

Moses Andre

What Being Tall Means to Me

I don't remember the exact moment I became "the tall one." It just sort of happened. One year I was standing in the middle row for class photos, and the next I was automatically placed in the back. People stopped commenting on my grades or hobbies first and instead started with, "You're so tall." At first, I thought it was just a physical trait — something neutral, like eye color. But over time, I realized being tall wasn't just about height. It slowly became part of my identity.

When you're tall, people notice you before you say anything. You don't blend into crowds easily. In school hallways, at church events, at volleyball games, even at work, I can feel attention shift in my direction. Sometimes it's curiosity. Sometimes it's expectation. Height carries an unspoken assumption: strength, confidence, leadership. Whether you ask for it or not, people project those traits onto you.

Playing volleyball made me understand this even more. On the court, being tall isn't just a feature — it's an advantage. When I step up to the net, I'm not just expected to compete — I'm expected to win. If we lose a point, eyes sometimes turn toward me first. Height feels like power, and power comes with pressure. But what people don't always see is the work behind it. Being tall doesn't automatically make you disciplined or mentally strong. It doesn't guarantee skill. I had to build those qualities through repetition, focus, and resilience. Height gave me opportunity, but character made it meaningful.

Height can make people feel safe. I've noticed it when walking with friends late at night or helping younger kids at church. My presence alone can create a sense of protection. But height can also intimidate. A tall figure entering a room can feel overwhelming, especially to someone smaller or unsure. I've learned that even something as simple as having a bad day — a serious expression or quiet mood — can make me seem far more intimidating than I intend. Because of that, I've had to develop emotional intelligence. I've become more aware of how I speak, how I stand, and how I read the people around me. My height forced me to understand that strength without awareness can feel threatening. So I learned to balance physical presence with approachability and control.

Those lessons have shaped how I approach my future. I plan to pursue Architectural Studies at the University of Toronto, a path that demands discipline, creativity, and long hours of focused work. The expectations I've carried because of my height pushed me early on to excel academically and build strong work habits, making me learn to meet expectations head-on instead of avoiding them. That mindset makes me confident in my ability to succeed at university. Architecture requires leadership in design, responsibility in planning, and the confidence to present ideas clearly — all qualities I've had to strengthen over time.

Working in architecture led me to construction, and in those environments I learned to appreciate how my physical build supports practical work, not just sport. Through summer co-op placements and hands-on work, I needed to lift framing lumber, set beams, and lift concrete. It

made me realise that in manual fields like construction, height can be a real advantage. That's one of the reasons I am so confident in my ability to succeed in that space, which for me, would look like designing and building public amenities or housing in Toronto. Spaces that could serve communities and stand for decades, mirroring the character height has encouraged me to assume.

To sum it up, I am grateful that I am tall. It has pushed me to grow into someone disciplined, aware, and prepared to carry expectations with maturity. More than inches, it has given me presence — and more importantly, it has taught me how to use that presence with purpose.