

Senya Scott - Ida B. Wells High School

What Does Rose City Reunion Mean to You?

The Rose City Parade was really my first look into the very colorful side of Portland. I remember watching the parade and being so enamored by all of the different colored dresses, elaborate floats, and of course, the roses. There was something about everyone being so collectively excited to be there that gave such a huge sense of community and purpose to the event. It's one of those things that you view and immediately see how much attention to detail and heart was put into it.

Years later, I was part of a middle school band that performed in the Junior Parade. Nothing about the excitement of the experience faded. With my crew neck band shirt, and black pants, I played my clarinet with utmost pride. It was like I had gotten a taste of what it was like to be more than just a spectator, to be a part of a beloved tradition. It made me feel a real sense of purpose, and helped me realize how much that positive energy extends to each event, no matter how big or small.

These events don't only bring joy and excitement to those that attend them, but they give us a peek into what Portland really values. Community, diversity, and natural beauty provide a space for culture to be seen with a vibrant and infectious energy. The events give Portlanders a reminder of what makes our Rose City such a uniquely colorful and forward-thinking place. Whether that be through the abundance of flowers and greenery, the celebration of our prominent Indigenous culture, or the regal Rose Festival Court, there is really something for everyone to enjoy. The Rose City Reunion really shows how much a city like Portland is willing to persevere and shows why a sense of community truly is worth fighting for.

When Portland had to shut down due to COVID, Rose City had lost some of the most prominent events that make the city what it is. As Portland began opening up again little by little, I'm sure that I was not the only one who waited with baited breath for an announcement of which events would be returning. These events provide true feelings of comfort, and the Rose City Reunion is like the budding flower of Portland this year. While there are things that will remain changed for a while post Covid, there is a sense of security that comes with knowing that as far as the Rose Festival is concerned, this tradition will remain.