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Do you remember the last time you felt genuine brilliance? Was it euphoria of pure genius enveloping your body? Was it the result of passion flowing through your veins or a light bulb suddenly coming alight? Did it sweep your insides with absolute amazement and leave you breathless?

Brilliant: it's a word that instantly radiates vibrancy and life, one that captures a state of utter admiration and appreciation. We tend to treasure these moments of brilliance; they have a habit of staying hidden until every once in awhile they'll peek from behind their curtain. They cast this light upon points on our journeys, adding color and beauty. I've been so thankful to witness these moments myself on several occasions.

As an 11 year old Girl Scout touring a warehouse, I recall watching hundreds of volunteers cover tall frames in chicken wire and then attach flowers of all sizes and shapes, turning the ordinary into extraordinary...brilliant.

Touched by the mission to stop the mean-girl phenomenon with kids educating kids, my old elementary school's principal exclaimed my campaign was...brilliant.

In my 8th grade year, I attended a leadership conference, that not only equipped me with endless skills, but motivated me in a way that opened my eyes to a new potential I'd never seen in myself...I felt brilliant.

This last summer, I joined a team of compassionate volunteers that emotionally and mentally support kids from 18 and younger in three different outlets, from all over the world for free, anonymously...so brilliant.

Then, I think back to my summer overlooking the Willamette River of Pioneer Square, watching the city lights dance across the still waters like watercolors...they twinkled brilliantly.

Eventually, my mind wanders to Hawthorne, where the smell of crispy, creamy fried oreos and sweet waffles beneath cheesecake pudding and blueberry compote stir my senses...mmmm, brilliant.

Where just across the street, vintage clothes lovers like myself gather inside Buffalo Exchange to give old items in return for new old items...oh so brilliant.

I marvel at these brilliances, and wonder how does one commemorate these experiences and all those still yet to come? I don't ponder long as it's evident that Portland holds the greatest brilliance of all...our Portland Rose Festival.

The Rose Festival is especially successful at celebrating our city of roses, because they have sustained the ability to create a state of brilliance within members of our community for over 100 years. Regardless of the rarity we find in brilliance, Rose Festival guarantees we will experience this feeling of complete awe, together: a community interconnected under one uniting sentiment time and time again. With that unwavering security in my heart, I am assured brilliance will always be a presence in my life, as the Rose Festival provides the greatest celebration of events known to cherish our very own Portland, Oregon...that is truly brilliant.