



Josue Cruz Morales

Josue Cruz Morales has transformed his life from a C-D student to first year law school student at the University of Puerto Rico's flagship campus. He graduated with a 4.0 in the top 5 at the University of Puerto Rico Carolina. This 23-year old aspires to become the Mayor of Vieques and inspire other youth to become leaders of their island. In 2010, Josue received the Stone Soup Leadership Institute's first Walter Cronkite Award.

In 2004, Josue co-founded the Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative to train young and emerging leaders to build a new Vieques. After reading the Brooking Report declaring that Puerto Rico was the poorest community in the U.S., he wrote *The Challenges Facing Vieques Youth*, which is the poorest community in Puerto Rico. This report galvanized support from local, national and international leaders for this four-year bi-lingual demonstration project for the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. Josue and VYLI college youth produced a 2020 Report on Sustainable Development for Vieques that was presented at the APEC Youth Summit in Peru in 2008. In 2008 Josue co-founded Comunidad Verde Vieques (Green Vieques). The Mayor dedicated 500 acres to 300 landless families.

In 2010 Josue he presented this report as a youth delegate from Vieques at the Institute's 6th Annual Youth Summit on Sustainable Development on Martha's Vineyard. Youth delegates from other Caribbean islands included Bahamas, Jamaica, St. Vincent and Virgin Gorda. His deep commitment to learning best practices for his island, he helped implement the first "Green Initiative" in Puerto Rico's public schools where more than 5,000 students and 150 teachers created more than 100 school gardens. In 2011, Josue served as the Institute's Director for the 7th Annual Youth Leadership Summit focused on Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Business, Sustainable Building, Sustainable Cultures and Sustainable Islands. Youth delegates included Hawaii, Nantucket and Virgin Gorda, BVI.

This year, Josue has received tremendous press from the #1 English language Caribbean Business, Puerto Rico Daily Sun, Positive Caribbean News and the Vieques Events.

http://caribbeanbusinesspr.com/news03.php?nt_id=62215&ct_id=1

Stone Soup Leadership Institute
P.O. Box 4551, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
www.soup4worldinstitute.com

Accomplished Spokesperson

An inspiring speaker, Josue was VYLI's bi-lingual spokesperson – from local town meetings to presentations to the BVI Prime Minister to Caribbean conferences to Washington D.C. to the 2011 Walter Cronkite Awards Ceremony: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUyfAO5DJV&feature=share>

Josue's first presentation was at VYLI's event in San Juan at the El Convento Hotel that resulted in Puerto Rico Tourism Company's sponsorship of VYLI's photographic exhibit in the Vieques Airport. At the Alliance for New Humanity's 2nd annual conference in San Juan, co-chaired by Deepok Chopra and Costa Rica President Oscar Arias, brought cheers and tears to global leaders from business, government and philanthropy. At the Puerto Rican Governor's La Fortaleza Josue spoke on behalf of the VYLI delegate of 42 youth, parents and supporters to request greater support for Vieques youth. A member of VYLI's Economic-Cultural Delegation with Vieques Mayor Damaso Serrano Lopez and his staff to Tortola, British Virgin Islands, Josue made an impressive presentation to the BVI Chief Minister which was instrumental in the founding of the BVI's Virgin Gorda Youth Leadership Initiative. He represented Puerto Rico at the Commonwealth Youth Exchange with youth leaders from 15 other Caribbean countries and was featured in the *St. Thomas Daily News*. He served as a youth delegate to the Caribbean Media Exchange. At the Stone Soup Leadership Institute's VIP event in Washington D.C. Josue's presentation inspired business and government leaders like Congressman Elijah Cummings Deputy Vernon Simms and Aspira Vice President Hilda Crespo. At numerous VYLI events, Josue impressed CEOs like Richard Carrion from Banco Popular, Governor Anibel Acevedo and First Lady Luisa Gandara de Acevedo, Governor Sila Calderon and New York Governor George Pataki and CEO women of the Belizian Grove. He spoke at the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference on the crisis and innovative solutions for housing in Vieques, featured in many articles in the press. Josue was *El Nueva Dia* Award finalist; received a resolution from the Vieques Municipal Legislature and the Puerto Rican Senate congratulating him on this Award and his community service. He received scholarships from the Rosa Axtmayer Foundation from the UPR President and the prestigious Jose Jaine Pierluise Foundation scholarship. He was chosen as the youth representative to welcome Chelsea Clinton to Vieques.

Commitment to Technology

Josue is especially committed to the power of technology to empower young people and helped envision the Institute's first Technology Initiative. He contributed to an award-winning grant from Microsoft's Unlimited Potential and facilitated community workshops. In 2005 Josue served as a VYLI Summer Institute's Technology Coordinator working with young people to create VYLI's first newsletter. In 2006 Josue spearheaded VYLI's Radio Initiative; trained with the Cesar Chavez Foundation's Radio Campesina; and created his own radio show Community Radio Show in partnership with (Radio Puerto Rico 740 AM). In 2007, he served on the Institute's team in receiving a federal grant (NTIA) to plan a FCC license for the first radio station in Vieques. With support from Cesar Chavez, Josue helped design VYLI's website. In 2010, he helped create the first WiFy hotspot at the Vieques High School to connect students with educational opportunities around the world. Josue is lead project coordinator for the Institute's Sustainable Technology Initiative for Island Youth that will connect youth delegates from Hawaii, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and Vieques to develop their Sustainability-In-Action projects for their Islands future.



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