

“With the 11th pick in the 2028 MLB Draft, the Houston Astros select Jude Alshrouf out of University of Houston,” Only a select few believed in me. Back in 2017, I witnessed the Astros win their first ever World Series, and ever since that year, I knew I wanted to become a baseball player.

I talked to my dad and he agreed to mentor me. First he bought me gear and enrolled me in a summer league. He really believed in me the most. Growing up, it was not so easy, because even though I wanted to become a baseball player, I had to maintain my grades.

When I was 16, the doctors told me I wouldn't grow anymore. I was capped at 5'6. When I was in the Little Leagues, I hit 23 home runs and 71 runs batted in. Being short was not bad, after all I am the same height as my hero, Jose Altuve.

When I was 18, I did not get many baseball scholarships, so I accepted an academic scholarship from University of Houston to stay close to my home. However, that did not stop me from trying out for the baseball team. I made it and by my junior year, I was the starting shortstop on my team. It was the College World Series against Vanderbilt. Sadly, we lost 7-6, however, I got recognition in that game.

The analysts from Sports Centers, ESPN, Fox has all been saying that I am too short to last in the MLB, but that did not stop me. I kept training and working hard. Finally, I was at the MLB draft and I clearly wanted to get drafted by the Astros. All of the sudden, the Astros were on the clock and as I was patiently waiting there, I hear my name called. I got so happy and shed tears of happiness.

The first year for the Astros, I did not play a lot. We were mediocre in that season, going 93-69. We lost in the Wildcard round. However, the second year, our starting shortstop got injured. I got my time to shine in just such a few games. I had hit 12 home runs and 70 runs batted in.

Surprisingly, that was enough for me to make it into the All-Star game and to get Astros the third seed, finishing 100-65. Although my stats were not the best, I was an MVP candidate and that made me proud.

I found myself against the Minnesota Twins in the Wildcard round, where I hit a two-run homerun and it was the only score of the game. It was 2-0, and we advanced on to the second round.

In the second series, I did not play at all, after finding out one of my closest cousins has passed away. The team let me take the time off. Fortunately, we won the Series 3-1 and advanced to play the Yankees.

For the first game, I did not do well at all, as I went 0 for 3. We lost that game in a slump, but we bounced back the next game. I hit 4 home runs and 7 runs batted in, in the next 4 games. We won the series 4-2.

Here I am, in the World Series, in the place I never thought I would be in. We were going against the Dodgers, who we won against the first time we won the World Series. This was like a dream for me. I had a tough series and we went to seven games. It is the bottom of the ninth inning with two outs. Bases are loaded and we are down by

three. I get in the batter's box. I can smell the grass and I hear the crowd chanting, "MVP! MVP! MVP!"

All of a sudden, the crowd gets quiet. It is 0 balls and 2 strikes, and I have one chance to hit this or else we lose. The pitcher throws it and all I hear is a *crack!* The announcers are screaming, "I SEE THE BALL AND IT'S GOING LEFT FIELD! AND IT'S GONE! THIS GAME IS OVER FOLKS, AS THE ASTROS ARE YOUR 2029 WORLD SERIES CHAMPION!" I look at my teammates as I'm running to the base. I celebrate with everyone and we go into the locker room and they chant my name. I go to my dad and he gives me a big hug and tells me he is proud of me. I see a man coming up to me. I blinked my eyes to check, because what I see is my hero!

Jose Altuve comes up to me and shakes my hand as I stand there in awe. A reporter came up to me and asked me, "How does it feel to hit a walk off grand-slam on the biggest stage of them all to win the World Series!" I replied, "It feels awesome, amazing, a lot of people doubted me because of my height! Right now, I'm just happy that I made this city proud." The reporter asked me, "Do you have any piece of advice for kids who aspire to make it?" I look at the camera, I wink, and I say "Never give up."

Later, I found out that I have won MVP in my second year! I came back home to celebrate with my family as I got my first big paycheck! I surprised my dad with his favorite car, Lexus LX 2029 and my mom with a new house. I surprised my siblings and we all hugged and said, "I love you" to each other.