



Josue Cruz
Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative
Vieques, Puerto Rico
Texas

***Stone Soup for a Sustainable World:
Life-Changing Stories of Young Heroes***

How Can I Help?
Josue A. Cruz, J.D.
Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative
Vieques, Puerto Rico & Texas

When Josue Cruz was 14, he was invited to serve as a youth delegate to a Youth Leadership Summit being held in his home of Vieques, Puerto Rico. When he arrived there, his first question was, "How can I help?" Then he saw a poster that said "What is your dream for your life, for your island, and for the world?" and he realized that for the first time in his life, he was being encouraged to dream big. "My dream for my life is to become a lawyer," he said to himself. That was the beginning of a challenging journey--and an illustrious career--for Josue. After working very hard, he became a lawyer, and his first clients were the people in Vieques, whose land had been confiscated by the U.S. Navy. Josue helped them to reclaim their land: it was a long, arduous process and he spent many days pleading their cases. Today Josue lives in Texas, where he is defending the rights of border wall refugees from Central America. Now 30 years old, Josue loves seeing all the young people he has mentored at the Institute's Sustainability Summits who are pursuing *their* dreams. The work he started goes on! To Josue, this is life's greatest reward.

Values **Justice** **Compassion** **Solidarity** **Determination** **Cooperation**

Lessons Learned

- Be empathetic of the plight of others, and offer to help.
- When making a decision always ask yourself: What is the legacy I want to leave behind? Then act accordingly.
- The four most powerful words you can say are "How can I help?"

English Language Arts

- How has climate change affected Caribbean islands, particularly Puerto Rico? Create a timeline showing how the weather in the region has changed in the past 50 years, and how those changes have affected the economy, health, and quality of life of the people in this region. Make a digital poster presenting your findings and share it with your class.

- Write a personal narrative in which you explore the concept of empathy and how you could help those less fortunate in your community. Choose a particular issue that has resulted in people being treated unfairly, and using specific examples to explain how you would fight the injustice.
- Vieques was home to a military base for three generations. Working in groups of 3-5 people, create a poster on one of the following topics: 1. Sonic pollution, heavy metal pollution, economic restrictions imposed by the military base, and their consequences; 2. The importance of learning a second language in school; and 3. What is a nonviolent protest? Using your posters, create a [Gallery Walk](#) with the rest of your class.
- Write an essay comparing the treatment of the people of Vieques by the U.S Navy with the treatment of refugees at the southern U.S. border wall by U.S immigration officials.

STEM Activities

- Research the rates for various diseases (cancer, cardiovascular, diabetes) in Vieques, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean as a whole. Create a graph highlighting the distribution between regions. Do you see any trends in the data? Are the rates for some illnesses higher in Vieques than the average rates for Puerto Rico overall, or the Caribbean? Why do you think that is?
- Research how the effects of the U.S. Navy testing still affect the people of Vieques to this day. What can the Navy, or the U.S. government, do to mitigate these impacts? What would the cost be of implementing such a solution? Where might that fit into the annual U.S. budget?
- Research the economy of the island since the departure of the U.S Navy from Vieques in 2003. What are the main industries present on the island today? What are the sources of income for the residents? Graph the income distribution among demographics - local vs. mainland U.S. What percentage of the population falls below the federal income poverty line? Use the [U.S Census report for Puerto Rico](#) as a guide.
- How much land was sold to the U.S Navy? How much did the Navy pay the locals for their land? What is the land being used for today, and how much is it worth? What percentage of the land was returned to the people of Vieques?

Sustainability Innovations

- [Earth Justice](#) is one of the premier nonprofit public interest environmental law organizations in the world. Review some of their recent victories and learn how they are contributing to creating a more sustainable world.
- Earth Justice is one of the 20 environmentally-focused organizations specializing in law and policy that are highlighted in this [article](#). Why is it important to understand the scope of law as it pertains to environmental and social justice?
- In addition to addressing issues of environmental law, it is important to protect organizations that specialize in solving sustainability issues. The [Environmental Defense Center](#) specializes in providing legal counsel to sustainability-focused organizations.
- After Hurricane Maria, Vieques became a hotspot for organizations focused on disaster preparation and community empowerment. [Vieques Love](#) is one of the major organizations focused on preparing communities for disasters.

Sustainable Career Pathways

- **Environmental Lawyer.** Lawyers are central in the fight for a sustainable future, whether addressing local, national, or global challenges. Perhaps this is the path for you? Here is a brief overview of what an [environmental lawyer](#) is, [how to become one](#), and a guide to [careers in environmental law](#).
- **Disarmament Advocate.** According to the U.N. Office for Disarmament Affairs (UN ODA), disarmament is “vital for sustainable development and global survival.” The U.N., national governments, and NGOs all have jobs supporting the global reduction of arms. Do you want to help with this essential fight? [Learn more at UN ODA, and review job opportunities](#).
- **Immigration Services Officer.** Climate change will increase cross-border movement and immigration. Helping people adjust to life in a new country and navigate the difficult legal challenges involved is a noble career path. [Investigate immigration services here](#).

Call to Action: Urge your congresspeople to vote for urgent funds to rebuild Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. Support Josue's social justice and legal practice: www.josuecruzabogado.com.

Standards

California:

- **ELA**
- **RI.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **RST.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **SL.11-12.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed. c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- **SL.11-12.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence (e.g., reflective, historical investigation, response to literature presentations), conveying a clear and distinct perspective and a logical argument, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks. Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. CA a. Plan and deliver a reflective narrative that: explores the significance of a personal experience, event, or concern; uses sensory language to convey a vivid picture; includes appropriate narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, pacing, description); and draws comparisons between the specific incident and broader themes. (11th or 12th grade) CA b. Plan and present an argument that: supports a precise claim; provides a logical sequence for claims, counterclaims, and evidence; uses rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., analogy, appeal to logic through reasoning, appeal to emotion or ethical belief); uses varied syntax to link major sections of the presentation to create cohesion and clarity; and provides a concluding statement that supports the argument presented. (11th or 12th grade)
- **SL.11-12.5:** Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- **W.11-12.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. CA b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

- **W.11-12.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- **W.11-12.6:** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
- **W.11-12.7:** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **WHST.11-12.8:** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- **WHST.11-12.9:** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **STEM**
- **CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.HSS.ID.B.5:** Summarize categorical data for two categories in two-way frequency tables. Interpret relative frequencies in the context of the data (including joint, marginal, and conditional relative frequencies). Recognize possible associations and trends in the data.
- **CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.HSF.IF.B.6:** Calculate and interpret the average of change of a function (presented symbolically or as a table) over a specified interval. Estimate the rate of change from a graph.
- **HS-ESS3-1:** Construct an explanation based on evidence for how the availability of natural resources, occurrence of natural hazards, and changes in climate have influenced human activity.
- **HS-ESS3-4:** Evaluate or refine a technological solution that reduces impacts of human activities on natural systems.
- **HS-LS2-7:** Design, evaluate, and refine a solution for reducing the impacts of human activities on the environment and biodiversity.

Massachusetts:

- **ELA**
- **RI.11-12.3:** Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- **RI.11-12.7:** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **SL.11-12.2:** Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- **SL.11-12.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, vocabulary, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience and a range of formal and informal tasks. (See grades 11-12 Language Standards 4-6 for specific expectations regarding vocabulary.)
- **SL.11-12.5:** Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

- **SL.11-12.6:** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Language Standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)
- **W.11-12.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts (e.g., essays, oral reports, biographical feature articles) to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **W.11-12.2.a:** Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include text features (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- **W.11-12.2.b:** Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
- **W.11-12.2.e:** Establish and maintain a style appropriate to audience and purpose (e.g., formal for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- **W.11-12.3:** Write narratives to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured sequences.
- **W.11-12.3.a:** Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create an appropriate progression of experiences or events.
- **W.11-12.3.b:** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- **W.11-12.3.c:** Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
- **W.11-12.3.d:** Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and figurative and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- **W.11-12.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in Writing Standards 1-3.)
- **W.11-12.6:** Use technology, including current web-based communication platforms, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
- **W.11-12.7:** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **W.11-12.8:** When conducting research, gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

- **STEM**
- **MS-ID.B.5:** Summarize categorical data for two categories in two-way frequency tables. Interpret relative frequencies in the context of the data (including joint, marginal, and conditional relative frequencies). Recognize possible associations and trends in the data.
- **MI-F-IF.B.6:** Calculate and interpret the average rate of change of a function (presented symbolically or as a table) over a specified interval. Estimate the rate of change from a graph.
- **HS.ESS.3.1:** Construct an explanation based on evidence for how the availability of key natural resources and changes due to variations in climate have influenced human activity. Clarification Statements: Examples of key natural resources include access to fresh water (such as rivers, lakes, and groundwater), regions of fertile soils (such as river deltas), high concentrations of minerals and fossil fuels, and biotic

resources (such as fisheries and forests). Examples of changes due to variations in climate include changes to sea level and regional patterns of temperature and precipitation.

- **HS.LS.2.7:** Evaluate and refine a solution for reducing the impacts of human activities on biodiversity and ecosystem health. Clarification Statement: Examples of solutions can include captive breeding programs, habitat restoration, pollution mitigation, energy conservation, and ecotourism.

Stone Soup Leadership Institute

www.stonesoupleadership.org

www.sustainabilityisfun.net