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The rose has many legends surrounding its natural beauty and elegance. According to a Persian legend all roses were originally white. One night a nightingale saw a rose and fell in love with it at first sight. The nightingale's passion overtook him and he pressed himself against the flower but one of the roses' thorns pierced the nightingale through the heart and the rose was colored red ever after. Thus we get one of the traditions of why we associate roses with the color red, love and passion. Today each color connotes an emotion or expression. I believe that every rose has a spirit and the color of it exudes that spirit.

The city of Portland is comprised of many roses both symbolically and literally. From the International Rose Test Garden to the roses in our own backyards, our city is full of beautiful red, white, yellow, orange, and pink blooms.

The red rose symbolizes love and beauty- the love we have for the blessings in our lives, our city, the "city of roses," and our community. We express this love in how we keep Portland so unique and through sharing our talents with our community.

We also have white roses signifying the spirit of humility. Humility can be found through the dedication that not only St. Mary's as a whole but individual students and fellow Portlanders have in serving our community. It takes humbleness to serve others with an open heart.

Yellow roses symbolize the spirit of friendship and caring. Friendship and caring is exemplified in all SMA students when we support each other no matter what the outcome and cheer each other up through support and of course baked goods.

And lastly, beautiful orange roses can be found, which represent the enthusiasm and spirit found in all Portlanders and all of SMA students.

My goal and biggest dream is to be able to inspire others and resemble all of these aspects of rose spirit in order to become a role model for girls and young women. To let you know that you can pursue your dreams and bloom into a unique beautiful rose that you will be proud of and be able to share all of your gifts with our community to enrich our diversity.

Every one of us is a unique rose and together we create a large bouquet of multi-colored roses. We represent the diversity and strength of our city. One of us will have the opportunity to represent St. Mary's Academy in the Rose Festival Court with the grace of a pink rose. I would be honored to have that opportunity.