



## Russell Pressley: Proud Father of a College Graduate

Russell Pressley once described being a foster parent like this, “It’s a calling.” He has fostered and guided many young men into adulthood as a foster parent, a legal guardian, and an adoptive parent since 2000. But he couldn’t be more proud then when he shows a picture of himself and his son Dillon posing at his recent college graduation. Any father would be proud of a son graduating with a Bachelor’s Degree, a good job lined up, and a future ahead. But Russ and Dillon both worked hard to make it happen.

In Russ’s own words, “In the summer of 2003, while working with Covenant House of Alaska, I was introduced to a 13 year old quirky kid name Dillon. Dillon at that time was a resident of Covenant House as well as a foster child in need of a good foster home. Since I was currently a foster parent, one of the Covenant house staff asked me if I would be willing to take Dillon into my home as a foster son. She apparently believed that Dillon would be an excellent addition to my home. So after some deep soul searching, it didn’t take long for me to welcome Dillon into

my home as my foster son. About a year and a half later, I ended up adopting Dillon and his brother Taylor. On May 3, 2015, Dillon Salsman Pressley graduated from the University of Alaska Anchorage with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science Engineering. He also secured a fulltime job in his field of study before he graduated as well. Looking back over the years, taking Dillon in as a foster son and adopting him late on was one of the best decisions that I have made. It also reinforces and answers the question of why I became foster parent as well."

Dillon has a great future ahead because someone took a chance and took him in, giving him a home and permanency. Russell feels the pride and the accomplishment of making a real difference in a young man and his brother. Being a foster parent or an adoptive parent is not always easy, but it makes a difference. And Russ will tell you that it is worth the effort when you can pose with your son on college graduation day.

Congratulations, Dillon, for working hard for your accomplishment. And job well done, Russ, for fostering the future of a fine young man!