

Being tall has always been a defining part of how I move through the world. It is one of the first things people notice about me, but for me it goes far beyond appearance. My height has shaped the way people see me—physically, mentally and socially. It has influenced my leadership, my athletic ability, and the way others respond to me. Being tall is not just a measurement; it is a tool that I use to succeed in life. It has given me an advantage in several areas—one that has not gone to waste.

One of the greatest gifts my height has given me is long legs, and with them, a natural advantage as a runner. I have been running track and field as well as cross country for ten years, from elementary up through high school. Long legs create a longer stride, allowing me to cover more ground with each step. When I run, I feel efficient and powerful, as though my body was built for perpetual motion. I have been running for years, and over time I have learned how to use my stride to my advantage. Distance running, especially, feels almost rhythmic—each long step flowing into the next. I often wonder if I would have embraced the sport so fully without the physical advantages my height provides.

Beyond athletics, being tall affects how people perceive me. Tall people naturally command attention when they enter a room. There is an unspoken association between height and authority, strength, and leadership. While leadership is about far more than physical presence, height can create an immediate impression of confidence and capability. Throughout history, many respected leaders have been notably tall. For example, George Washington stood around six feet two inches, which was exceptionally tall for his time. His physical stature, combined with his character and integrity, contributed to the powerful presence he carried as a general and as the first President of the United States. While height alone did not make him a great leader, it certainly reinforced the commanding image he projected.

Similar to Washington, my height has made me a natural-born leader. After running on a high school team for two years, I was invited to become a captain of the group. I accepted this offer as well as the challenges that came with it. I worked closely with my teammates to guide,

encourage, and support them. I showed up every day to lead and manage the team. I consistently was put in charge of team events, activities, and drills, helping the group to run smoothly. Our coaches often relied on me to invite new athletes, invent new activities, and even fundraise for trips. Last year, I worked to raise over \$4,000 for our team! All of these examples show how being tall has made me a natural-born leader.

Of course, being tall is not the sole reason for any success I have experienced. Hard work, discipline, and character matter far more. But my height has undeniably shaped my journey. It has given me long legs that carry me swiftly across miles of pavement, and it has given me a presence that encourages leadership. Being tall, to me, means standing out—but also standing up: for myself, for others, and for the goals I continue to chase.