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What Does Rose City Reunion Mean to You?

The past two years have been traumatic for all of us during this global pandemic. We've all seen first-hand how our mental and physical health can be when we've been separated from what we are used to on a national scale. Partaking in online school, millions of people losing jobs, the unemployment rate rising, the cost of living rising, families experiencing loved ones being hospitalized, and even death. The public's overall health had plummeted. As well as many businesses being destroyed following protests and decrease in profits. The last two years have been mentally, physically and emotionally tough on everyone's health. And we need something to celebrate, something to look forward to returning to. Not just so we can pick up where we left off, but to exceed higher and carry on our traditions. "I can't wait for things to go back to normal" is what we've all been saying, and now we can have a sense of it.

Reunion - an instance of two or more people coming together again, after a period of separation. Reunion to me is the camaraderie we can display. If even just in that moment in time, to reminisce and take steps to rebuild for the future. It's always a beautiful thing to be amongst peers supporting our community, as well as making new friends. We all look forward to seeing our families annually for family reunions, the feeling of comfort from the familiarity in being around them. That's exactly how our Portlanders are going to feel being reunited!

The Rose Festival has been a tradition since 1907. A widely celebrated tradition celebrated in the City of Roses that encapsulates how groups from all different backgrounds can gather together safely and responsibly.

Traditionally, families camp out the night before for good seats and line the sidewalks for miles with lots of fold-out chairs. There's huge bubbles and chalk being drawn on the concrete. The crowd's anticipation grows as the beautiful floats, with the bright lights, and the blazing music surrounds us. Rain, sleet, or shine, we still come together and celebrate.

Being a part of the Rose Festival Court has always been a dream of mine, since being a young girl going to each parade. I know I just recently transferred to Jefferson. But Northeast Portland is my community. I will be a second-generation graduate. I am thankful for the opportunities that have brought me to where I am today. I will love to represent Jefferson and the Northeast as a member of the Rose Festival Court. And I hope to encourage other young women as well.