

A Legacy of Kindness



Family and friends hold a remembrance Friday for Kevin McDowell, the Portland man who died saving a swimmer on the Columbia River on June 26. Pictured are (from left) sister Trayanna, fiancée Dessiree and mother Rhonda Jackson (KATU Photo)

Family, Friends Remember Community Hero

On Friday evening July 15th family, friends, and the community came together at Washington Park Amphitheater to remember Kevin McDowell a well known Portland restaurant owner and community member who recently died saving a life of a swimmer.

On June 26, McDowell was boating near Lemon Island when he saw a woman struggling to swim. He jumped into the Columbia River to help her. She was able to reach safety, but McDowell went under the water and did not resurface. His body was recovered several days later on July 4.

McDowell's fiancée, Dessiree Guy, expressed what kind of person McDowell was during the special ceremony. In a statement, she

wrote "This tragic occurrence is a reminder of the selflessness and love of who Kevin is. Kevin is the type of man to pay for another person's meal sitting next to him. He would take the shirt off his back for a stranger without hesitation."

McDowell family members came to Portland from California following the incident last month. His mom, Rhonda Jackson, says the support from the community has been overwhelming. Before returning back to California, Jackson wanted to warn other of the dangers of the water. "This water may look pretty, but this water is dangerous," Jackson said. "My son was a strong swimmer at six foot, eight [inches]. There's no way he should've drowned."

Jackson is hopeful her son's legacy will live on in Portland through basketball and the bar. She says the local restaurant community has really stepped up to help Kevin's surviving loved ones.



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