



June 8, 2021

Dear Southcoast Colleagues,

At Southcoast Health, we want to honor all of our Portuguese American colleagues and their families for their contributions to Southcoast Health's success by recognizing "Dia de Portugal, de Camões e das Comunidades Portuguesas," or, Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities.

The Day of Portugal is a celebration of Portuguese history, language and culture. Observed on the anniversary of Luís Vaz de Camões' death on June 10, 1580, it is also known as Portugal's National Day.

Luís Vaz de Camões is considered to be Portugal's greatest poet and the most popular poet to have written in the Portuguese language. He was a romantic and an idealist whose mastery of poetry is compared to that of Shakespeare, Vondel and Homer. Camões enlisted in the military in 1549 and during a battle with the Moors, he lost the sight in his right eye and returned to Lisbon in 1551. He died at the age of 56 and is buried near Vasco Da Gama in the capital city.

We have extended our recognition of this special day to a weeklong celebration (June 6-June 10) to give us the time merited to celebrate our Portuguese American colleagues and their importance to our organization.

Today, the Southcoast region is home to one of the largest Portuguese populations in the United States. The history of the cities of New Bedford and Fall River can only be told by including the stories of the many Portuguese people who helped these cities grow through their hard work and determination, starting in the 1600s and each century since.

During this week, we have selected three Portuguese colleagues to share their stories with us. They will be featured in our Southcoast Weekly newsletter, on social media and on our website's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion page!

New this year, we are offering a Portuguese Baked Goods Sale! Queijadas tradicionais, Massa Portuguesa, Bolos levedos and four more delicious desserts will be available for purchase in the three hospital cafes. Portuguese meals will be served in Charlton Memorial and St. Luke's cafeterias. Tobey had a special event with Portuguese meals offered by Two Sisters caterer.

Thank you to all of our Portuguese American colleagues for all you have done and continue to do for our hospital and healthcare system, and for our community!

With Gratitude,

Lauren De Simon Johnson  
Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer  
Southcoast Health