



### VYLI's Radio Initiative

VYLI's Radio Initiative evolved from Josue Cruz dream to create the first community radio station to give people a voice in their future and a connection to the world. Vieques is undergoing monumental transition with no local media to facilitate coverage of the island's rebirth. For decades, the people of Vieques are disconnected from the world. Surrounded by water, they have been separated geographically, and from the critical decision-making process affecting their future. The psychological impact has been significant – leading to a deep cultural, social and economic divide. In order for the rebirth of Vieques to be successful, there is an urgent need for Vieques to be connected to people around the world with the resources, opportunities and support they need.



*As a long time producer for public radio in the United States, I know that, at its best, radio can literally create community. And I have never seen a people as in need of connection as the residents of Vieques, Puerto Rico. After 60 years of displacement by the U.S. Navy, the Viequenses are now left to pick up the pieces and rebuild a community. That's why I suggested to VYLI that a public radio station would serve as an excellent centerpiece for such an effort. The island residents, having had their futures decided for them by the needs of Navy, now must speak to each other and determine their own future. They have to manage their natural resources, inspire and educate their children, and create employment. They have to make difficult decisions about how to move forward collectively, and how to integrate new members of their community with older ones. What better resource than their own, community-owned public radio station? Not only would it help to connect them to each other, but it would bring them the wisdom of the outside world.*

**Doug Berman, NPR's Car Talk**

## Our Progress

- **June 2004:** Josue participates in VYLI's first Summer Institute and declares his dream for a radio station.
- **June, 2005:** Cesar Chavez serves as faculty for 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summer Institute and participates in first planning session on VYLI Radio Show/Station with Josue Cruz and VYLI Board members.
- **August, 2005:** The Cesar Chavez Foundation's Radio Campesina hosts Josue to a training in Los Angeles and their studio in Bakersfield, CA. Cesar's father, Anthony encourages VYLI to work with friends and colleagues at Corporation for Public Broadcasting to request support for VYLI to secure a radio station. During the last two years, we have worked towards addressing all of their recommendations.
- **September, 2005:** Josue produced community program as a regular host on a radio show.
- **February, 2006:** VYLI hosts 2nd planning session with Doug Berman, NPR Car Talk;
- Josue participates in live New York radio show with *The Marsha Reeves Jews Show*.
- **February, 2007:** Hogan & Hartson L.L.P. from Washington, DC agrees to serve pro-bono;
- The engineering firm Cavell, Mertz & Davis, Inc. conducted advance analysis (pro-bono).
- **April, 2007:** VYLI submits comprehensive proposal to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the Department of Commerce/Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) for a planning grant to create the first community radio station in Vieques. The letter of support from NPR's Doug Berman speaks to the importance of how VYLI's Radio-Technology Initiative will significantly impact Vieques to be less isolated, more connected, more educated about issues affecting them and receive more support from the world.
- **June, 2007:** VIP event in Washington D.C. with Hogan & Hartson hosted by Zanibar's on the Waterfront.
- Josue participates on XM Radio station in Washington DC reaching over 1 million listeners.
- **September, 2007:** VYLI receives planning grant from NTIA.
- VYLI with Hogan & Hartson will submit second proposal for construction grant valued at 75%. Vieques must raise the 25% matching funds for the construction grant application.
- **October, 2007:** For the first time in 7 years, the FCC will accept license applications for non-commercial radio stations. We are extremely fortunate to receive pro-bono legal and technical support and assistance from a top Washington D.C. law firm, Hogan & Hartson LLP who is familiar with the FCC Telecommunications laws.