

What Being Tall Means To Me

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Being 6'0 tall as a girl growing up in Hialeah, Florida has always made me stand out before I ever had the chance to introduce myself. In a city where the average teenage girl is about 5'3, my height was impossible to ignore. For much of my childhood, being tall felt like something I had to explain or quietly apologize for. I ducked under doorframes, stood out in class photos, and often heard my name followed by comments about how much I had grown. I learned early on what it meant to be "above average" in a way that drew attention, even when I wasn't ready for it.

For a long time, I thought my height was something that set me apart from others. As I grew older, though, I realized it could be something that pushed me toward who I wanted to become.

Being tall made me visible, and visibility taught me awareness. When you are noticed, how you carry yourself matters. I became conscious of my posture, my tone, and the way I occupied space. Over time, I learned that standing out did not require being loud. It required being intentional. I began to see "above average" not as a label placed on me, but as a standard I could choose for myself.

Volleyball was one of the first places where I saw this lesson come to life. On the court, my height was obvious, but it was never the whole story. What stayed with me were the early morning practices, the quiet nods exchanged after tough points, and the responsibility I felt as a captain when momentum shifted. I learned that leadership is not about towering over teammates. It is about staying steady when others are unsure. In those moments, being tall meant being dependable, grounded, and willing to take the hit so others could keep going.

That same mindset followed me into the classroom. I began to approach academics with the same consistency I brought to training. Late nights studying, challenging material, and moments of doubt became part of a routine built on perseverance rather than

pressure. I was not trying to outshine anyone. I was trying to become capable, someone who could think critically, listen closely, and one day make decisions that truly matter.

Service offered another perspective. Some of my most meaningful experiences did not come with recognition or titles, but with quiet conversations and shared effort. Being tall taught me to notice who might be overlooked in a room and to step in when help was needed. I learned that presence can be powerful, and that sometimes the most impactful thing you can do is simply stay.

My aspiration to pursue medicine, especially working with newborns and their families, comes from these same experiences. I am drawn to moments that require steadiness and care, when people are overwhelmed and searching for reassurance. I want to be the kind of physician who remains calm in uncertainty, who listens before speaking, and who understands that trust is built in the smallest interactions. In many ways, being tall has prepared me for that role, not physically, but emotionally, teaching me how to hold space for others.

Today, my height no longer feels like something I need to justify. Being tall means holding myself to expectations that go beyond achievement. It means choosing growth, showing up fully, and using what I have been given with purpose. Standing out taught me how to stand for others, and that is the meaning of being above average that I carry with me every day.