2005/2006
C.U.R.E. STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence
Given by the SUNY Chancellor to students who have best combined academic excellence with significant contributions to the university community
Adelina Primiano

School of Education
C.U.R.E. Award
Given to the student with the highest GPA in C.U.R.E. who has demonstrated best practices in urban education while student teaching
Adelina Primiano

School of Arts & Sciences
Maxwell Hawkins Award
Given for academic excellence & highest GPA by a senior geology major
Adelina Primiano

National Societies
Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society
(Freshman Honor Society)
Jessica Cabrera
Ashley Chapple
Krystina Hardter
Sabria Santos

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society
(Education Honor Society)
Rene DaSilva
Adelina Primiano

Tau Sigma Honor Society
(Transfer Honor Society)
Nicole Brooks

Top 5% of Their Class
Ashley Chapple
Krystina Hardter
Adelina Primiano
Sabria Santos

Top 2% of Their Class
Rene DaSilva

Challenge for Success Awards
Academic Strength-Gold
Adelina Primiano

Academic Strength-Silver
Rene DaSilva

Outstanding Freshman
Jessica Cabrera

Leadership Award
Rose Graham
Lauren Ortiz

SUNY Cortland Outstanding Student Leaders 2005-2006
Nicole Brooks
Rose Graham
Elyse Loughlin
Lauren Ortiz

Excellence in Understanding Multicultural and Gender Studies Award
Rose Graham

2006 Civic Engagement Award
Jessica Cabrera

Gospel Choir Awards
Outstanding Freshman
Ashley Chapple

Outstanding Junior
Rene DaSilva

Graduation with Honors
Suma Cum Laude
(3.75 and higher)
Adelina Primiano

Magna Cum Laude
(3.5 to 3.749)
Suzanne Holzer

Cum Laude
(3.2 to 3.49)
Lillivette Gonzalez

Seniors graduating with a 3.0 to 3.19 GPA
Luisa Arbanil
Dana Guardararamas
Katherine Ortiz
Jonathan Woody

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Reflections of Geoffrey Canada’s, Stick, Fist, Knife, Gun
By Lauren Ortiz, Sophomore Childhood Education Major

“Wow” is the only word that repeated in my head as I read Fist Stick Knife Gun by Geoffrey Canada. In one book alone he shares the many valuable life lessons he learned from growing up in the “hood.” The streets, however, were not the only place he was able to learn about life. He learned through his mother, his brothers, and also through school. Everything Mr. Canada went through and learned he held on to, knowing that one day it would come in handy.

One of the most profound learning experiences in the book happens within the first few pages. Mr. Canada, at only four years old, is given a glimpse to what the real world is like. His two older brothers Dan and John come home afraid because a bully had just taken Dan’s jacket. Never being exposed to any other children in the South Bronx, let alone to violence, the two young and defenseless boys did nothing but finally give the jacket to the bully.

Thinking that they could come home to the comforting and understanding arms of their mother, they received the opposite reaction. She exploded and explained to them that she did not have the money to buy another jacket therefore they had to go and get the jacket back. This might have been one of the most difficult things a mother must do, but I knew that she was doing it to teach the boys a lesson. They could not show fear or weakness or they would have been tortured on their own block. In the end the boys were able to get the jacket back, but not after learning from their mother. Never show fear, and never run and tell your mother.

Mr. Canada’s story is also a great example of a child who grows up and beats the odds. What are these odds placed against him? He is a poor, minority, with no father figure in his life, growing up in one of the scariest cities in New York, the Bronx. Mr. Canada was able to master tricks of the street and was accepted by the older boys before others in his age group. Mr. Canada also never lost his love of reading. He loved to read books and learn about what the streets were not teaching him.

Growing up in the Bronx, I was fortunate enough to never have to feel the way Mr. Canada and his brothers felt. I was always kept away from the streets and always kept away from anything my parents thought would hurt my development. I did not, however, pretend that all neighborhoods and all families were like my own. Some of my own family members lived similar lives to that of Mr. Canada. I knew that the world outside of the one my parents created for me was a scary place. Now at 19, I understand why they kept me so sheltered. The world is a scary place, especially when you are growing up in an inner-city.

Savage Inequalities Revisited: A Scholar’s Day Presentation
By Kaitlyn Tainter, Sophomore, English Education Major


In their discussion, the C.U.R.E. students illustrated the issues that many American cities confront today. They examined the race and class issues that the public schools of Chicago, Washington, D.C., and San Antonio deal with on an everyday basis. Each C.U.R.E. student also shared their personal experiences in urban education and their reactions to observing at a Syracuse City public school.

The students that participated this year were Ashley Chapple, Liz Alarcon, Sulema Iriarte, Trevor Griffin, Krystina Hardter, Jessica Cabrera, Sabria Santos, Rachel McKenna, Alyssa Guerrier and Nicole Peralta. This Scholar’s Day was a success. Each C.U.R.E. student who participated did an outstanding job!
Senior Spotlight: Suzanne Holzer

Suzanne Holzer will be graduating from SUNY Cortland this May. Originally from Stony Brook, Long Island, Suzanne plans to teach close to home in one of New York City’s public schools. Suzanne will be graduating as a dual major in Adolescence Education and History, she said that she chose to study history because, “I felt that in the Social Studies classroom, the teacher could implement more issues that relate to the students’ personal experiences. It is easier to bring social issues to the forefront in Social Studies.”

In the Fall of 2005, Suzanne was a student teacher in ninth and tenth grades at a public school in Syracuse, NY. From her experience, Suzanne felt that she learned more about herself as a teacher, and realized who she wants to be in the classroom. She also learned that teaching skills do not come perfectly in one day; she feels that they develop and grow stronger over time. Suzanne also learned that it is important for teachers to establish relationships with their students; without them, they will not learn effectively.

Suzanne did not originally want to pursue a career in education. Originally, she hoped to be a lawyer, but when she learned of the C.U.R.E. Scholarship, decided to apply for it. Once she got it, she realized her true passion for teaching, and urban education in particular. Through All C.U.R.E. meetings and the three classes that C.U.R.E. offers, she realized the many inequities between high-need urban schools and wealthier, suburban schools. She began to feel more thankful for the privileges she had growing up and decided she wanted to contribute to a high-needs community.

Suzanne remarked that, “Computers, physical appearance, etc. all affect the education of students. So, finding out about the inequities made me feel that the purpose of education was lost in high-needs urban areas. I want to provide for kids...give something to them.”

As for the C.U.R.E. program, Suzanne feels that it has greatly prepared her for teaching next fall. She thinks that the classes C.U.R.E. offers helped her to realize the reality of high-needs urban schools. She said, “A lot of people think teaching in urban areas will be Hell, but on the other hand, others think that it requires the same skills as teaching in a wealthy, suburban school. Not true, you need to be aware of issues in these areas. C.U.R.E. doesn’t train you to be a good teacher, but it helps you know how to deal with them.” She said that while student teaching, her school dealt with fights everyday, and four stabblings over the semester. Because of C.U.R.E., these occurrences were not a shock to her.

Furthermore, Suzanne also thinks that there are a few major issues that most concern urban educators. She thinks that the lack of funding in today’s schools causes a ripple effect. Because high-needs urban districts have a lack of funding, they cannot pay their teachers enough. Many teachers leave eventually, not because they are unhappy, but because they need to make more money. Also, many of the problems in schools are class related. Race is an issue, but economics has more effect on how people deal with each other. So, because high-needs urban areas cannot afford proper equipment, supplies, etc., students do not get as good an education as those living in wealthier districts. Therefore, Suzanne believes that the students reflect their frustration through violence, hateful speech and drug use. As a future educator, Suzanne hopes to make a difference in the students’ lives. She says, “Even if it’s one student, I want them to know that he/she is better than what they think of themselves.”

Suzanne is excited to graduate, but will miss some things about SUNY Cortland and C.U.R.E. She will miss the close community at the school and seeing familiar faces. Most importantly, she will miss the free membership at the school gym. As for C.U.R.E., she will miss coming into the office and talking about her daily experiences. We will miss you Suzanne! Good luck with all of your future endeavors!
This May, Katie Ortiz, a senior from Merrick, Long Island, will be graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Childhood Education. This summer, she will be working as a Special Education teacher for “United Cerebral Palsy.” Next year, she will be working as an educator for a New York City Public School. Katie decided to pursue a career in teaching because, she says, “I was inspired to be a teacher because of the great teachers I have had in my life.” She believes that C.U.R.E. has provided her with the knowledge and information that will be helpful in teaching at high-need urban schools. Katie feels that the C.U.R.E. classes prepared her well for the issues in urban education, and commented, “In many ways, C.U.R.E. students are more prepared than others at the beginning of student teaching. Nothing shocked or surprised me in the schools.”

Katie student taught first and fourth grades at a public school in Syracuse, NY. As for her experiences as a student teacher, Katie also feels that she learned much more than she could have ever learned in an academic classroom. She says, “Classes simply can’t prepare you for some of the situations that you will encounter during teaching, first-hand experience if the only way to learn those kinds of lessons.” Through student-teaching, she learned that being positive is essential in the classroom--it can really effect a child’s outlook and attitude for the day.

She thinks that teaching in other areas can be rewarding, but that high-need urban areas are more challenging for educators and thus, more rewarding in the long-run. Of this she says, “The children in these schools don’t always have the best home lives and you can tell that the things you do really make their days. I just feel like kids in urban schools deserve everything that kids in suburban schools deserve, if not more because of their home environments.”

Katie says she will miss the friendships she has made over the past four years and the people she has met through C.U.R.E. She says that, “C.U.R.E. is a great group of people...Claudia and Michelle have done more for me than they probably even realize.” She leaves with some advice for her fellow C.U.R.E. peers, “Take advantage of all the perks of C.U.R.E.-the mentors, the support and the great group of people you meet. Also, cherish these years. College goes by a lot faster that you would imagine.” Good luck Katie! We will miss you and know you will do great things in your future!