come... My vision - built around the three pillars of energy, water, and technology - does not replace the Group's existing strengths but enhances its core economic activities to secure a sustainable future. That would be something I would love to see embedded in the Group as my contribution.

million upgrade of the Ċumnija WasteWater Treatment Plant in Mellieħa, which is expected to take 33 months to complete.

"These landmark grid-scale and wastewater treatment projects mark the beginning of Powerezi's mission to help deliver truly transformative infrastructure; the kind of projects that will define Vassallo Group's legacy," says Alex.

The third pillar, technology, is the glue that connects them. "All energy and water infrastructure today needs to be well controlled, monitored and connected into a future-proof eco-system. By integrating smart systems, we can ensure these solutions are not just sustainable, but also clean and secure," he adds.

Alex sees Powerezi as an innovation engine within the Vassallo Group, creating fresh synergies and opportunities that extend beyond its immediate projects. "We're not just delivering infrastructure. We're opening doors to new project opportunities with Vassallo Builders and other Group companies, since many of these projects involve complex engineering and civil works."

He also draws parallels with earlier transformations in the Group's history. "Just as CareMalta once represented a bold new step beyond construction, Powerezi is doing the same in energy, water and technology. These are critical economic sectors, and

by entering them, we are not only strengthening our Group's portfolio but also contributing to Malta's sustainable future."

For Alex, leading Powerezi is a full-circle moment and the culmination of a career that has spanned multiple industries within the Group - from healthcare to catering - as well as international experience in large-scale solar ground mount development with SunPower... Not to mention his five-year term as Enemalta's non-executive Chairman, which taught him "national scale responsibilities, governance and long-term planning". He calculated that he has been with Vassallo Group for "over 40 per cent of its 80-year history" occupying various C-suite roles.

The roadmap is ambitious. Over the next two years, Powerezi expects to deliver tangible results across its three pillars, from energy grid infrastructure to new water and waste initiatives. "It's one thing to talk about vision," he says. "But now it's time to see it materialise... to create reference projects that demonstrate what Powerezi 2.0 really means."

"The next decade will be transformative as we aim to leave the Group with a more sustainable and intelligent ecosystem which hopefully will be a legacy worth leaving." ■

TEAMWORK

Shaping Malta's future through education and sport

CHARLO BONNICI

CEO, LEARNING WORKS,
MEDITERRANEAN COLLEGE OF SPORT

'We're investing in Malta's future...
one learner, one athlete, and one
leader at a time'



As the driving force behind the Mediterranean College of Sport and Learning Works, Charlo Bonnici sees these two entities as vital contributors to Malta's evolving social and economic landscape.

Their shared mission, he explains, is to cultivate a culture of lifelong learning and excellence that empowers individuals to reach their full potential.

"The Mediterranean College of Sport provides a unique model that integrates academic achievement with sporting development, fostering discipline, teamwork, and resilience in young people. This holistic approach not only prepares students for professional careers in sport but equips them with transferable skills that benefit Maltese society at large... from leadership and collaboration to physical and mental wellbeing."

At the heart of MCS' success lies a clear philosophy: sporting excellence and academic achievement are not competing priorities, but complementary pillars of holistic development.

Built on three core principles: balance, flexibility, and personal growth, the college provides an environment where students can pursue their athletic passions without compromising their education, through a flexible academic framework that adapts to training and competition schedules.

The programmes are rigorous and designed to foster critical thinking, leadership, and problem-solving skills; qualities essential in sport and life. In parallel, the sports curriculum emphasises discipline, teamwork, and performance excellence, supported by expert coaches, access to sport performance science, and state-of-the-art facilities.

"Each learner's academic and sporting journey is personalised." Charlo explains. "This ensures that when our students graduate, they are not only accomplished athletes, but also confident, capable individuals prepared for success in any path they choose."

The college's impact extends far beyond the classroom and playing field. MCS has quickly become a sought-after venue for major national events, hosting government, political, church, and sports association activities.

"This past year has been truly transformative for MCS, a defining period in which we not only consolidated our foundations but also set the stage for sustainable growth. Launching our full secondary and sixth form cycles was a milestone achievement, and looking back, I am immensely proud of how far we have come in such a short time," he smiles.

Meanwhile, Learning Works focuses on vocational and professional education that meets the evolving needs of Malta's workforce. Through its upskilling and reskilling initiatives in sectors ranging from health and social care to management, hospitality, and sport, the institution is actively supporting social mobility and inclusion.

Together, these two entities contribute to a more competitive and sustainable Malta, one that attracts talent, stimulates innovation, and diversifies the country's knowledge economy. As they grow, they continue to respond proactively to Malta's changing education and employment landscape.

"Ultimately," Charlo affirms, "our mission is aligned with Malta's broader vision: to invest in people, empower communities, and build a future founded on education, wellbeing, and opportunity."

Looking to the future, Charlo is excited about the momentum across both institutions.

"One of the most exciting developments is the introduction of new sports disciplines at MCS," he reveals. "We are expanding our programme to include dance and tennis, while laying the groundwork for the introduction of basketball and padel in the near future."

To support this growth, the teaching and coaching teams are expanding, bringing in passionate professionals who share the college's vision of excellence.

MCS is also forging new connections with reputable institutions and entities, locally and abroad, which will open fresh opportunities for knowledge exchange, professional development, and cultural enrichment.

At the same time, the entity is strengthening its foundation at the earliest educational levels. The introduction of its Primary School marks a major milestone.

"This expansion forms part of a long-term plan to provide a seamless educational pathway within MCS. We see it as a foundation for lifelong learning, where our youngest learners are nurtured to develop curiosity, creativity, and confidence."

With the government's Achieve 360 initiative bringing in new students, the energy on campus has been dynamic and inclusive.

The success of MCS, he adds, is the result of teamwork between academic leaders, coaches, and support staff.

"We have seen first-hand what can be achieved when a team shares a common vision and works cohesively towards it," he reflects. "The focus now is on strengthening our foundations and ensuring MCS remains a place where every student can thrive."

Learning Works, too, is marking important milestones.

"This year we awarded a homegrown degree at MQF Level 6 in Leadership and Management," he says with pride.

Today, Learning Works offers a diverse range of programmes, from Sport Management and Eating Disorders to Healthcare, unified by a common purpose: improving quality of life.

Whether through sport, vocational training, or higher education, MCS and Learning Works are shaping a Malta that values knowledge, wellbeing, and opportunity.

"Our story is one of continuous expansion and growth. By investing in education, we're investing in Malta's future... one learner, one athlete, and one leader at a time." ■



Describe the Group's next decade in one word: Game-changer.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

I hope to leave a legacy where education and sport are firmly embedded within the Vassallo Group, thriving, profitable, and a game-changer... leaving a meaningful mark on generations of Maltese and foreign individuals, young and old alike.



CareMalta is shaping the next generation of care

JAMES SCIRIHA

CEO, CAREMALTA GROUP

As CareMalta celebrates what CEO James Sciriha calls its “best year ever”, the Group’s care arm within Vassallo Group is already looking towards a even more transformative decade ahead.

“2025 has been the best year in CareMalta’s history, especially when it comes to financial results,” James says proudly, noting that the Group also made major strides in resident safety, digitalisation, and service consolidation.

The past two years have been dedicated to consolidating the success built over three decades and preparing the company for its next generation of growth. With nine homes for the elderly and seven properties specialising in disability care, CareMalta Group has long been recognised as both a pioneer and the largest provider in Malta’s care sector, but, more importantly, a true leader in quality and innovation.

One of the year’s milestones was the opening of Dar Sant’Anna in Senglea, part of HILA Homes Ltd, as a residence for persons with disabilities. The property houses 23 residents previously living at Casa Apap Bologna in Mosta, bringing them closer to their local community.

CareMalta Group, through HILA also assumed responsibility for *Fondazzjoni Wens*, relocating its residents to Casa Apap Bologna.

“Our expertise through HILA shows that there’s a growing demand for respite and residential services for persons with disabilities,” James explains. “Once these services become available, demand increases further. We already have waiting lists, and we hope to offer more opportunities, especially in respite care and other related services.”

Looking ahead, James envisions an ambitious period of transformation. “We are ready for more. CareMalta will definitely continue to expand over the next five to 10 years. It will not look anything like what it is today... We are undergoing a transformation and there will be more homes and new lines of business,” he reveals.

Before embarking on this next phase, CareMalta reinforced its mission by becoming the only private operator in the sector to adopt the ethical guidelines for elderly care launched in April by the Archdiocese of Malta. The guidelines promote dignity and the protection of life until its final moments, principles that echo CareMalta’s own ethos.



Describe Vassallo Group's next decade in one word: Innovative.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind? I want people to remember CareMalta under my leadership as being a company close to the people; empowering them. The person is always at the centre of everything in Vassallo Group.

"It felt like a natural step," James explains. "Throughout our history, we've always taken ethical decisions and these guidelines are based on the same values and pillars CareMalta believes in.

To ensure these standards are upheld, CareMalta Group established a dedicated Ethics Committee, made up of himself, Chief Operating Officer Noel Borg, Rev. Prof. Raymond Zammit from the University of Malta's Faculty of Theology, and Prof. Charles Savona Ventura, professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The committee serves as a forum for reflection and expert consultation.

"It's a space for thoughtful discussion and support. As we evolve, we face increasingly complex challenges, and it helps to consult with experts who've encountered similar situations."

For James, CareMalta's success lies in its people and a culture built on trust and vocation.

"All our business decisions are evidence-based," he says. "Whatever we implement is proven beforehand. At the core of everything is the investment in people."

'At the core of everything is the investment in people'

He views caregiving not simply as a job, but a calling. "We need people who truly want and love this work. We call it a vocation rather than a job. The role of a carer isn't easy. We invest heavily in training and in using technology to reduce the administrative burden on staff."

Quality assurance remains another key pillar. A dedicated manager now leads this department, which will continue to expand to enhance standards even further.

CareMalta is also embracing technology in innovative ways. It recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Malta to form part of the HEARTS project – Human-Centred Elderly Assistance with Robotic Technology and Supports – featuring Pepper, a humanoid robot designed to assist and engage residents through AI.

"Pepper's aim isn't to replace the carer but to offer cognitive stimulation to residents," James explains. "And most importantly, he can be programmed to speak Maltese."

Language, he adds, remains one of the biggest challenges in care, alongside staff retention. "Our older residents prefer speaking Maltese. For us, it's vital that we get their needs right."

Despite CareMalta's growth and success, humility remains central to its culture. "One of the things I'm most proud of is the unity we've created in our teams, especially during challenging times," James reflects.

As he looks to the future, his words capture the essence of CareMalta's philosophy:

"Even though we're the largest provider in the care industry, we remain humble. We always tell our people, it's not enough to be the leaders; we must also be the best. We're giving meaningful jobs to people, providing a good service, and making a real difference in people's lives." ■



Describe the Group's next decade in one word:
Leadership.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

An ethos transcendent to self and others that is relational to what we do and convey to the person: respecting one's identity and dignity.



‘As a Group we can turn limitations into opportunities’

NOEL BORG

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CAREMALTA GROUP

When you meet Noel Borg, one thing becomes immediately clear: even though he now serves as CareMalta’s COO, he is, first and foremost, a nurse.

Noel believes in turning what many see as limitations into opportunities. This is something he says the Group has been doing for years, and has been proving it even more strongly in its recent work, through CareMalta and HILA.

Today, as COO, Noel sees his job clearly: “Whatever we do, the focus must always be on the person, respecting their dignity and ensuring quality of life.”

Reflecting on the speed of change in the healthcare sector, he adds. “Having been in the field for two decades, I think the industry sometimes evolves faster than it can understand itself, and this is not a criticism but a call to remain alert and open to transformation. As a company part of Vassallo Group, CareMalta Group must keep evolving.”

When CareMalta was founded 32 years ago by Nazzareno Vassallo, who was the Chairman of Vassallo Group at the time, it aimed to give older people a better way of living, not just another place to reside. That philosophy, Noel says, is still very much alive today.

“We keep evolving, developing and adapting through models of care. Conceptualisation and operationalisation is how we are stepping ourselves into the future; leading us to a continuous legacy of care.”

Noel believes the strength of CareMalta is through HILA and vice versa, and this is only made possible if there is one operating model presenting common pathways of care.

CareMalta, he explains, reviews processes of care and analyses them to set up an identity through the development of its mission and vision, which are aligned with Vassallo Group’s values: excellence, integrity, respect and innovation.

“Through all of this, we focus completely on person-centredness,” he adds.

Noel refers to a holistic approach to systems management and how the identity of the person receiving care remains central to what CareMalta Group does.

“Let us not forget that every operating model is subject to human error, and that is why each model needs to address such errors, because what we provide is a service of care towards people who take care of people.”

All of this has been sustained by the Memorandum of Understandings signed with two different faculties within the University of Malta. The first is with the Department of Health Systems Management and Leadership within the Faculty of Health Sciences to collaborate on enhancing safety protocols and practices; and the latest MOU was signed with the Department of Computer Information Systems at the Faculty of ICT, which will lead to deeper collaboration in AI, robotics, and digital health.

It is here that he says the company’s collaboration with academic institutions, such as the University of Malta, becomes deeply important.

“I believe in these partnerships and relations, which aim to strengthen research, professional standards, and evidence-based practices, ultimately combining tradition with innovation.”

To Noel, the future of the healthcare sector must be grounded in professionalism and evidence-based practice, and he wants CareMalta to push even further, connecting local practice

with what is being done internationally. This means more research, increased training, and developing a culture where decisions are made by insight and knowledge.

Noel points out how CareMalta has a legacy of quality care, and this should not be fragmented. “Our quality mark reflects the quality of care we provide... that quality leads our residents and service users to ultimately understand and experience it.”

“CareMalta is a diverse Group that brings its employees together without distinction. I firmly believe our next chapter will be shaped by innovation and compassion and moving from quantity to quality; from assumptions to evidence, and from limitations to opportunities.” ■

‘We have grown, and we continue to grow. But growth must always have meaning for the person’



Being an ‘Extended Family’ is not just a slogan

JANET SILVIO

CEO, HILA

When Dar Sant’Anna opened its doors in Senglea on September 12, 2025, it was, as HILA CEO Janet Silvio puts it, “a significant milestone in HILA’s journey; a reflection of our unwavering belief in inclusive care and a concrete step in our vision for de-institutionalisation”.

With six facilities now under its management, HILA has steadily expanded its reach and impact across Malta, building on a philosophy that sees every individual as a valued member of a wider community.

Dar Sant’Anna’s opening marks a shift from institutional models of care to smaller, community-based homes where, as Janet explains, “our service users can live fully within the community. Here, they are defined not by their needs but by their aspirations and their rightful place in society”.

Having been part of HILA from the very beginning, Janet speaks with evident pride about watching her vision come to life.

“Having founded HILA, from its name and meaning, to its vision and mission and seeing it reach this stage fills me with profound pride and gratitude,” she says.

“It is more than an organisation to me; it’s an extension of who I am and how I see life. It represents compassion, inclusion, and dignity, values I cherish. Watching it develop from a vision into a vibrant community that touches so many lives has been one of my greatest sources of purpose and fulfilment.”

Since its inception, HILA’s growth has been guided by listening to its service users, their families, and the changing social landscape.

“From the very beginning, our focus has been on listening and understanding that each individual’s journey is unique and that care and support centres around their needs,” Janet explains.

That responsiveness has shaped HILA’s evolution from offering primarily residential and respite care to adopting a broader, more holistic model.

“Our broader model embraces empowerment, independence, and community integration. We’ve invested in specialised facilities, person-centred programmes, and innovative approaches that place dignity and choice at the heart of everything we do.”

For Janet, inclusion means ensuring people with disabilities are not defined by their challenges but celebrated for their strengths and unique value they bring to the community.

Over the past five years, she has seen a positive shift in how Maltese society perceives and includes people with disabilities.

“Awareness and acceptance are certainly growing, and we are witnessing more conversations about rights, inclusion, and dignity,” she notes.

But while awareness is important, Janet stresses that true inclusion is not only about awareness; it demands daily action, equal opportunities, and genuine engagement.

Still, she acknowledges the journey is far from over.

“To build a truly inclusive society, we need to go beyond awareness and move towards genuine participation and equal opportunity. Inclusion should not be an act of charity but reflected and ingrained in our education systems, workplaces, and communities, recognising individuals’ right to belong and contribute.”

Malta must continue to challenge mindsets, create accessible environments, and give everyone a voice in shaping the services and policies that affect them.

“Only then,” she says, “can inclusion become part of our culture, not just our conversation.”

As HILA grows, its founding slogan ‘Extended Family’ remains a powerful touchstone. The phrase, Janet shares, was inspired by heartfelt conversations with parents who said HILA had become like a second family to them, particularly those who lacked other forms of support.

“With our growth, this slogan has strengthened and taken on an even deeper meaning. Growth has not diluted our sense of family; it has strengthened it,” she says.

“We continue to build genuine relationships rooted in empathy, respect, and trust. At HILA, being an ‘Extended Family’ is not just a slogan; it’s the way we live, work, and care every day.”

As HILA looks to the future, Janet’s ambitions remain both grounded and visionary.

“My hope for HILA in the coming years is to continue growing, not just in size, but in deepening the impact we make to people’s lives,” she says.

Compassion, inclusion, and dignity will remain central to this mission, while embracing innovation that enhances the quality of life of HILA’s service users.

“I want HILA to keep challenging perceptions, leading by example, and shaping a society where every person has the opportunity to thrive, belong, and be valued, regardless of their ability or their diagnosis,” she explains.

Above all, Janet’s dream is for HILA to continue being a place where heart and purpose meet... and where care truly feels like family. ■





‘To build a truly inclusive society, we need to go beyond awareness and move towards genuine participation’



Describe the Group’s next decade in one word: Unified.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

I hope to leave a legacy where compassion and innovation walk hand-in-hand; where care, dignity, and hope guide every action, and every individual we serve is empowered to live with purpose.



‘Everything starts with a dream’

NAZZARENO VASSALLO

FOUNDER, VASSALLO GROUP

The lineage of Vassallo Group traces back to 1946 when Piju Vassallo set up an operation with his nephews clearing the debris of buildings demolished in World War II. When Nazzareno, the eighth of Piju’s 12 children, was born in 1951 he inherited an innate passion and business acumen that would see him achieve a series of firsts in Malta. After leading Vassallo Group for decades, Zaren, as he is fondly known, stepped back and passed the baton to his five children. Today, he watches with pride as each one carries the pioneering legacy forward. He shares his memories and vision with *Arkati*.

What does the Group’s 80th anniversary mean to you personally?

It represents my life’s work. I was born into the company and began working in 1965, when we had only 12 employees, six of them shareholders. By 1967, I was already pushing for modernisation. At the time, everything ran on partnerships with no written records; everything was logged in people’s heads.

On October 16, 1967, I was put in charge of paperwork, wages, and stores, working out of a tiny office under the stairs. It was our first real step forward. Soon after, I began dreaming of a proper office where we could welcome clients. In 1969 we moved, and in 1988 we opened The Three Arches.

A defining moment came on June 4, 1971, when we registered Vassallo Builders Ltd, later Vassallo Builders Group Ltd and today

Vassallo Group Ltd. My father and brothers appointed me Managing Director, which formalised our structure and set us on a new path.

Today, as we celebrate 80 years, it also marks a personal turning point. At the 75th anniversary, I decided to step down and hand over the leadership to my children. The first year was transitional, but five years later, I can look on with pride and say it was the right decision. They took full responsibility, and the diversification strategy I had put in place allowed each one of them to lead their own sector and find their space.

Did you ever dream that the Group would have diversified its portfolio to this extent and grown so much?

Yes, it was always part of the plan. When I bought my siblings’ shares, my vision was clear: diversification was essential. It wasn’t



only about growth; it was about creating future opportunities for my children in different industries. From the beginning, I wanted the Group to expand beyond construction. Nothing happened by accident; it was a deliberate strategy.

The first steps are always the most difficult, but I started by forming partnerships with people I trusted, and later by investing in the hotel sector. Many of those partners still feel like family to this day.

Our expansion was gradual, but I always kept my eye on the potential for growth. If something was small but promising, I pursued it. That approach led us into elderly care, then into the creation of HILA, which opened an entirely new direction for the Group. Opportunities come when you are prepared, and now is the time to keep building on that foundation.

When you look back, what are you most proud of?

I am proud to have contributed to national projects that shaped Malta. One of the earliest milestones was the Danish Village, the first turnkey contract in the country. I personally handled everything – construction, furnishing, even the curtains and cutlery. That project elevated the company into the premier league and opened doors to larger opportunities, especially in hospitality.

Another defining moment was the construction of the Malta International Airport terminal. It was the first consortium ever formed in Malta – NOVITA. Out of 14 tenders, ours was €200,000 lower, and we won the first internationally opened contract ever taken by Maltese companies. Chairing that consortium remains one of the highlights of my life.

Other achievements include the restoration of St John's Co-Cathedral, the first project of its kind in Malta, and several major hotel developments. But what gives me the deepest satisfaction is CareMalta, because it is not just business; it is service. A simple thank-you from a resident is priceless. We are still the only company in Malta with a dementia licence, and that recognition means a lot.

Casa Arkati in Mosta also holds a special place, becoming a benchmark for quality care. The same applies to HILA, which extended our mission to the disability sector. And now the Mediterranean College of Sport and Campus Hub, which are shaping young people's futures. Specialisation has become a core part of the Group's identity, and that makes me proud.

Many second-generation companies tend to falter, but in this case, the Group has grown from strength to strength. What do you believe is behind this success?

My children were equal shareholders from the start, long before they could actively participate. They grew up knowing the business was theirs. Being born and raised inside the company gave them a deep sense of responsibility and belonging. This wasn't by chance, it

'From the beginning, I wanted the Group to expand... Nothing happened by chance; it was a deliberate strategy'

was intentional. I never wanted them to be sleeping partners. Today, they are fully involved at the heart of operations. That sense of ownership is what has kept the Group strong across generations.

What is your hope for the Group's future?

That it continues to consolidate its position in Malta while expanding abroad. Our group has today developed expertise both in care and student accommodation. This knowledge and experience can be successfully applied in other countries. I have personally not managed to live this dream but I'm confident my children will succeed.

Have you achieved the legacy you hoped for?

I believe I have. Nothing happens by chance. You must dream, work, and dedicate your energy to making things happen. Everything within the Group started as a dream... Achievements require determination, perseverance, and belief in yourself and in the people around you. That has been my guiding principle throughout.

What is your advice to those leading the Group? What would you like them to keep foremost in their mind?

Never ask what the company can do for you; ask what you can do for the company. If this mindset is kept alive, the next generations will continue to grow and flourish. My principle, right from the start and to this very day, was always to make every day count for our group.

How do you spend your time these days?

I remain very active. I wake up at 6am and am out by 7am. When I return home, I continue working... even when I'm abroad or on the boat. I love my work. Ideas often come on quiet days, even Sundays. When I face a problem, I think it over, sleep on it, and usually wake up with the solution.

Describe the Group's next decade in one word:

Leader.

If you had to summarise your journey in one sentence what would it be?

A dream that became reality. Follow your vision with determination. ■



Inspiring leadership

Vassallo Group held its annual Chairperson's Lunch at the historic Manoel Theatre in Valletta last December. Chairperson Natalie Briffa Farrugia spoke about building bridges for the future and embodying humanity's resilience to overcome and transform. Guests received *Bridges in Malta* by Alex Attard, and the Group proudly launched its annual publication, *Arkati*. Vassallo Group continues to thrive across construction, care, property, hospitality, energy, and education sectors.



HYROX events raise over €110,000

Held in April and September, The Challenge, hosted by Jungle Box and Warehouse, has cemented its status as Malta's biggest HYROX event. This year's editions raised an incredible €110,000 in aid of the Inspire and Alive foundations, drawing over 2,000 athletes and welcoming more than 50,000 visitors to the Campus Hub piazza. This competition proved to be one of the most impactful events.

Festive spirit shines bright

The Vassallo Group's annual Christmas party lit up Villa Arrigo with festive cheer and celebration! It was an evening filled with joy, laughter, and unforgettable memories as colleagues came together to toast the season.



Advancing safety

Local and international experts came together at the Symposium on Person Safety & Clinical Risk Management in Health and Social Care, to discuss critical issues and share insights. Organised by the University of Malta's Faculty of Health Sciences, in collaboration with CareMalta Group, the symposium explored best practices in safety and risk management across healthcare and social care settings.

Parliament power meets sporting spirit

The Mediterranean College of Sport welcomed European Parliament President Roberta Metsola. Joined by MCS officials, Dr Metsola toured the state-of-the-art campus, meeting with students, educators, and staff. Her visit marks yet another proud milestone for the growing MCS community.





Building vision

Vassallo Builders' management team gathered at the Mediterranean College of Sport for an inspiring seminar where CEO Jonathan Buttigieg opened with a presentation on the company's vision, achievements, and future plans. This was followed by guest speaker Joseph Zahra's dynamic session on strengthening commercial orientation. The day wrapped up with a networking lunch, fostering collaboration and reflection.



Battle of the Beasts

Campus Hub took centre stage during Freshers' Week by hosting a live press conference for an upcoming Netflix series set to launch next year. The event featured 12 of the world's strongest and most influential bodybuilders, marking their first-ever appearance together in Malta. The star-studded launch drew major attention and turned Campus Hub into the ultimate hotspot for fitness fans and Netflix enthusiasts alike.



Time to achieve

Achieve 360, a new scholarship scheme offering 20 sixth form students the chance to excel in sports and academics, was launched by the government. Developed in collaboration with the Mediterranean College of Sport and the Ministry for Education, this initiative empowers young athletes to reach their full potential, on and off the field, at home and abroad.

A tradition of care

Vassallo Group founder Nazzareno Vassallo kept up his cherished Easter tradition of visiting all CareMalta facilities to personally greet each resident and present them with a small gift. His thoughtful gesture is a heartfelt reminder of the compassion, respect, and community spirit that define the CareMalta Group.



Pink with a purpose

Vassallo Group Head Office employees came together for a delicious fundraising event in support of the Malta Community Chest Fund. With hot dogs and pink lamingtons on the menu, every bite contributed to a worthy cause. Thanks to everyone's generosity, all proceeds will be donated.



Success in motion

The Mediterranean College of Sport proudly celebrated the third graduation of its MQF Level 7 MSc in International Sport Coaching in February; a programme delivered in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University. Congratulations to all our graduates on this outstanding achievement.



Running strong

The Vassallo Group spirit was in full stride at the Malta Marathon when VGR CEO Ruben Vassallo, Group Chairperson Natalie Briffa Farrugia, MCS CEO Charlo Bonnici, and team members from across the Group took part in the half-marathon. The values of teamwork, perseverance, and a healthy lifestyle were on full display.



Firing up team spirit

Just before the Santa Marija shutdown, the Vassallo Builders team gathered at Mtarfa for a special team-building event... the much-loved annual *majjalata*. The celebration was a heartfelt show of appreciation for everyone's hard work and dedication. CEO Jonathan Buttigieg addressed the team, thanking all staff for their ongoing commitment and contribution.

CareMalta goes the distance in Gozo

CareMalta proudly marked the first anniversary of its Gozo operations with a special Run/Walk from Ta' Pinu Church to Dar San Ġużepp in Ghajnsielem. The event was attended by Vassallo Group Chairperson Natalie Briffa Farrugia, Group CEO Pio Vassallo, shareholders, CareMalta CEO James Sciriha, and team members. Opened in April 2024, Dar San Ġużepp continues to embody Vassallo Group's commitment to enhancing wellbeing and care within the Gozitan community.



Buzzing with energy

Dr Lydia Abela, the Prime Minister's wife, visited the Mediterranean College of Sport in May to officially inaugurate the BeeSmart Malta Childcare and Kindergarten facility. Already buzzing with young energy since its soft launch, the centre offers a warm, engaging environment where MCS's youngest learners can grow and explore.

Grill, chill and connect

At Vassallo Group, teamwork goes beyond the workplace. Before the summer shutdown, employees and management came together at Head Office for a well-deserved BBQ. Moments like these strengthen connections and recharge the team for continued success ahead.



Strengthening ethical care

CareMalta Group announced a major step forward in promoting dignity and wellbeing for older persons by formally adopting the *Ethical Guidelines for the Care of Older Persons* issued by the Archdiocese of Malta. To ensure these standards are upheld, CareMalta has established an Ethics Committee to oversee implementation and address emerging ethical dilemmas, reinforcing the Group's ongoing commitment to compassionate and responsible care.



A true culture of safety

Toolbox Talks play a vital role in reinforcing safety on site, especially when working at heights. Emphasising the correct use of safety harnesses, from thorough pre-use inspections and proper fit to correct adjustment and safe storage, helps prevent accidents and ensures compliance. Regular discussions like these strengthen awareness and build a true culture of safety across every Vassallo Builders site.



New beginnings

September marked a milestone moment at the Mediterranean College of Sport, as the first group of secondary school student-athletes kicked off their journey. The day was filled with excitement as students settled into their new environment. Secondary and sixth form students, as well as primary school students followed to start the new academic year.



A journey of faith

CareMalta residents were joined by Vassallo Group Chairperson Natalie Briffa Farrugia and Facility Managers Edel Borg Mizzi and Nicolette Anastasi Sant on the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. Organised by UMTAL *Ghaqda Maltija Ghat-Trasport tal-Morda f'Lourdes* and led by Archbishop Charles Scicluna, the pilgrimage was a moving experience of faith, care, and community.

Leading the way

The Mediterranean College of Sport hosted the second graduation ceremony for the MQF Level 3 Award in Team Manager Duties in May; a course delivered in collaboration with the Malta Football Association. Congratulations to those who successfully completed this programme.





Keeping the spirit of Santa Marija alive

CareMalta Group organised a procession in Mosta ahead of the Santa Marija Feast. The celebration began at the Oratory, continued to Villa Amadeo, and ended at the iconic Mosta Church, where a special Mass was held.



Little learners, big dreams

The Mediterranean College of Sport officially welcomed its Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, along with their proud parents, to campus in September. The classrooms buzzed with smiles, curiosity, and excitement as the young learners stepped into their new adventure.

Shaping the future of care

Innovative solutions to enhance care and wellbeing are on the horizon after CareMalta Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Computer Information Systems within the Faculty of ICT at the University of Malta. This strategic partnership marks an important step in strengthening collaboration in artificial intelligence, robotics, and digital health.



A new chapter of care and collaboration

HILA inaugurated Dar Sant'Anna in Senglea in September, breathing new life into a historic home founded through the generosity of Nicolo Dingli and Madalena Cornelio. This initiative reflects the strong collaboration between the Church, Government, and private sector. Dar Sant'Anna will now serve as a home for long-time HILA service users. The ceremony was attended by Vassallo Group's leadership, Archbishop Charles Scicluna, and Social Wellbeing Minister Julia Farrugia Portelli.

Creativity knows no boundaries

To mark the International Day for Older Persons on October 1, CareMalta Group launched *Bir-Rima Naghtu Qima*, a collection of poems by 88-year-old Villa Messina resident Richard Gatt. Sponsored by CareMalta, this special publication celebrates the voices and talents of older persons. The launch was attended by Richard's family, Vassallo Group Chairperson Natalie Briffa Farrugia, Group directors, and Parliamentary Secretary for Active Ageing Malcolm Paul Agius Galea.





Kicking off in style

In January, the Benfica Football School Malta held its first open training session at the Mediterranean College of Sport, welcoming children aged 3 to 12. Under the expert guidance of SL Benfica youth coach Ricardo Mota, young players enjoyed a taste of top-tier training inspired by Benfica's famed methodology. The school officially opened in March, bringing professional sessions to life on MCS's world-class pitch.

A reflection of devotion

CareMalta proudly unveiled the *Via Crucis*, a collection of 14 tabulexes created by renowned Maltese sacred artist Chev. Antonio Mifsud. To mark the occasion, a Mass was celebrated by Gozo Bishop Anton Teuma. This initiative reflects CareMalta's continued commitment to enrich the spiritual and cultural life within its residences.



Building bonds

The Vassallo Builders Technical Team came together for a team-building session led by Michelle Fenech Seguna from *Speak to Move*. Centred on the theme of Collaboration, the session focused on building trust, deepening connections, and reinforcing the team's shared commitment to excellence. Through interactive activities and open dialogue, the team strengthened the foundations of unity and teamwork that drive Vassallo Builders forward.



A national project

Prime Minister Robert Abela visited the Mediterranean College of Sport in April, hailing the college as "a national project" and highlighting the vital role of education and sport in shaping Malta's youth. During the visit, a special ceremony was held to name the new football ground in honour of Fr Hilary Tagliaferro, celebrating his lifelong contribution to youth sport in Malta.

A first for Learning Works

Learning Works celebrated a milestone this year when awarded its first homegrown MQF Level 6 Degree in Leadership & Management, a celebration of vision, perseverance, and lifelong learning. Some graduates began their journey at Level 4, progressing all the way to their degree. Others were awarded with MQF Level 5 Diplomas in Leadership & Sport Management and Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in Eating Disorders & Obesity. Congratulations to all.

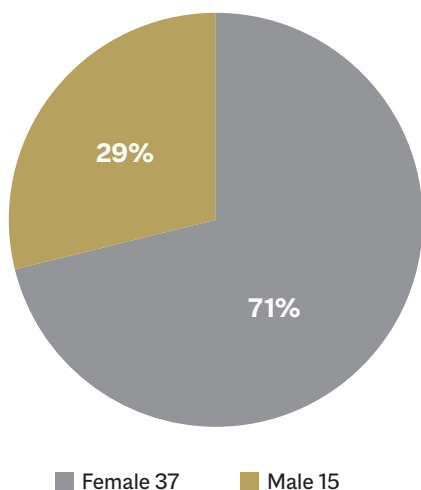




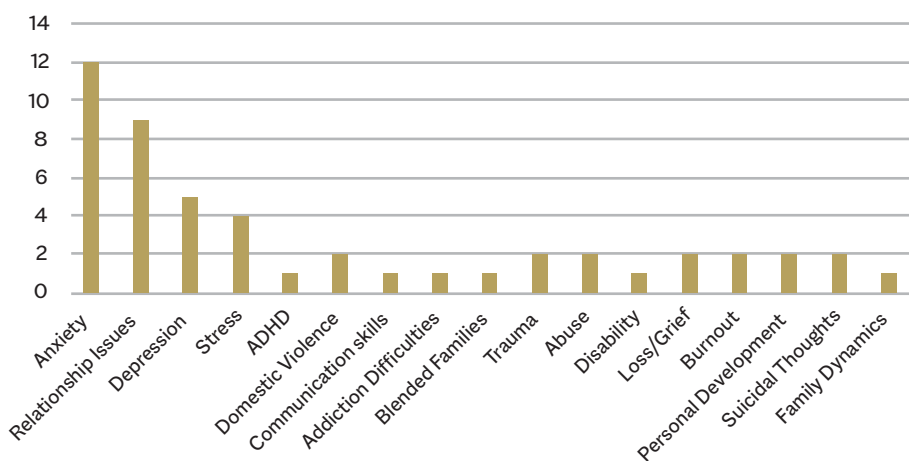
The foundation of giving

In February, Vassallo Group celebrated Arkati Foundation Day, highlighting its internal charity fund established 34 years ago to support employees in difficult times. The Foundation is unique in its collective spirit, employees donate a small portion of their salary, and the Group boosts these efforts with a substantial annual contribution. Through support programmes and development initiatives, the Foundation helps enhance employees' wellbeing and foster a thriving workplace. This year saw strong donations, enabling even greater support for staff.

Gender Distribution



Indications for Intervention





The Arkati Foundation Financial Statements 30 November 2024

Income and Expenditure Account

Year ended 30 November 2024

	Note	2024 €	2023 €
Income			
Donations		58,801	62,778
Investment gains		25,422	21,696
Gross income		84,223	84,474
Fees and charges		(969)	(524)
Tax at source		(4,680)	(8,492)
Excess of income over expenditure		78,574	75,458
Allocated to:			
Accumulated funds		39,287	37,729
Distributable fund	4	39,287	37,729
		78,574	75,458

Statement of Affairs

30 November 2024

	Note	2024 €	2023 €
ASSETS AND LIABILITIES			
Non-current assets			
Financial assets	5	344,573	329,573
Current assets			
Loans receivable	6	330,000	250,000
Other receivables		35,995	18,622
Cash and cash equivalents		14,619	66,963
		380,614	335,585
Total assets		725,187	665,158
Funds and liabilities			
Funds			
Capital fund	7	11,647	11,647
Distributable fund	4	74,877	71,180
Accumulated fund	8	558,976	502,965
		645,500	585,792
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accruals		1,546	1,049
Distributable income		74,877	71,180
Current tax liabilities		3,264	7,137
		79,687	79,366
Net funds and liabilities		725,187	665,158

Liabilities

Current liabilities

Accruals		1,546	1,049
Distributable income		74,877	71,180
Current tax liabilities		3,264	7,137
		79,687	79,366

Net funds and liabilities

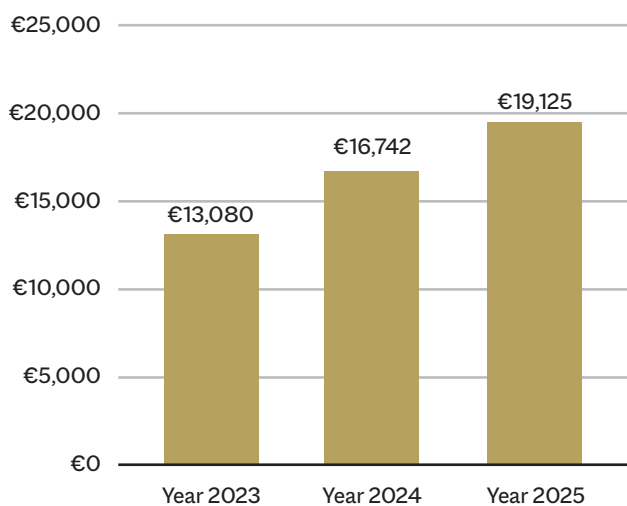
		725,187	665,158
--	--	----------------	---------

These financial statements were approved by the board members, authorised for issue on 28 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Joe Saliba
President

Pio Vassallo
Member

Donations Paid



A man with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored striped button-down shirt and dark trousers, stands with his arms crossed in an office environment. In the background, there are wooden stairs and office furniture.

Vassallo Group's human touch keeps pace with change

LEE XUEREB

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER,
VASSALLO GROUP

The role of human resources, including that at Vassallo Group, has undergone a massive shift in recent years, with organisations around the world reimagining how they attract, support, and retain talent.

“I feel that as time goes by, people’s expectations – from their employer, their role, and themselves – have grown and changed dramatically,” explains Lee Xuereb, Chief People Officer at Vassallo Group.

“A lot of it is generational and cultural, but world events have also shaped these expectations. People today are clearer about what they want and less willing to accept anything else.”

For Vassallo Group, the importance of valuing employees has always been embedded in its DNA.

“At Vassallo Group and its subsidiaries, HR was never just an operational function. The importance we’ve given our employees was always a priority. Before, it was our choice; today, it’s a must. If employee wellbeing isn’t a priority, you risk losing your people.”

Digitalisation has also played a key role in reshaping HR. From analytics and reporting to data-driven decision-making, technology has helped streamline once time-consuming processes.

“Digital tools make our work faster and more accurate,” Lee notes. “Of course, there’s a learning curve... people often have a love-hate relationship with new systems until they become comfortable with them, but ultimately, the benefits outweigh the challenges.”

‘If employee wellbeing isn’t a priority, you risk losing your people’

A strong HR strategy must also align closely with corporate objectives and Vassallo Group has given HR a permanent seat at the strategy table. This ensures employee-related priorities remain part of the wider business agenda.

Looking to the future, workforce development remains a central focus. Through annual training, needs analysis, as well as ongoing appraisals and discussions, the Group ensures its people are equipped for current demands and future opportunities.

As Vassallo Group nears its 80th year, Lee says what he is most proud of is the connectivity between shareholders, management and employees at all levels: “That sense of connection and relatability gives the company its face and its soul. It’s what sets us apart, and it’s what will carry us forward.” ■

Describe the Group’s next decade in one word: Flourishing.

As a guardian of the Group’s 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind?

A healthy culture of mutual respect between employees of all levels and between all companies.

Vassallo Group's digital transformation is redefining the way the organisation operates, collaborates, and delivers value, and for Carlo Aquilina, Chief Corporate Services Officer and CIO, this is not just about technology, "it's about empowering people".

"By automating routine tasks and centralising information, we're enabling our teams to focus on higher value activities, innovation, and service quality," he explains.

This shift from fragmented, manual processes to integrated, data-driven operations is improving visibility and consistency across departments, speeding up decision-making processes, strengthening efficiency and long-term strategy.

Innovation requires responsibility and Carlo emphasises that every new platform introduced across the Group is assessed for its security, compliance, and governance standards.

"We encourage innovation within a controlled environment," he says. "Trusted cloud platforms, advanced endpoint protection, and threat-management tools allow us to stay agile without compromising resilience."

His remit also extends to corporate governance and compliance, areas he views as enablers, not constraints. Vassallo Group's principles-based governance model provides clear accountability and transparency, while allowing each subsidiary the flexibility to innovate within its sector.

"Strong governance gives us the confidence to evolve responsibly, knowing we have the right controls, guidance and support in place," he adds.

'Strong governance gives us the confidence to evolve responsibly'

Carlo sees Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles as central to the Group's long-term vision, "shaping how we operate, innovate and grow responsibly".

Data-driven systems are being developed to capture ESG metrics across all subsidiaries, ensuring decisions align with the Group's values of integrity, innovation, and care.

Sustainability and digital transformation, he notes, are "deeply interconnected". Reliable data and intelligent technologies enable the Group to improve efficiency, reduce its environmental footprint, and pursue growth that is responsible and profitable.

Artificial intelligence is also being explored in experimental phases to assess its potential in enhancing operational efficiency and driving innovation across the Group.

"It allows us to innovate with purpose," Carlo says.

As Vassallo Group approaches its 80th anniversary, he reflects on the responsibility of shaping systems that will sustain its legacy. "It's about honouring the past while preparing for the future," he says.

"We're building structures that are secure, scalable, and intelligent, ensuring the next generation inherits not just a successful organisation, but one that is resilient, ethical, and future-ready." ■

Building a digital, sustainable future

CARLO AQUILINA

CHIEF CORPORATE SERVICES OFFICER &
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, VASSALLO GROUP



Describe the Group's next decade in one word: Progressive.

As a guardian of the Group's 80-year legacy, what do you hope to leave behind? I hope to leave behind a foundation of systems, structures and values that future generations can build on with confidence. My goal is to ensure the transformation we're driving today isn't just about new technology or policies, but about creating a culture of integrity, innovation, and accountability that endures.

SHINE AWARDS



**BEST SUPERVISOR AWARD -
CAMPUS HUB**
CLAUDINE SCIBERRAS



**BEST SUPERVISOR AWARD -
CAREMALTA**
JOSETTE AGIUS



**BEST SUPERVISOR AWARD -
CATERESSENCE**
MICHEL HERRAN



**BEST SUPERVISOR AWARD -
HILA**
CHARMAINE IZUAKOR



**BEST SUPERVISOR AWARD -
VASSALLO BUILDERS**
WILLIAM XERRI



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
CAMPUS HUB**
ALI IBRAHIM



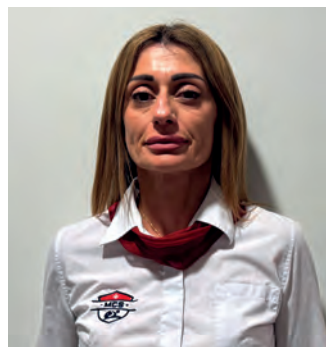
**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
CAREMALTA**
BENIGNA FAVA



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
CATERESSENCE**
ANTONELLA MIFSUD



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
HILA**
PAULA SULTANA



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
MEDITERRANEAN COLLEGE
OF SPORT**
MARIELLA BUHAGIAR



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
VASSALLO BUILDERS**
LEANNE D'ANASTASI



**BEST EMPLOYEE AWARD -
VASSALLO GROUP REALTY**
MARIO FARRUGIA



**BEST MANAGER AWARD -
VASSALLO BUILDERS**
GEORGE AZZOPARDI



**BEST MANAGER AWARD -
HILA**
RENATA ZAHRA



**TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
AWARD - VASSALLO BUILDERS**
YOUSEFF HAJJAJATE



**BEST NEWCOMER AWARD -
CATERESSENCE**
LIVIA VARGYAS BEBESINE



**BRAND AMBASSADOR AWARD
ACCOMMODATION &
CATERING - CAMPUS HUB
SLAVOLJUB GOLUBOVIC**



**BRAND AMBASSADOR AWARD CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY -
VASSALLO GROUP REALTY
MARTIN DEGIORGIO & PAUL VASSALLO**



**BRAND AMBASSADOR AWARD
EDUCATION - MEDITERRANEAN
COLLEGE OF SPORT
RICARDO MOTA**



**BRAND AMBASSADOR AWARD
HEALTH - HILA
RENJINI NAIR**



**CUSTOMER FOCUS AWARD
ACCOMMODATION &
CATERING - CATERESSENCE
FABIANA VELLA**



**CUSTOMER FOCUS AWARD
CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY -
VASSALLO BUILDERS
ARLENE VILLENA**



**CUSTOMER FOCUS AWARD
EDUCATION - LEARNING
WORKS
MARINA MIFSUD**



**CUSTOMER FOCUS AWARD
HEALTH - CAREMALTA
PAUL AGIUS**



**SERVICE QUALITY AWARD - CAREMALTA
MARIA FENECH & JOSETTE MICALLEF**



SERVICE AWARDS

VASSALLO GROUP REALTY

5 YEARS

Jason Anthony Saliba

VASSALLO GROUP

5 YEARS

Sarah Aquilina

15 YEARS

Donnalise Borg
Lee Xuereb

10 YEARS

Martin Bondin

VASSALLO BUILDERS

5 YEARS

Omar Safine
Er Rafay Mohammed
Vladan Stanojevic
Ivaylo Dimitrov
Simo Todorov
Mohamed Ichamrahen
Sukhpal Singh
Jaspal Singh
Ram Ratan Singh
Pardeep Singh

10 YEARS

Iqbal Azhar

15 YEARS

Martin Galea
Eugenio Muscat
Edin Silajdzija
Joseph Abela
Spiridione Sciberras
Charles Len Borg
Joseph Vassallo
Simo Karaivanov
Joseph Sacco

Joseph Bellizzi
Anthony Delia
Mark Spiteri
Henry Jerry
Georgi Dimitrov Mitrev
Tencho Zhivkov Tenchev
George Azzopardi
Oumar Gueite Fode
Iliya Petev Iliev
Srdan Kvrjic
Harvinder Singh
Ravinder Singh
Varinder Singh
Monday Omoruyi
Christian Ianes Borg
Joshua Benjamin Gauci
Luke Micallef

20 YEARS

Anna Bugeja

25 YEARS

Joseph Aquilina
Gordon Micallef
Stephan Sladden

CATERESSENCE

5 YEARS

Mariya Manolova
Leanne Cassar
Dimche Spirkoski

10 YEARS

Andre McKay
Kevin Debattista

HILA

5 YEARS

Elaine Marie Grixti
Anna Curmi
Fatima Espinosa Tinio
Jean Leizle Dalingding
Joseph Debono

Melanie Muscat
Doreen Garcia
Karen Debra Hodge

10 YEARS

Charlene Terribile

CAREMALTA

5 YEARS

Aisa Marie Samonte Pabilla
Isabelle Abela
Raymond Debono
Johnson Kunjukunjamma John
Shaji Kuruvilla
Mitty Anijo
Sherin Raj
Geogy Thomas
Ruth Tonna
Doreen Chetcuti
Maria Cecelia Soria Lumor
Joseph Debono
Riya Paul
Sabitha Joseph
Tomcy Tom
Marie Louise Darmanin
Camille Taboso Caslib
Aney Saji
Josna Jose
Rincy Alias
Miriam Brown
Jermaine Mistola Troisi
Janice Sarabia Nabor
Jayson Oliveros Cabrillos
Bojana Deljanin
Sunija Nellikunnu Sandaran
Deserie Aspa
Mylene Abalos Rayo
Joemarie Refil Amaro
John Paul Refil Amaro
John Vincent Olchondra Gozo
Anthony Caruana
Manju Chilambikunnel Thomas
Ma Joe Jean Sadiang-Abay Gauci
Gesil Boniola Godinez
Patrick John Falconite
Rita Williams
Glenda Garriedo Balanta
Randy Aboyme
Glenn Capina Vargas
Marites Tongco Ferrer
Liza Bayotlang Acebuche
Mar Blanco Dela Cruz
Jemar Sarancial
Anusree Udayaprakash
Cherynate Acenas Pellazar
Maricar Rizo Elope
Rodrigo Tabal Carcallas
Jovana Petkovic
Emilyn Coronado Dulam
Cynthia Narvasa Jugalbot
Rosemarie Bacus Hapos
Antoinette Degabriele
Linshy Andrews
Aleyamma Varghese
Marites Emit Espedillon
Pinky Sundar Raj
Analiza Banaag Andal
Anu Joby
Elseena John
Reena Thomas
Darrell Manlangit Jumalon

Kristine Atienza Marasigan
Ronie Amacna Flores
Feliciano Jr Escallar Alarca
Karen Concepcion Nabua
Rizza Guerrero
Trifena Gantas
Richelle Paragas Soriano
Juby Joy Peedikaparampil
Neethu Raju
Mattias Triganza
Joan Bagarinao Lapong
James Royston Myatt
Marianne Delicata
Sijo George
Anju Raj
Anthony Zahra
Joseph Camilleri
Jubi Joseph
Antoine Zahra
Iris Anguit Gomez
Marilyn Mangin
Christine Asish Alex

10 YEARS

Lawrence Sultana
Charmaine Bonanno
Estelito Garcia
Jonathan Xuereb
Edera Magro
Miriam Grillo
Noel Schembri
Jacqueline Bonnici
Sylvia Briffa
Joanna Farrugia
Ronald Borg
Sophie Barnes
Sylvia Camilleri
Antoinette Agius
Sandra Scerri
Janet Dalli
Dorcas Chircop
Josephine Meli

15 YEARS

Josette Muscat
Josianne Mercieca
Charlene Debono
Maria Sultana

20 YEARS

Antonia Bonnici
Rita Cassar
Edel Borg Mizzi
Josianne Coleiro
Doreen Borg
Maria Romina Mintoff
Frans Portelli

25 YEARS

Anabel Ciappara

CAMPUS HUB

10 YEARS

Caroline Borg

15 YEARS

Svalovjub Golubovic

VASSALLO GROUP REALTY

5 YEARS

Mario Farrugia

25 YEARS

Angelo Micallef

10 YEARS

Audrey Muscat
Jacqueline Cordina

35 YEARS

Martin Degiorgio



5 YEARS

Simone Vella

20 YEARS

Christian Vassallo

10 YEARS

John Grima
Natalie Cauchi

25 YEARS

Pio Vassallo
Stephen Borg

VASSALLO BUILDERS

5 YEARS

Ljubisa Zaric
Hassan El Haimar
Mateo Bularon Porcadilla
Momeriano Demol Jr Cabatana
Deborah Meilak
Mustapha Naimi
Puthenthara Sebastian Sistus
Mhamed Baaziz
Dharamvir Tiwana
Sukhvir Singh
Sijen Vazhappilly chacko
Joby Jose
Sarabjit Singh
Gurpreet Singh
Jomon Savier
Mohammed Chaman
Sher Singh
Wraich Harpreet Singh
Deepak Dewedi
Bikramjeet Singh
Dharminder Singh

15 YEARS

Srdjan Kovacevic
Sezgin Shaban
Thomas Gatt
Christian Micallef
Safet Patkovic
Noel John Jones

20 YEARS

Reno Vassallo

25 YEARS

Francis Gatt
Gordian Ohaegbu
Christian Camilleri

30 YEARS

Andrew Zammit

35 YEARS

John Zammit
Mario Caruana

10 YEARS

Omar Laadi

HILA

5 YEARS

Renjini Chittakkattukizhakethil
Radhakrishnan Nair
Bose Paul Areeckal
Maria Nissan Barliso Bonita
Rosette Borg
Reyel Gerald Magnaye
Maricel Oberos Echenique
Nibin Jose
Jennifer Obianuju Chukwuma

Maria Scerri
Josephine Caruana

15 YEARS

Antoine Borg
Janet Silvio

20 YEARS

Sandra Farrugia

25 YEARS

Christine Agius

10 YEARS

Paula Sultana

CAREMALTA

5 YEARS

Rincy Sinto
Sijo James
Gelli Vitug Pineda
Kimberly Buhagiar
Michelle Rivero
Mark Ciantar
Joice Jose
Ma Susana Demateo Senson
Maria Donata Mininni
Nadia Galea
Carmelo Mifsud
Maria Theresa Desamparado
Tesaluna
Tika Pajja Pun
Kurt Vella
Reymar Rubio Bermudo
Cheryl Quindo Vergara
Delia Espellarga Abecia
Ethel Saliba
Annabel Pogosa Maceda
Catherine Cilia
Armida Penafiel Sagad
Ivelina Marinova
Josette Abela
Annie Martinez Popon
Trancy Bacalso Olib
Crispina Paler Barbaquil
Matthew Vassallo
Katerina Spirkoska
Godwin Maramag Miranda
Lourdes Marie Ciantar
Thomas James Bianco
Michael Ramirez Catagatan
Geethu Krishnan
Joseph Galea
Pacifico Aton Cabigon
Ethel Cuevas Robledo
Mohaini Sabellano Pepito
Christine Muscat
Marinko Trajkoski
Ollie Mangalindan Arcadio
Kylie Mifsud
Edgar Narciso Ferrer
Perumal Balakrishnan

Asha Kirar
Rainelyn Milallos Moralidad
Irish Jan Gabua Davo-Davo
Hristena Vaseva
Bernardette Coppola
Zvetlana Debono
Rita Pace Vuckovic
Babu Plappilli Varghese

10 YEARS

Brian Saliba
Cathy Vella
Christopher Gauci
Luisa Sedrome Castillon
Dimitrina Petrova Mitreva
Michelle Attard
Anna Abela
Maria Dolores Saliba
Nathalie Grima
Carmelo Borg
Belinda Pavia Gonzales

15 YEARS

Graziella Di Grazia
Mary Grace Gerada
Robert Grech
Frederick Vella
Doreen Mifsud
Johannes Tromp
James Sciriha

20 YEARS

Simon Cuschieri

25 YEARS

Ruth Tanti
Purity Spiteri Vlahovic

30 YEARS

Stephen Teager

CATERESSENCE

5 YEARS

Elizabeta Prodanovikj
Ramon Ceci

Douq Brahim
Claudia Marie Calleja
Fabiana Vella

VASSALLO GROUP REALTY

5 YEARS

Sasa Nikolic

15 YEARS

Paul Abela

10 YEARS

Mario Borg

APPOINTMENTS & PROMOTIONS

VASSALLO GROUP

Radica Arsoška Front Office Receptionist

Martina Magro Front Office Receptionist

James Casha Finance Manager

Eve Maria Monger Front Office Receptionist

Naomi Zerafa Front Office Receptionist

Shanise Chetcuti Procurement Clerk

Donnalise Borg Procurement Executive

Christine Valente Assistant Procurement Manager

VASSALLO BUILDERS

Abdelati Ouargane Mason

Iqbal Shahid Qazi Shad Plumber

Sonique Ellul Human Resources Clerk

Victoria Mackinze Cost Planner and Development Project Manager

Laith Alkhatib Civil Work Site Manager

Francis Tanti Mason

Dragomir Aksentic Charge Hand

Leanne D'Anastasi Human Resources Executive

CAREMALTA GROUP

Ritianne Borg Designated Facility Manager

Robert Grech Person Safety and Development Manager

Dorianne Bugeja Services Executive

Idil Demicoli HR Executive

Simona Kazaryan Facility Lead

Simone Borg Facility Administrative Assistant

Mary Teresa Micallef Assistant Facility Manager

Angelle Bezzina Assistant HR Manager

Zvetlana Debono Senior Nursing Manager

Mirabelle Sultana Lead Care Assistant

Akshay Kirar Digital Training Executive

Maclainne Mangilit Navarro Team Leader

Shania Tonna Junior HR Executive

Subin Bose Services Executive

Clarice Micallef Cilia Facility Manager

Julia Tabone Facility Manager

CATERESSENCE

Anisa Ramaj Financial Analyst

Mark Ronald Auditor Jaralve F&B Supervisor

Harryson Nyl Reyes Garcia Kitchen Steward Supervisor III

Niraj Meche Café Assistant II

Crishelle Medrano Jr Chef de Partie

Jennifer Michel Herran Duitama Cake Box Jr Executive

Leanne Cassar Business Administration Executive

Lina Maria Echeverry Rosas Jr Supervisor II

Sovit Giri Café Assistant III

Edward Zammit Maintenance Technician

Durgesh Painuly Sous Chef

Pinki Sharma Café Assistant II

Fabio Andres Silva Ascencio Porter

Henry Fabian Rangel Gonzalez Kitchen Steward

Devis De Jesus Vanegas Caro Chef

Christabelle Camilleri Sales Invoicing Executive

Javier Gonzalo Bautista Packer III

Anyelis Berardinelli Café Assistant II

David Mulford Maldonado Café Assistant III

Melwin Manoj Antony F&B Attendant

Ervin Castillo Tolosa Chef de Partie

Alden Reyes Manalastas Stores Assistant II

Anees Rahman T.A. Accounts Payables Executive

Ciro Antonio Jaimes Lindarte Cleaner

Mohammad Faisal Kaifulvara Jr Supervisor II

Angie Sofia Acevedo Pulido Jr Supervisor I

Rajesh Ranjitkar Kitchen Helper

Roberta Johnston Canteen Supervisor

Marlon Dimaala Nitro Stock & Cost Controller

Aldana Mariel Garayo Suarez Office Assistant

Jagat Bahadur Pariyar Jr Sous Chef

Evans Bienomugisha Headwaiter

Lina Sophia Rivera Estupinan Café Assistant II

Chandra Kumar Shrestha Jr Supervisor I

Raul Andres Reyes Cadena Commis Chef I

VASSALLO GROUP REALTY

Adrian Farrugia Senior Security Officer

Natasha Muscat Accounts Executive

Jubin Joseph Janitor

Keith Gauci Maintenance Supervisor

Neethu Thomas Cleaner

Zlatko Rajkov Maintenance Technician

CAMPUS HUB

Gabriel Borg Accounts Executive

Maria Angelica Parra Jurado Sales & Reservations Executive

Zsofia Veronika Kelemen Customer Experience Officer

Litto Thomas Housekeeping Assistant

Kelly Meilak Desira Customer Experience Manager

Anastasia Zhuravleva Sales and Reservations Coordinator

Joseph Borg Refurbishment Team Leader

Isaac Kwaku Agyekum Accounts Clerk

Mariela Nadkova Borisova Housekeeping Supervisor

Dylan Domenici Junior Accountant

Diaz Ariza Haslady Tatiana Customer Experience Officer

Oladipupo Ibrahim Adeogun Customer Experience Officer

MEDITERRANEAN COLLEGE OF SPORT

Gloria Madeleine Chacon Pedraza Housekeeping Supervisor

Katia Cristina Vazquez Cuesta Teacher

Talitha Van Cohen Supply Graduate Teacher

Klara Vassallo Supply Graduate Teacher

Claire Sant Supply Learning Support Educator

Matthew Thake Teacher

Nataliya Prodanova Science Lab Technician

Elisabeth Mero-Santucci Teacher

Mikela Riolo Teacher

Jonathan Vella Goalkeeping Coach

Rachel Rizzo Primary Teacher

Anna Cali Teacher

Hale Bonello Supply Teacher

Bryan Pace Teacher

Patrick Padovani Teacher

Deborah Camilleri Briffa Primary Teacher

Martina Vella Supply Learning Support Educator

Lara Vella Petroni Teacher

Paul Scicluna Teacher

Kristina Zammit Learning Support Educator

Dorianne Delicata Supply Graduate Teacher

Melissa Mawdsley Supply Graduate Teacher

Jake Bonello Supply Graduate Teacher

Carald Vella Football Coach

Yanika Bugeja Teacher

Martina Borg Sport Psychology Practitioner

Duncan Spiteri Teacher

Pierre Camilleri Front Office Receptionist

Denjel Grima Sports Attendant

Jordy Azzopardi Benfica Assistant Football Coach

Claire Chelagat Janitor

Alessandro Ramon Front Desk Administrator

Leonor Alves Da Silva Fernandes Administrative Assistant

Elisabeth Mero-Santucci IT Support Officer

Alfred Apap Junior Accountant

Mihaela Andone Front Office Receptionist

Joelle Marie Spiteri Front Office Receptionist

Aleandro Garzia Sports Attendant

Miguel Andre Vilaca Santos Patrao Silva Strength & Conditioning Coach

Teodora Drakuloska Supply Learning Support Educator

LEARNING WORKS

Elaine Bonnici Zammit Operations & Administration Manager

Celebrating outstanding contribution

Appreciation inspires excellence. *Arkati* sits down with the team members whose dedication and commitment earned them special recognition.



LEANNE D'ANASTASI, 30
Role: HR Executive, Vassallo Builders.

How long have you been with the company: 10 years.

What motivates you? My goal is to ensure everyone goes home safe, feels supported, and has the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. Knowing my work can improve someone's wellbeing, job satisfaction, and sense of security gives me a real sense of purpose and pride.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? It's a moment that makes me pause and reflect. It's not just about recognition for the work I do, but also about the values I hold dear; values I learned from my father, who first joined this company 20 years ago, and whose work ethic motivates me.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? Every one of you plays a vital role in making this company what it is. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment make a real difference. Let's continue to work with purpose and collaboration.

ANTONELLA MIFSUD, 30
Role: Cake decorator, CaterEssence.

How long have you been with the company: 6 years.

What motivates you? The opportunity to learn something new every day and to put that into practice whenever possible.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? I feel honoured and appreciated. This award means a great deal to me, and it motivates me to continue giving my very best. Knowing the company is proud of my work inspires me to aim even higher.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? That everything is possible if you put in your effort and stay focused on your goal.



MARIELLA BUHAGIAR, 45
Role: School Clerk, MCS.

How long have you been with the company: Close to 18 months.

What motivates you? The opportunity to make a positive difference each day, whether it's helping students, supporting the SLT team and teachers, or ensuring everything runs smoothly behind the scenes. Knowing my work contributes to a supportive and well-organised environment keeps me going.

What does winning the best Employee Award mean to you? It came as a big surprise and it was a great honour. This recognition reminds me that dedication and teamwork are noticed and valued. It encourages me to keep giving my best in all I do.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? We all play an important part in the success of MCS... supporting each other, staying positive and taking pride in what we do makes a real difference. I'm grateful to be part of this dedicated team.



MARIO FARRUGIA, 40

Role: Maintenance, Vassallo Group Realty.

How long have you been with the company: Nearly 7 years.

What motivates you? The respect and appreciation shown by the Vassallo family. Our CEO, Ruben Vassallo, always shows genuine interest and respect towards all employees, and Jacky Cordina is always ready to support us. I am also fortunate to work with colleagues who are hardworking, united and supportive.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? It means a lot to know my work is recognised. It also gives me a stronger sense of responsibility and encourages me to continue working with dedication.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? Let us continue to remain united, hardworking and respectful toward one another. When we support each other, we all grow and succeed.

PAULA SULTANA, 58

Role: Facility Administrative Assistant, CareMalta

How long have you been with the company: 10 years.

What motivates you? Seeing the smiles on the faces of our service users and knowing I have made a positive difference to their day. Their appreciation is what inspires me to keep giving my best.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? Winning this award shows me I'm on the right track. It also makes me feel grateful to have an amazing mentor in our Facility Manager Renata Zahra, whose guidance and support mean so much to me.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues?

- T - Together
- E - Everyone
- A - Achieves
- M - More.



BENIGNA FAVA, 61

Role: Care worker, HILA.

How long have you been with the company: 18 years.

What motivates you? Knowing my work has a real impact on the wellbeing of the residents. Seeing them smile, feeling I have helped make their day brighter, and knowing they feel cared for and respected is what keeps me going.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? It means a lot. It is a wonderful recognition of the love and effort I put into my work everyday. Caring for older people is not just a job, it's a calling. This award reminds me that kindness, patience, and dedication never go unnoticed. It has also inspired me to keep giving my best and to continue growing in my role.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? Every small act of care matters. The work we do is not easy, but it is incredibly meaningful. Supporting each other makes all the difference. I am grateful to be part of such a compassionate team, and I encourage everyone to keep working with heart, because residents feel that love everyday.



ALI IBRAHIM, 42

Role: Maintenance, Campus Hub.

How long have you been with the company: Joined in 2013, with a break in between, then rejoined and moved to Campus Hub when it opened.

What motivates you? It's a dream to work with Vassallo Group. I'm very happy working here... Vassallo treats everyone equally, no matter what colour or nationality you are.

What does winning the Best Employee Award mean to you? I'm very honoured by this award as there were many nominees... it's amazing to be chosen as a winner.

What message would you like to share with your colleagues? Everybody must work hard to achieve their goals and dreams.



The supervisors who help others shine

Behind every strong team is a steady guiding hand. *Arkati* celebrates the supervisors who have made a meaningful impact through their leadership and dedication.



MICHEL HERRAN, 29

Position: Junior Executive/ Supervisor, The Cake Box.

How long have you been with the company: 2 years.

How do you keep your team motivated?

Communication and trust are the foundation of my team. I ensure they feel comfortable approaching me, which helps them feel heard and valued. This encourages them to perform at their best and share ideas when they see opportunities for improvement.

What's one lesson leadership has taught you?

One of the most valuable lessons I've learned is how to manage a team with different personalities... recognising when something is wrong and how to support them. Learning to guide my team without making them feel constantly under pressure has been a challenge and an important learning experience.

What kind of leader do you strive to be?

I aim to guide my team toward constant improvement. Leadership isn't just about giving instructions, it's about creating a safe environment where people feel valued and encouraged to grow through mutual respect.

What does winning the Best Supervisor Award mean to you?

It was a happy surprise and I feel grateful for the recognition. It shows the effort I put in is noticed, and it motivates me to continue improving and contributing to the company's growth.

CLAUDINE SCIBERRAS, 45

Position: Head of Housekeeping, Campus Hub.

How long have you been with the Group: Nearly 4 years.

How do you keep your team motivated? By keeping a positive environment and making sure my team feel supported... I strongly believe that a positive mindset is the key to feeling motivated in everything you do.

What's one lesson leadership has taught you? Leadership taught me responsibility and to be strong to lead my team.

What kind of leader do you strive to be? I strive to be a role model as a leader to my team and everyone around me; being committed to lead; always giving hundred per cent in my work; and being someone my team can look up to as a leader and friend.

What does winning the Best Supervisor Award mean to you?

Winning showed me how far I've come – of the determination, work ethic, and sacrifices that brought me here. It represents the opportunity to grow into a leadership role and gives me a sense of appreciation and pride, knowing the work I've done, and will continue to do, is recognised.





WILLIAM XERRI, 55

Position: Supervisor, Vassallo Builders.

How long have you been with the Group: 35 years.

How do you keep your team motivated? By leading by example, being kind, and ensuring I stop to listen. I believe showing respect and understanding builds trust and encourages everyone to give their best.

What's one lesson leadership has taught you? That listening is just as important as giving direction. My job is to support and guide, not just lead.

What kind of leader do you strive to be? I strive to be a leader who is fair, approachable, and supportive. Someone who helps others reach their best potential.

What does winning the Best Supervisor Award mean to you? This recognition reminds me of the importance of continuing to learn, improve, and lead in a way that supports and inspires my team.

CHARMAINE IZUAKOR, 48

Position: Lead Key Worker, HILA.

How long have you been with the Group: 9 years.

How do you keep your team motivated? I believe motivation comes from feeling valued and supported. I make sure to listen, show appreciation, and celebrate even the small achievements. We work in a challenging but deeply rewarding environment, so I always remind my team of the positive difference they make every day.

What's one lesson leadership has taught you? Leadership taught me the importance of patience and empathy. Every person has their own strengths and struggles, and taking the time to understand and support them makes all the difference.

What kind of leader do you strive to be? I strive to be a person who leads by example: being approachable, understanding, and fair. I want my team to feel comfortable approaching me for guidance and to know I'm there to lend a hand or a listening ear.

What does winning the Best Supervisor Award mean to you? It means a great deal to me. It's a wonderful acknowledgment of the care, dedication, and teamwork that goes into what we do every day. I see it not just as a personal achievement, but as a recognition of my whole team's hard work and commitment.



JOSETTE AGIUS, 63

Position: Senior Supervisor, CareMalta.

How long have you been with the Group: Over 13 years.

How do you keep your team motivated? Motivating my team starts with clear communication. I make sure everyone understands their responsibilities so our shifts run smoothly. I check in regularly, offering both encouragement and constructive feedback. I stay approachable and supportive, not just as a supervisor but as someone who genuinely cares about their wellbeing. Celebrating small achievements helps keep morale strong.

What is one lesson leadership has taught you? Leadership taught me the importance of compassion and consistency. Treating residents and staff with the same respect creates trust. I've learned that leadership is not about authority, but about service, listening, guiding, and being present when it matters most.

What kind of leader do you strive to be? I strive to lead by example: someone who teaches, supports, and uplifts. I want to create an environment where everyone feels valued, supported, and motivated to grow. My approach is rooted in empathy, accountability, and teamwork.

What does winning the Best Supervisor Award mean to you personally? Winning the Best Supervisor Award is deeply meaningful to me. It's a recognition not just of my work, but of the values I've upheld throughout my years with CareMalta - dedication, integrity, and compassion. It made me feel appreciated. This recognition is shared with my team, whose support makes everything possible.

Leading with heart

From transforming team culture to driving outstanding results, *Arkati* catches up with the two managers who claimed this year's top award.

GEORGE AZZOPARDI, VASSALLO BUILDERS PLANT & SCAFFOLDING SECTION MANAGER

With over nearly two decades at Vassallo Builders, George Azzopardi has earned a reputation for proving he not only gets the job done, but is a man of his word.

For George - Plant and Scaffolding Section Manager, and Vassallo Builders' water and electricity coordinator - integrity has never been more essential than today.

"We need to maintain our integrity. People try to cheat or take shortcuts all the time, I'm not that guy. If I give you my word, you better believe I'm going to keep it. Even when times get tough, I'll do everything I can to follow through," he said.

George attributes his long-standing tenure to the variety of challenges and opportunities Vassallo Group offered him over the years. From scaffolding, to plant, panels and utilities, he has been entrusted with numerous roles. He has also received several certifications, including a Mason Licence and Skill Cards, proving he is always ready to continue learning.

"I'm lucky in that sense, the company remains the same, but the challenges are always changing. I always have the chance to try something new."

Managing a 19-person scaffolding team, overseeing workers in water and electricity, and keeping up to date on the Plant section (now largely handled by his colleague, Thomas Gatt) keeps George on his toes. He also focuses on ensuring the business remains ahead with competitive quotations, timely delivery, and client satisfaction.

"No matter the size of the project, there's no better feeling than hearing a client say how happy they were with our team and our work. Whether it's a small shaft or a large-scale project, a good reputation brings more business."

One of the keys to his team's productivity is George's hands-on leadership style. "If a job needs to get done and my team needs extra help, why wouldn't I pitch in? It just makes sense."

This year, George was named one of Vassallo Group's Best Managers, an honour he deeply values. "It means a lot, not because of the award itself, but because I truly felt appreciated."



RENATA ZAHRA, CASAL NUOVO FACILITY MANAGER

For Renata Zahra, one of the keys to being a successful leader is maintaining a human, person-centred approach to management, so it is no surprise she considers her 74-person team and Casal Nuova's residents to be part of her extended family.

"I'm proud to say my team is united. We are one family, and we all work to listen to and respect one another. I believe in a no-blame culture; I prefer to focus on solutions, and we can only achieve that through listening and reflecting on each other's suggestions," she says.

At HILA's Casal Nuova, Renata goes out of her way to emphasise that every member of the team holds the same value in her eyes, irrelevant of their role.

"There is no distinction between a cleaner and a nurse. We all work here, and we rely on each other for a smooth operation... We all need each other, myself included. The captain can't steer the ship alone."

Originally from Lithuania, Renata arrived in Malta in 2009 as an Erasmus nursing student. A summer job as a care assistant marked the start of her long-standing career in care.

Three years later, she joined CareMalta as a care assistant at Zammit Clapp, eventually progressing to Senior Care Assistant and Lead Care Assistant at Villa Messina. Today, Renata serves as Facility Manager at Casal Nuova, home to over 60 residents; a role she has held for the past five years.

Reflecting on her journey, Renata speaks about the unique challenges of working with residents who have mental health conditions and disabilities. Her experience with CareMalta has helped her shift the focus toward addressing residents' social needs, not just their medical ones.

"We aim to give them back a quality of life. Our goal is to reintroduce them to the community, and so far, I think it is going well," she says.

"We are a second family to them, and they are a second family to me," she adds fondly.

Renata's dedication and compassionate leadership earned her the title of Best Manager this year, a well-deserved honour she says she did not expect but deeply appreciates.

"We don't do this work for awards; we do it because we care. I know I've found my place here." ■





From power to possibility

Building smarter systems for a sustainable world.

ENERGY
WATER
TECHNOLOGY

We're engineering transformation where sustainability meets intelligence – deploying clean energy, efficient water solutions, and advanced technologies to power what's next.



powerezi.com

POWEREZI



VASSALLO GROUP
SINCE 1946

The Three Arches, Valletta Road, Mosta MST9016
Tel: +356 2143 2333 Email: info@vassallogroupmalta.com
www.vassallogroupmalta.com

Find us on   