

Stav cafeteria is often deemed the worst place to work by students on campus and I used to think so as well. It wasn't until I started working at the Caf last semester that I realized it was, in fact, one of the best jobs on campus.

I initially signed up to work at the Caf out of desperation. I really needed a job and fast and with the Caf you are guaranteed a position if you fill out a simple google form. So I applied in late-January and started working in February.

After my first shift, which was five hours on a Friday night, I wanted to quit. Actually, I wanted to quit in the middle of my first shift. After about two hours of standing behind the pasta station trying desperately not to lock my knees and not burn myself from the enormous boiling pot of pasta water, I escaped to the bathroom for a break. I called my mom quick and ranted to her about how physically demanding the job was. I begged her to save me from the last three hours of my shift. But I knew the only decent decision I could make was to stick out my shift and lose my ego. I told myself "Sophia, work is not supposed to be fun." Here is the crazy part, eventually working at the Caf DID become fun.

I kept on feeling extremely tired and frustrated with the demands of the job for the first few weeks working at the Caf. But after a little while I started to get this sort of "high" when I was working there. I realized I was helping to feed every student on campus. I was apart of this small, but mighty community on campus that worked day after day to ensure students had access to healthy food options. These were Stav workers.

I started making connections with the workers, both student workers and the older Bon Appetit workers. I even met one of my really good friends/ex-boyfriend. I never would've thought that scooping stir fry was what it took for me to find a relationship.

I made another strong relationship with a Bon Appetit worker. His name is Phuong. If you've been in Stav, you've likely seen him. He is always at bowls cooking up amazing stir fry. There is a language barrier between us as he is from Vietnam and has a thick accent, so we don't do that much talking. But it hasn't stopped us from connecting. Whenever I see him I can't help but smile. He is like my dad away from home. Whenever he sees me in the Caf when I'm not working, I can see his smile come back too. He throws me a funny face as well. He will roll his eyes or stick out his tongue and tell me "you're not getting any food, honey."

Nowadays the physically demanding work like lifting 50 pound bags of milk and bending over repeatedly to grab cups to stack doesn't bother me. I could do it for hours. Because now I see it as a means to be with and support people I love.