

Standing at nearly 6'2" as a female is not always easy. I learned at a young age that hiding was never an option. Before asking my name, people would comment on my height, ask if I played basketball, or wonder how tall my parents were. As a young girl, that attention felt overwhelming at times, especially at a time in life where I desired to fit in and be liked. While others easily blended into group pictures, I stood out immediately. With constant visibility, I had to learn to become comfortable in my own skin and embrace standing out. Over time, however, I stopped wishing I could be smaller and started embracing what made me different.

Although I love my height now, that was not always my story. Elementary school to high school contained a long phase of discomfort and growth. Many of the boys were shorter than me, and as a child, that was isolating. I often associated "normal" with being average, in height especially. I wore adult-sized clothes in elementary school and felt out of place during shopping trips and other simple outings with my friends. I tried adjusting my posture to seem smaller, but no matter how I stood, I was always visible. Eventually, I realized I was shrinking myself. Not only did the constant comparison make me feel less accepted, but also less authentic. As a result I began to welcome the attention rather than resist it, recognizing that not everyone is given a visible unique trait. I gained confidence earlier than I expected and learned that my height was never something to apologize for but rather embrace.

In sports, my height is a unique advantage and with that comes responsibility in the roles I play on and off the field. As a high performance soccer player in the position of a center back, I am required to stay organized, constantly scan the field, direct my teammates in defence, and attack. On top of that, I have the added responsibility of being the last line of defense. While my height helps me win aerial battles, my presence, due in part to my height, and leadership define my role as a teammate. I communicate constantly, guide my teammates, and remain composed under pressure. My teammates rely on me because I am accountable and consistent. My height makes me easily noticed, and in sports that comes with an unspoken responsibility to perform my best.

Being tall has taught me to take up space with purpose no matter where I am. I cannot pick and choose certain days to stand out and other days to blend in. Whether volunteering in my community or supporting other athletes, presence is vital. How I influence others is how I use my spaces to uplift others, motivate, and inspire them. The tall community will never camouflage in the backgrounds, but each individual has the choice of how they want to illustrate their own character.

To me, being tall is the reward of knowing I was meant to stand out in life and that there are many amazing things I can “stand” up for. Being tall is not only a physical characteristic, it is a mindset, it is being the best version of myself. It represents growth, resilience, and self-confidence developed over years of learning to fully accept myself. A trait that once felt overwhelming is now empowering. I treasure walking into a room without shrinking. Though I may stand taller than others, I stand firm in who I am.

