

**Title of Proposal: Project Dare to Dream: The Impact of Leadership Development among Secondary School Students and Educators in Tonga (Authors: Jue, Salerno & Turner)**

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ABSTRACT

Historical turning points that have enabled humanity to take quantum leaps forward have often hinged upon citizens who have *dared to dream*. Some dreamers have even become heroes. A hero may be characterized as someone who deliberately and courageously overcomes obstacles for the benefit of others and provides opportunities for growth and change without regard to consequences. We all need inspirational heroes as role models in our personal lives, educational institutions, and communities.

This year, one educator *dared to dream* of changes for Tonga. Teaming with international educators, she developed a leadership program to inspire Tongan students and educators toward grass-roots community activism by starting their own businesses. The program drew from the arts, education, business, and the personal journeys of each facilitator to convey transformational leadership principles via experiential action learning.

The results have been fruitful. One business, "Young Hule Designs," specializes in designing banners, signs, logos, and business cards. Another group interested in the performing arts has networked with a local musician to provide performances at a Tongan club. Still another group, "The Dream Releasers," has implemented Tonga's first career fair.

This proposed session will explore how introducing such leadership programs among secondary school students and educators in developing nations may help communities in *daring to dream*, contributing to greater socio-economic progress. Issues and challenges will be discussed as well as future opportunities. Using this case study, participants will interactively develop strategies and techniques for employing leadership development effectively in education toward socially innovative ends.