

Madison Su

What South Cove Means to Me

It is hard to put exactly into words how South Cove has impacted me. My earliest memories as a child trace back to scenes from South Cove's annual Christmas parties: the laughter as friends reunite and families meet for the first time, the abundant feast that leaves a lingering aroma, and of course the not so big Santa Claus who comes bearing gifts for all the children. My mom would light up as she introduced me to her fellow co-workers. I was quite the shy kid so meeting dozens of new people made me sit up a little straighter and my heart beat a little faster. However, looking back on it now I see the importance of those red and gold filled nights. On this night people are present; they are present in the food, present in the conversations and most notably present in the community that supports them year round. I don't always think my generation understands their lack of presence in the moment. Technology facilitates much of what we view as "normal" today: the bent down necks, becoming angry if someone doesn't reply right away, using text message as a replacement for any face to face contact. But those nights everyone comes together; everyone is connected in the most raw and real way. On this night the South Cove community celebrates in unity despite what might be going on in their individual lives. There is certainly no app for that.

While the Christmas parties are the first thing that comes to mind, South Cove has impacted me in numerous other ways that I hadn't even realized until sitting down to write this essay. Like I said earlier my mom started working at South Cove in 1987 so that's about 29 years—give or take with maternity leave—that she has worked here. My mom even resigned from South Cove after having me in 1998. However, the monotonous days feeding and burping me didn't cut it. She missed her days out in the workforce as a nurse (and also realized the steep cost sending two kids to college). So a year later my mom was back at it immediately accepting the position South Cove had offered her. South Cove is more than just an employer. They show

deep concern for their employees and support them in times of adversity. When my mom was first diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer South Cove did not abandon the loyalty that she had contributed over the years and to this day South Cove continues to support her throughout this difficult journey. I hope that I am fortunate enough to work for an employer with even half the compassion and devotion that South Cove has shown my family.

Besides serving as a support system for my family, South Cove and its mission has inspired my future endeavors as a nursing student attending UMass Amherst in the fall. If there is anything I've learned about myself after graduating high school, it's that I love the immediate gratification you feel from helping someone in need. As a nurse you are able to see and interact with those that you are taking care of. My intentions for becoming a nurse emulate the spirit of South Cove and its goal to provide accessible care for a medically underserved population. After years of visiting my mom while she was at work and volunteering at shelters like Rosie's Place, I've come to realize that healthcare is a universal right. One's place of birth should not determine his or her quality of life. Everyone has the fundamental right to have a quality of care that treats not only the disease, but also tends to the humanity of the person. It is evident that South Cove wholeheartedly cares for and respects its patients and I aim to serve my future patients with the same tenacity of care.

Of course this quality of service would not be possible without an excellent staff. One individual I have had the pleasure of meeting is registered nurse, Mary Jo Majors. She has not only shown my family great kindness, but she has also served as a nursing role model for me. Mary Jo exemplifies what South Cove has to offer in terms of patient advocacy and leadership. I aspire to coalesce all the positive attributes that South Cove and its individual staff has demonstrated as I begin my path to becoming a registered nurse and eventually a nurse anesthetist.