

"The Notre Dame Community Raised Me" - Spotlight on Adili Skillin, Class of '94



Photos: Adili with his partner and two sons; Adili's family, including "Toots" and his beloved uncles, at his sister's graduation from the College of Notre Dame in 1962.

Adili Skillin comes from a long line of family members with ties to the Notre Dame learning community. His aunt, Sr. Veronica Skillin, was past President of then College of Notre Dame (CND); his mother attended both Notre Dame High School in San Francisco and CND (while his grandmother was the "Mother Hen"); and Adili himself is a '94 grad. "I literally grew up with the Sisters of Notre Dame, both in San Francisco and Belmont. My mother and I used to drive down from the city and visit the Sisters all the time. They always showed me a lot of love."

Born and raised in San Francisco in a single parent home, Adili, whose name means "righteous one" in Swahili, attended public school before entering Mission Dolores Academy in fifth grade. He hails from a big Irish, Italian and African American family, where it was not uncommon for multiple family members to enter the clergy. In addition to his Aunt Veronica, affectionately called "Toots" by her family members, two of his uncles became priests.

Adili's love for theater led him to attend the School of the Arts High School, a program within McAteer High School in San Francisco. From there, he went on to Notre Dame to earn his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. For the past 20 years, he has taught and coached in the Sequoia Union High School District, primarily working with students with mild to moderate psycho-social disabilities and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. He also worked at the College of San Mateo as the Alcohol and Drug Prevention Coordinator.

"I love teaching," says Adili. "I view education not so much as a ticket for financial success, but rather the opportunity for growth that shows you the truth." He continues, "For me personally, education brings me closer to God. Since I believe that God exemplifies love, teaching is the perfect profession. I view myself as someone who connects with and brings communities together. I have been very fortunate in having people help me along the way, and now it's my turn to help my students recognize how amazing they are, and how they can rise to any level they set their sights on."

Adili views NDNU as "the best school on the planet, where people are always looking out for you." While a student during his aunt's tenure as University President, he relates the story of missing more than a few sessions of his Western Civilization class. "I was in my dorm room with my roommate when I heard

a knock at the door. It was Sr. Pat Hutchinson who communicated volumes with a single comment, 'I need you to attend my class.' Suffice it to say, I never missed a class from that point on!"

Three years ago, Adili became a father when he and his partner Simone welcomed their first child, Bruce Harmond Skillin, who he describes as "sweet, intelligent, loving and a bit of a smart-aleck like me!" They also have another son, Daniel Boyd Skillin, who will be 1 in July and "is just starting to come into his own."

"I'm so blessed to be doing what I love – both in my career and as a parent. And I am grateful to NDNU for helping to raise me. I am happy to help in any way while the university continues its transition from an undergraduate school to a primarily graduate institution. I invite my fellow alumni to join me in helping NDNU get to where it needs to be. We all want our beloved alma mater to succeed."