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What Being Tall Means To Me

I bet that every tall person has been told before, “You can’t teach height,” when being asked if they played basketball or volleyball. This is definitely true; one cannot teach height, but height still teaches you. It has shaped all areas of how I see the world, from the confidence I carry to how I push myself; stature makes a big impact. To me, being tall means everything; it is a huge part of my identity, personal standards, leadership, and community.

Height plays a huge role in my identity, even if I don’t see it. In my own experience, growing up as the tallest everywhere gave me some mixed experiences. Size plays a more significant role in confidence than many care to admit. Whether that comes from standing out in every class picture or taking longer to gain coordination after a new growth spurt, it changes how you see the world. It took me a long time to learn that I was allowed to take up space, my height wasn’t something to hide: it is something to celebrate, and I should carry myself accordingly. I realized that both the most and least confident versions of myself were technically the same height, yet one looked much taller and subsequently, much happier. The more confident I stood, the happier I was with myself.

A big part of being tall, especially as an athlete, is that I have to work the hardest. If I don’t work hard, it is the first thing anyone sees when watching a game. Regardless of how hard I am actually working, as a 6’3.5” athlete, everything I do as fast as shorter players, or even faster, looks significantly slower. It means I have to work harder than everyone else to appear on the same level as them. To get picked for a team, I have to push myself harder than any other athletes. While this may sound like a disadvantage to most, it has pushed me to raise my own personal standards, to be the absolute best version of myself possible. While

being tall has led to some frustration in the past, it only served as motivation to grow in the present.

My height gives me the ability to set the standard, not just for myself, but for my entire team. It makes leadership feel natural because my teammates can easily read my energy, effort, and attitude. Standing tall makes my effort impossible to miss. They notice when I keep my head up, when I push through challenges, and when I refuse to slow down. My body language has influence, and that confidence can make a real difference on the confidence of those around me. Because of that, I hold myself tall and intentional; that visibility pushes them to raise their intensity as well. The harder I work, the harder they work, and we grow stronger together.

Being the tallest gave me a simultaneous sense of uniqueness and community. Most of the time, I was the “unicorn”: the tallest person on the court, field, picture, class, etc. While this was mostly the case, finding other people tall like me has started so many conversations, leading to everlasting friendships. It gives something so simple yet so unmatched to bond over. It feels like family, but that might just be because my family is all over 6 feet.

Height is more than just a number; it shapes who a person is, how they hold themselves, and how they connect with others, creating its own kind of community. My height has taught me how to be authentically myself and to move through the world with intention. In the end, being tall has become more than just what I look like; it influenced who I am and who I will continue to grow into.