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What Being Tall Means to Me

Being tall is something people often wish for, but for me it's so much more than just reaching the top self for mom. Always being one of the tallest students in my class, I was looked up to by teachers and classmates to “lead by example” in the class. Being tall means to me that I must be the example to inspire and lead. When people are looking up to me, literally, it makes me want to be a person they trust and follow. Although my height isn't something I need to succeed, it has helped me to become the person I am today. Being above average in height helped me learn that I cannot hide behind anything and participate in all situations. My height made it easy for me to be noticed, whether I wanted the attention or not. In high school, sport coaches would notice me before I even said a word and would speak to me about joining the team. On the other hand, I have found that it’s not always easy being tall, and I have had to learn to make myself fit in an average size world. Being tall, I am often the first one seen and it can feel like I am being judged. Being tall has shaped how I carry myself, how I lead, and how I place expectations on myself.

My earliest example of how my height shaped my character is when I played baseball for the first time in a junior league. Having never played, my height gave me a great sense of confidence to try a new sport with the support of the coach. Being the tallest on the team, I was looked at as a leader. There was more pressure on me because my height to be the best, and I found that I had to rise to the challenge. Having been shorter than the coach, at that time, looking up to him built confidence in myself and made me want to become the leader for others.

Being tall hasn't always been an advantage in growing up. I must be extra cautious in doorways, playgrounds, and even school desks. Even the size of cars reminds me that everything is not one size fits all. When I walk into a room, it feels like I am the first one to be noticed. Rather than become nervous about it, I have learned to present myself approachable and smile to divert the attention. Being above average in height has shaped my character by giving me the confidence to stand out and lead to inspire others.

In my life, having so many people look up to me has made me the strong leader I am today. I use my presence to help others have the courage to stand out and confidence to try anything. I want to use my skills to make a real impact, not just for a moment, but to make it lifelong. While growing up, I wanted to set the example that tall people are protectors, not intimidators. To me, being tall isn't just about physical height, it's how you choose to lift the people up around you, how you face adversity, and how you use your strengths to help others. You can't just focus on yourself, that’s what got me into wanting to give back to the people in my community. To give back to those that can't help themselves. That’s when I decided I was going to use my height for good, to set a good example for those around me.