

Gallup goes to Macy's for Thanksgiving

Written by By Beth Blakeman Managing Editor
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Gallupians can see five of their neighbors on the screen as this year's cartoon balloon animals pass by in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

Alyssa Acevedo, Shana Begay, Sophia Sanchez, Ashlin Tom and Keili Vidales will be performing and representing the Miyamura Patriette Dance Team under the banner MHS All Star Dance Team right in front of Macy's Nov. 25. They will be five among about 600 dancers in this year's event.

The dance team is coached by Michelle Sanchez, who was assistant coach when they qualified to perform in the parade in 2019. Now Sanchez is head coach and her daughter Sophia, who also appeared at the 2019 performance, is captain of the dance team.

"[It's] a great opportunity for the girls to experience ... meeting new people," Sanchez told the *Sun*.

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The Miyamura dancers will all wear masks during the performance and they will wear the same costume of every high school that qualifies which includes a short yellow skirt.

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They will also wear the same makeup. Spirit of America Productions, which provides the dancers and cheerleaders for the parade, specifies and provides everything for the performance.

Sanchez and the team will stay a week in Manhattan, where they will practice up until their performance and return the next day.

But in between, she said down time will include a Rockettes show, a harbor cruise around the Statue of Liberty, a visit to the 911 Memorial, Central Park, Times Square, the Empire State Building, the Central Park Zoo, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Broadway show "Six," about the wife of Henry VIII. They will also get a chance to go shopping.

Their non-traditional Thanksgiving feast will be held at Serendipity Restaurant, although the original plan was to visit Ellen's Stardust Diner which is filled with Broadway singer-waiters.

This could become a repeat performance next year since those teams that qualify receive invitations to return.

The first opportunity for dancers to perform in the Macy's parade was in 1986. Before that cheerleaders were the teams positioned between the balloons.

By Beth Blakeman
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