

**Dreams to Possibilities: A Qualitative Research Study on the
Personal and Career Dreams of a Group of Young South
Africans Living in Contexts of Poverty****Denise Polk¹ and Ansie Kitching²**¹*West Chester University, USA*²*North-West University, RSA**E-mail: ¹<dpolk@wcupa.edu>, ²<Ansie.Kitching@nwu.ac.za>***KEYWORDS** Concerted Cultivation. Human Rights. Inclusive Education. Social Justice. Sociocultural Learning

ABSTRACT Children living in contexts of poverty face challenges and obstacles in their attempts to rise out of their circumstances. These challenges and obstacles might deprive them of personal dreams which limit their capacity for learning and working. During a study-abroad initiative, American students explored the dreams of 26 young South Africans (YSAs) between 13 and 20 years who live in contexts of poverty using semi-structured interviews. The findings of this qualitative study indicate that, despite their adversities, participants still hope for a better future and are aware of the changes needed to create a better environment for themselves and their families. The identified inhibitors and enhancers to the realization of their dreams viewed from the perspective concerted cultivation theory illustrate that young people in contexts of poverty need more focused support than they currently receive in order to provide them with equal opportunities to realize their dreams.