



## Dream Big

*By Slade Martin*

My name is Slade Martin; I'm 24 and currently the Anchorage Regional Representative of Facing Foster Care in Alaska. I have been with FFCA for 6 years, and previously served as the South Central Regional Representative. On May 10th I received my Associates Degree in Human Services from Matanuska Susitna College. I was honored to have nearly 40 of my FFCA brothers and sisters attend and help celebrate my accomplishment with me. I was overwhelmed with Joy. I never thought of myself as a college graduate, being a product of the system it's hard to dream big. In addition, I was discouraged due to flunking out of UAA in 2007. This is not an uncommon occurrence; presently only 11% of current or former foster youth go to college, with just a 3% graduation rate. But with determination, a positive attitude, and the right support anything is possible. Now I am proud to call myself a college graduate and I could

not have done it alone. I would like to thank my GAL June Haisten, my Social Worker Anne Ashton, my mentors Amanda Metivier and Les Gara, my friends, family, and most importantly FFCA and its Allies for ALWAYS believing in me and showing me unconditional love and support. I'm not afraid to dream big anymore, and will continue to further my education.

*Your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure- Bill Cosby*

Facing Foster Care in Alaska