In a September 25, 2003 interview in the Dragon Chronicle President Bitterbaum highlighted seven goals he had in mind for the college. Those goals include internationalization, diversity and expanding and improving the C.U.R.E. Program. We decided to meet with President Bitterbaum in order to expand on these topics and to get a better idea of his outlook on C.U.R.E. and SUNY Cortland.

As we discussed internationalization and diversity at SUNY Cortland, one topic that kept recurring was study abroad. Of the 64 SUNY campuses, Cortland is number five in sending students abroad. In addition, many members of the staff are either from abroad, or have traveled abroad themselves. This is important, President Bitterbaum says, as we as a campus have been making an effort to broaden our borders. President Bitterbaum talked a lot about the importance of study abroad programs and said it is important to get a wider perspective on the world. This can open one’s mind, he says, as well as open doors of opportunity.

We shifted gears a little to discuss diversity on campus. Improving diversity is especially important on this campus. Just as you can learn a lot by traveling to a different country, there is much to be learned by getting to know Americans of different backgrounds. We discussed not only some programs on campus such as cultural groups and lecture series that are aimed to increase diversity, but also the challenge of getting people to open their minds to new ideas and new people. Ultimately, President Bitterbaum says, the decision rests within the individual to branch out. He discussed a few practices with us to help people become more open minded. One example he mentioned was to modify the curriculum and General Education courses to include an international perspective. Learning in a diverse surrounding, President Bitterbaum says, can be supportive to an open mind. Furthermore, he continued, it is important on the individual level to be supportive and accepting to all people.

As for the C.U.R.E. program, President Bitterbaum gave us a general idea of how he wanted to make it better. He says he wants to make the program more visible and for it to grow both in size and financially. The president says he realizes we need to put the best teachers where they are most needed, and the C.U.R.E. can help to bring those teachers to the inner-city. As for the future of the C.U.R.E. Program, he asked what we would like to see. He said we can make this program stronger by using trial and error, and then work on the feedback from there.
**C.U.R.E. Profile: Tyanisha Brown**

Tyanisha Brown is a senior at SUNY Cortland majoring in Health Education. Tyanisha came to Cortland after two years at Morrisville where she earned an AA degree in Sports Nutrition and Fitness Management. Tyanisha says that she was inspired to get into Health Education when she realized that many African Americans were disproportionately affected by diseases such as AIDS, asthma and diabetes.

Tyanisha approaches Health Education from a community health standpoint. She says she knew she wanted to teach in an urban school since she was young, and she believes that school is a good way to reach children and families. In the long run, Tyanisha says she would like to get her master’s degree in Public Health or Community Health. Ultimately, she would like to work in Africa doing AIDS prevention.

On Thursday February 12, three C.U.R.E. students returned to SUNY Cortland to discuss their experiences of student teaching in Syracuse. Marchea Taylor, who has finished her student teaching at both Delaware Elementary School and Grant Middle School in Syracuse, discussed her challenges and successes in the classroom at two very challenging urban schools. Christina DiPietrantonio and Tory Walley discussed with a rapt group of C.U.R.E. students the ups and downs of working as a student teacher, and spelled out for the group what to expect. Christina is currently working in a classroom at H.W. Smith School in Syracuse that serves recent immigrants and refugees. Tory is currently at Grant Middle School. All three said they felt confident and prepared for the specific challenges of working in an urban school.

**C.U.R.E. Quiz**

**Test Yourself on Recent Urban Education News**

Q1. Children living in poverty currently represent what percentage of New York State public school students?
Q2. In the 2002-2003 school year, what percentage of New York State fourth graders are considered proficient or above in math?
Q3. What percentage of NY State eighth graders are considered proficient or above in math?
Q4. Students of color currently make up what percentage of New York State public school students?
ALUMNI UPDATE: C.U.R.E. PROFESSORS VISIT ALUMNI IN THE BIG APPLE

Last December, C.U.R.E. professors Michelle Kelly and Stephanie Spina along with Childhood Education professor Susana Davidenko visited C.U.R.E. alumni in New York City. They were able to visit nine recent C.U.R.E. graduates in schools in the Bronx.

Nikki Prater, Natalie Catin, Debbie Bristling, Estrellita Singh, James Williams and Daniel Lambert-Gonzalez are working at CS 102 in the Bronx. Dr. Davidenko remarked, "I was impressed by how much these new teachers have grown in their understanding of their role in the classroom. They were so alert and caring about the children. Even when they were talking to us (the visitors), they constantly monitored the students, this reflected their awareness about everything that happened in the class."

They also visited Rose Laure Beauvais and Clarissa Tucker at PS 105 and Vanessa Horgan at PS 246. Clarissa teaches 3rd grade, Rose Laure is a Kindergarten teacher and Vanessa is a fifth grade teacher. Clarissa Tucker said about their visit, "...it was great. They made me feel like I was doing a good job. They talked with my children and interacted with them. My class loved them and were thrilled to meet the lady that taught me how to teach."

In addition, the three professors hosted a dinner for C.U.R.E. graduates that was attended by James Williams along with his girlfriend, Shanequa, and beautiful new daughter Maya, as well as Rose Laure Beauvais, Clarissa Tucker, Randi Rubel, Brandi Teichs, Estrellita Singh, Marissa Torres and Nikki Prater. Also in attendance was New York City Supervisor for SUNY Cortland, Rebecca Kaufman.

Dr. Davidenko said, “During the dinner I was excited to see how important it was for these new teachers to keep in touch with each other as a supporting group.” Clarissa Tucker added, “it was great to be able to connect with people and share some of our stories. It was comforting knowing that there were people we know going through the same struggles or successes as a new teacher.”

BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL

By Mariella Bethea

Over Winter Break, I had to go back to high school. Only this time, I was on the other side of the learning experience. I spent 30 plus hours at my alma mater, Oneida high School, with my old Spanish teacher. I observed, helped teach lessons, and finally put to use what college had taught me. It was a very surreal experience for several different reasons.

First and foremost, I knew many of the students in my classes very well, but it was now my duty to draw the line and interact with them solely on a professional basis. At times, this was hard to do because many of them still wanted to treat me like their friend, as if I was a senior again and they were sophomores. This was hard for me as well, since I’ve known some of them before they could tie their shoes properly. Yet I found it much more important to set a boundary and be consistent in my teacher-student relationships while we were in the classroom. Furthermore, relationships with teachers, who had once taught me, now became more personal as they asked me about my classes and we discussed curriculum and different teaching.

Because the teacher I worked with had been my Spanish teacher for the majority of my high school career, she and I both felt comfortable letting me actively participate in the class. I was given the opportunity to help explain verbs, tenses, masculine and feminine articles, vocabulary and clauses. Besides helping teach the students, I, myself got a refresher course in a few things I had forgotten! Overall, my time spent observing was incredibly eye opening and allowed me to experience school from the viewpoint of a teacher.
“Whose child is this?” I asked one day
Seeing a little one out at play
“Mine,” said the parent with a tender
smile
“Mine to keep a little while
To bathe his hands and comb his hair
To tell him what he is to wear
To prepare him that he may always be
good
And each day do the things he should.”

“Whose child is this?” I asked again
As the door opened and someone came in
“Mine,” said the teacher with the same
tender smile

“Mine, to keep just for a little while
To teach him how to be gentle and kind
To train and direct his dear little mind
To help him live by every rule
And get the best he can from school”

“Whose child is this?” I ask once more
Just as the little one entered the door
“Ours,” said the parent and the teacher
as they smiled
And each took the hand of the little child
“Ours to love and train together
Ours this blessed task forever.”

C.U.R.E. QUIZ ANSWERS
Q1. Currently 21% of all NY State public school children are living in poverty..
Q2. 33%
Q3. 34%
Q4. Currently, 45.2% of all NY State public school children are students of color.