African-Americans who were brought as slaves. This is an important factor in analyzing minorities. It is believed that, because they came of their free will, Asians will succeed in school and work because they came to America for the opportunity of a better life. Lee found that this pressure comes as much from parents of Asian students who made sacrifices for their children to come to America to learn, as it does from others outside the group. This pressure can help or hurt a child.

Lee studied different types of Asians and found that Koreans who are middle- to-upper class and hard working live up to the high expectations of the model minority myth. They get good grades in school and earn high salaries. Korean students felt more pressure to be like Americans in the way they dress, what they eat, and how they speak. Parents push their kids to conform to American ways, which leads to a loss of culture and family.

Lee also focused on a more rebel Asian group who did not work hard, skipped classes, and were trying to be more “cool” Americans. She found this group did not live up to any myths or stereotypes, even after parents urged them to, but chose instead to rebel against it. They wanted to fit in better with their American peers in a social way by being “cool” and slacking off. Also there were the Asian-Americans who were in between the Koreans and the rebel group. These students worked hard but tried to break the model minority myth. They wanted to create more of an accepted and strong Asian and American bond, which would keep the Asians different but not have to live up to the stereotype.

I believe that the model minority myth is an influential force in many Asians’ lives. This can be helpful or hurtful depending on how it is being used. While the Koreans worked hard in school and received good grades for it, which would be considered good, they thought of themselves as being better than the white Americans. To contrast this, other Asians worked against the stereotype by being the opposite, which means they are not working up to their highest potential. This is a negative way of thinking that may cause problems for them later in their lives. In conclusion I believe this myth needs to be destroyed so that all Asians may be treated as individuals and can all work hard to their own potential and not only to what others may think or believe about them.
Being in an urban school for one day out of the week for my urban ed. course has given me a new way to look at inner-city schools. Instead of looking from the students’ point of view, I was given the chance to observe what goes on from a teacher’s point of view. Keith Greene and I were “helpers” in a middle school class. In our time there, we built strong relationships with the students and gained helpful experience in the classroom.

The first day at the school was a fairly smooth day. I didn’t know what to expect from these students. The class was working on social studies problems and Keith and I had to find the students that needed help and assist them. At first, the students wanted to know who we were and where we came from. We told them we would tell them everything about us after they finished their work. We continued helping them until it was time to go to lunch.

The teacher showed us how to line the kids up for lunch and silently walk them down the hallway in single file. If they were to raise their voices or misbehave, we were to bring them back. The teacher decided to take half and leave the other half for Keith and me. While lining the students up, I began to recognize a familiar looking band that students in my junior high wore around their wrists. They were called “sex” bands and students would perform different sexual acts to each other depending on the color. A student would have to snap off the other student’s band in order to do so. The kids were surprised when I explained to them I knew what it was and if I saw it again I would tell their teacher. After lunch, I couldn’t find a band if I needed one.

The second week was much easier for us because we were familiar with the schedule and some of the students. We were working on “I Am” poems with the students and the teacher gave Keith and me a group of students to take to the library so they could print out their poems. We walked our group of students silently and in a single file down to the library. Right before we reached the library doors, we stopped them and explained to them the proper way to act in the library and if they finished early we could have time to talk and learn more about each other. They students were very excited to talk to us so they finished their work extremely quickly.

In our third visit we saw how behavior and discipline play a major part in the education of these students. Everything was running smoothly until lunchtime when the students became wilder than usual. Then one student started pushing another into the wall and the cafeteria started chanting “FIGHT FIGHT!” We rushed over to separate the two kids and calm them down. We got there before punches were thrown so no one was hurt.

After lunch, we had to take the students to one of their “specials”. Most of them where still pumped from the fight in the cafeteria and they were out of control in this classroom. This was the most tiring day out of all weeks and I felt a certain relief when it was time to leave.

The fourth day was pretty much an average day in class. The students were doing their work and we helped them. The students were now feeling that they were obliged to respect us. After gaining a certain respect from your students, they are much better behaved because they don’t want to destroy that bond that you’ve created. I was working with a student in art class that day and he finally finished his work. His drawing was beautiful and it was clear that he had talent. I told him that he should finish his work more often and instead of being considered a troublemaker, teachers would respect him more. He said that he felt the teachers don’t respect any of the students. He feels like he never gets a chance to tell his side of the story. I feel that it is important to hear what the students have to say because you can then put yourself in their shoes and understand where they’re coming from. This can help you relate to the student and prevent repetitive actions in the future.

The last day in class was a very sad day. We had grown so close to the students. We read together, ate together, and performed relaxation techniques. The students were sad to see us leave. I’ve learned so much from only 5 visits to that classroom and enjoyed the experience. I wish I could have more time with that class because I really feel it was helping me prepare for my future.
C.U.R.E. Profile: Dan Cordaro

Dan Cordaro is a Senior, Adolescent Spanish Education major who is leaving SUNY Cortland to begin his student teaching in the Syracuse City School District. Dan was born in El Salvador and came to Ontario, NY (a small town on Lake Ontario) when he was still an infant. He says it has always been his dream to visit El Salvador again some day.

When he was in High School, Dan spent a year in Quito, Ecuador as an exchange student. He wanted to do this, he says, to learn more about his Latin American roots. Dan says he loves Quito because of all the excitement and bustle of the city as well as the diversity of people and culture.

He knew he wanted to major in Spanish Education before he started college because of his interest in Spanish language and culture. He says he chose Cortland because of the C.U.R.E. program and scholarship. Dan says he gained an insight into city schools through the three required C.U.R.E. classes and now he feels ready to teach there. "C.U.R.E. has got me curious and excited about student teaching," he says, "I am looking forward to getting students to want to learn. I'd like for them to come out of my class and be able to communicate with a native speaker."

Dan has been very busy while at SUNY Cortland. He has been on the Tae Kwon Do Club Team for the last four years and he plays soccer for a local Cortland team in Homer. In his free time he loves to listen to music and exercise some more.

Good luck Dan, we'll miss you!

Luisa Arbanil: Discovering the Exceptional

Luisa Arbanil, a Junior Childhood Education major volunteered last year as a coach for Cortland’s Adaptive Swim Team (C.A.S.T.) These are her words describing this exceptional experience.

Last fall, I took the Special Education course that is required for all Childhood Education majors and we had a choice to do either 20 hours with a special education class or child, or write a paper. Jack Eckhardt, the head coach of C.A.S.T., came into the class and told us about C.A.S.T. I thought it sounded pretty interesting and fun so I decided to spend my hours working there.

The team practiced three times per week. We would meet at the pool in Moffett. The number of children who showed up varied depending on the day of the week. As the children came in, we were assigned a child or children to work with for that practice.

The type of work we did depended on the child. Usually I started with easy exercises using a kickboard and eventually progressed to having the children swim without any help. I was a bit shy and scared when I first started working with C.A.S.T. I learned that you just have to find a way to communicate with any child on their level because they are all different and respond to different techniques.

Our first swim meet was the most amazing and surprising day of the year. C.A.S.T. swimmers swim against teams of children without disabilities, which shocked me at first. When the children swam, even if they got last place, they were so happy because they finished. The crowd and the other teams were supportive and cheered them on, even if it took longer than normal. That was a great moment.

From this experience I learned that children with disabilities aren’t all that different from anyone else. I didn’t think I would get as attached as I did to both the program and students. I was also surprised at how much parental support was present and how the parents would help you work with their children. I think others should volunteer because it is a great opportunity and you walk away feeling accomplished and appreciated. Some relationships that are built are so special and unique. I know I’ve come away with a lot of memories.

The C.A.S.T. Program is volunteer run. If you would like to participate, please contact Jack at CAST@twcny.rr.com
Five C.U.R.E. students spoke at the November All-C.U.R.E. Seminar. Seniors Mike Witkowich, Jon Leonardi, Mike Nobles, Tyanisha Brown and Adrian Lopez were all student teaching in either Syracuse or Binghamton schools this fall. Each of the students told stories about their student teaching experiences and encouraged the C.U.R.E. students to really participate in their urban education classes and field experiences to be fully prepared for careers in urban schools. Although each faced different challenges, all five students reported overall positive experiences and say they are looking forward to beginning their professional careers in urban schools. Good luck to all of you!