



Castleton University

Office of the President

Please remain standing while Kathleen Thompson from the Class of 2017, leads us in singing the National Anthem.

Please be seated.

Thank you, Kathleen.

Now, formally, welcome to Castleton's 230th Commencement and the second for us as Castleton University. I would also like to welcome thousands of others who, thanks to Northeast Sports Network, are watching at home on their computers or, if they are savvy enough, or perhaps young enough, on their televisions.

I am Dave Wolk, and I have had the pleasure and honor of being Castleton's president since 2001. For me, this is Commencement #16, and with very mixed feelings it is my last as President.

I understand what you are feeling. It's the unexpected waves of nostalgia. It's the full heart as you think about our loving community, the staff and faculty and your classmates who have been with you along this journey.

A lot has changed since 2001 and these graduating seniors have been an important part of many of the improvements at Castleton University.

I want you graduates to remember the role you have played. We have seen significant transformations in your life here, including the continuing enhancement of academic life and the quality of our students (including all of you!), with even more excitement ahead of us, especially given our continuing expansion in Rutland. And here we are right next to the beautiful, solar powered and wind powered Hoff Hall and this amazing Pavilion, unlike anything in the country, bigger than any other covered outdoor venue in Vermont, where we have had a myriad of events here, including several weddings. Many alums have been married here already! Maybe you will have yours here some day? Maybe you won't invite quite so many people. At any rate, I hope you will always come back to see the wonder and beauty of our new and improved campus.

One of the many improvements at Castleton has been our recent influx of talented international students, now representing forty countries.

I would like to draw your attention to the flags behind me, which represent our graduating international students, who came to Castleton from their home countries of Bermuda, Canada, China, Latvia, Peru and Switzerland, and are graduating today. Another group of graduates is our new Americans, those students who immigrated to the United States from countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. All of these students have successfully



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completed their Castleton degrees---and for many, English is their second, or sometimes, third language, which makes this achievement even more impressive.

We are so proud of all of you. We welcomed you with the warm embrace of a loving family, and we are grateful to you for enriching our community. You have made us better people. And we look forward to learning about your many successes in the future.

Castleton remains a special place where learning is valued, where individual differences are respected and honored, where well-educated and compassionate professors care about their students, where students prepare themselves for ever-changing careers, knowing that learning a living is as important as earning a living.

On Thursday night we had some fun together, and you stayed safe. So this is about Safe Ride, and many thanks to those who helped out. This is not a new story for some of you here this morning, so I apologize in advance for the redundancy, but thankfully you won't be hearing this silly story ever again. So I want to inform the Governor and other platform dignitaries, some of you new to Castleton Commencement, about what happened that night so that you won't be confused by some comments you might overhear on stage from students when I hand out diplomas to members of this class, many of whom I know quite well. Again, no surprise here for staff and faculty. For most of my years here I have been driving a Safe Ride van during senior night to the wee hours of the morning. The point is that we want to uphold the tradition of having fun while staying safe. We chauffeured hundreds of students on the bus and I was also their designated driver. I am only pointing this out because of some confusion platform guests have had in past years when I hand out diplomas and they overhear students saying to me, as they have already: President Wolk, thanks for last night.

Just for the record, it's about Safe Ride and that's all it is. And you will never have to listen to this story again!

I also want to point out to the 3000 or so in attendance today, and all who are watching on simulcast, that several of our stellar graduates were honored on Thursday night at our rehearsal with an early graduation. This is because our conference champion and tournament champion women's lacrosse team is playing in the NCAA tournament today at 1 p.m. in western New York. They showed Spartan Pride, and we celebrated their graduation at rehearsal with their families and friends taking pictures and cheering them on. It was a heartwarming experience for all of us. These women had the distinction of graduating first in their class!

For you graduates this is a day of great excitement and some mixed emotions. I know. It is a bittersweet day for me because I have come to know and love so many of you. I shook many of your hands at freshman orientation and now I get to shake your hand again today. It is an honor for me. I love how you transformed yourselves. I love how you transformed



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Castleton. I love how you transformed me. I ask you to always remember your special place in the small University with the big heart. Thank you and Keep Smiling.

At this time I want to recognize the members of the platform party. Please hold your applause until all have been introduced, and I would ask platform party members to remain standing after you are introduced.

Dale Kreisler, Professor of Mathematics, retiring this year, serving as the Mace Bearer;
Ingrid Johnston, Dean of Special Academic Programs;
Richard Reardon, Director of Education;
Christopher Macfarlane, member of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees;
Tim Jerman, vice-chairman of the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees;
Governor Phil Scott, who will deliver the Commencement address;
Martha O'Connor, chair of the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees;
Karen Luneau, secretary of the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees;
Churchill Hindes, member of the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees;
Jonathan Spiro, Chief Academic Officer;
Cathy Kozlik, Associate Academic Dean, and
Helen Mango, Professor of Geochemistry, President of the Faculty Assembly, serving as the Platform Marshal for today's ceremony.

I would also like to recognize today's marshals. I ask that each of them stand and remain standing until all are introduced. Please hold your applause.

Faculty Marshals, Professors Lillian Jackson and retiring Professor Bob Gershon;
Class marshals, Peg Richards; and Anne Slonaker.

and also our Degree Marshals,
Patty Moore,
Kimberly Carey,
Andy Vermilyea,
Sherrill Blodget,
David Blow,
Michael Reeves,
Shannon Newell,
Charles Madsen, and
Marybeth Lennox.

Thanks to all of you.

I would like to recognize a distinguished member of our faculty who is with us today, Jeff Freeman, Professor Emeritus.



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I would also like to thank the members of the Alumni Association who carried the degree banners in today's ceremony. Would you please stand and be recognized?

I also want to thank Coordinator of Studio Music Josh Thompson and the Castleton Wind Ensemble for providing the wonderful music today.

Castleton is all about family, and our commencement would not be complete if we did not recognize the support and love of family and friends. You are more than just the audience; you are an essential part of this ceremony. I ask the parents, grandparents, spouses, children, extended families, friends and significant others to stand and receive our appreciation. And a very Happy Mother's Day tomorrow to you as well!

Beside me is the faculty from Castleton's more than 30 academic programs. They are knowledgeable, creative, and caring. Most importantly they are good teachers. Our faculty know a lot, and they care a lot.

Will the faculty please rise -- and will the rest of you join me in recognizing them?

The faculty is supported by a dedicated team of staff and administrators. I would also like to recognize some of the behind the scenes unsung heroes who work so diligently on events like this, and particularly our entire Public Safety staff, as well as Victoria Angis, Brigitte Olson, Lori Phillips, Sarah Chambers, Sam Green, Macarthur Stine and the tech crew, and especially Rick Wareing, Chuck Lavoie and the Facilities staff. Will all staff and administrators present please rise to accept our appreciation?

It is now my distinct pleasure to introduce this year's Class President, Daniel Warnecke . Daniel is an amazing young man. He is on the President's List, has a 3.75 GPA, majoring in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing and Management, is active in all things good, and Daniel has earned lots of awards and been very involved in the community, all while working 25 or more hours per week. He is the ultimate multi-tasker, and a model citizen. Daniel Warnecke.

DAN GIVES REMARKS AND LEAVE PLATFORM.

In recent years the Castleton Alumni Association created two special awards honoring an outstanding faculty member and a distinguished senior. It is now my honor to present those awards.

The Alumni Association Outstanding Faculty Award recognizes a faculty member whose excellence in teaching influences students well beyond graduation. Past recipients have included the most esteemed members of the faculty.

This year's honoree is an absolutely phenomenal professor. I can't remember a year with so many nominations for one candidate. Here are words from nominees to describe her:



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enthusiasm, experienced, respectful, positive, passionate, great listener, superlative advisor, rigorous, top notch, transparent, inspiring, influential, focused on student success, professional, amazing mentor, cares for her students as if they were her own family. Treating students as you would your own family members is what we are all about.

On behalf of the Alumni Association, and the Alumni Board, I am pleased to present this award to the architect of our successful Master's Degree Program in Athletic Leadership and Assistant Professor of Heath, Human Movement, and Sport Marybeth Lennox.

The Leonard C. Goldman Distinguished Senior Award is given to the graduating senior who has excelled in and out of the classroom, contributed to community service, and served as an example to others.

This year's honoree, nominated by several faculty and staff members, is well respected and admired by all. She holds several leadership roles on campus, is a senior student ambassador, works as a tutor and financial literacy assistant in the Academic Support Center, has excelled in her internships, is a stellar Admissions representative, serves on the Campus Activities Board, among many other endeavors. She bleeds 343 green. She has also worked at local restaurants, makes maple syrup and is an avid outdoors woman and hunter. She is a woman of substance and humility, embodying the Castleton way: doing the right thing when no one is watching.

On behalf of the Alumni Association and the Alumni Board, I am pleased to present this award to Kathleen Haseltine.

Eight years ago, an anonymous friend of Castleton gave the University a very special gift to establish an endowment for the purpose of each year honoring one of Castleton's many dedicated, highly competent part-time faculty.

This year's deserving recipient has been teaching since 2009. She demonstrates exceptional enthusiasm and expertise. She inspires students to think critically and creatively. She demands excellence in student research. She is a kind and clear communicator who demonstrates a deep passion for student learning. Our students are so fortunate that she is such a positive role model.

Please join me in honoring the Outstanding Part-Time Faculty member for 2017: Health, Human Movement and Sport Professor Helen Strom-Olsen.

Today's Commencement speaker is a wonderful man and a good friend.

He is a native Vermonter who grew up in Barre and graduated from Spaulding High School and UVM. We forgive him for that. He was elected to the Vermont Senate in 2000 and served for five terms. He was elected Lt. Governor in 2010, serving until this past January when he was sworn in as Vermont's 82nd Governor.



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Throughout his many years of public service, our Governor has listened to and learned from Vermonters, always willing to roll up his sleeves to help make a difference in people's lives. He launched the Everyday Jobs Initiative and Vermont Economy Pitch sessions, learning from hundreds of Vermont employers and workers, working alongside folks in 35 different professions.

He is the first Vermont governor in 50 years since Governor Hoff, for whom the building behind me is named, to request of the Legislature a very significant increase in state funding for the Vermont State Colleges. He has been our biggest supporter in Montpelier, and for that and much more we are very grateful.

He is very active in community service projects, as if he was a Castleton Spartan. He founded the Wheels for Warmth program, through which Vermonters donate tires they no longer need, offered for resale at affordable prices, with all proceeds benefitting heating fuel assistance programs, raising \$367,000 thus far.

For more than thirty years he was a co-owner of his family construction business. Many of you know him as the guy who has raced the #14 car at Barre's Thunder Road for more than two decades. He holds the most wins as a Late Model driver at the track. Much to the consternation of his state police security detail, he was back racing his #14 car at Thunder Road a couple weeks ago, making him the only Governor in America who is also a champion race car driver.

He lives in Berlin with his lovely wife Diana McTeague Scott and their two dogs, a spoiled golden retriever and a loving black lab. They also have two grown daughters.

He is one of the most authentic, down to earth people I know, and unlike almost every other politician I have met over five decades, he is not intoxicated with his importance in the world. He is a real guy, a great guy and I am really proud after a very long legislative session just concluded that he is here today.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Governor Phil Scott.

Gov. Scott SPEAKS.

Governor, thank you very much.

College Steps is a program that provides post secondary support for students with varying abilities, including autism spectrum disorders. College Steps students earn a certificate in higher education over the course of two years by completing academic, vocational and campus life requirements.



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PRESIDENT: Will the Chief Academic Officer present the candidates for the Certificate in Higher Education?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this Certificate please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the Certificate in Higher Education and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this Certificate.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the Certificate in Higher Education.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Master of Science?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Master of Science and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the degree of Master of Science.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized and to receive their hoods?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidate for the degree of Master of Music Education?

JONATHAN: Will the candidate for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting this candidate for the degree of Master of Music Education and to report that in the judgment of the faculty he has satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the degree of Master of Music Education.



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JONATHAN: Will the candidate please come forward to be recognized and to receive his hood?

Please hold your applause.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Master of Arts?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Master of Arts and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer upon you the degree of Master of Arts.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized and to receive their hoods?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Social Work?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Social Work and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Bachelor of Social Work.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.



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PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Bachelor of Science.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Music?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Music and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Bachelor of Music.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Associate of Science?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Associate of Science and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.



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PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Associate of Science.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates for the degree have been presented.

PRESIDENT: Will the Dean present the candidates for the degree of Associate of Arts?

JONATHAN: Will the candidates for this degree please stand?

President Wolk, I have the honor of presenting these candidates for the degree of Associate of Arts and to report that in the judgment of the faculty they have satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements for this degree.

PRESIDENT: By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees, I hereby confer the degree of Associate of Arts.

JONATHAN: Will the candidates please come forward to be recognized?

Please hold your applause until all candidates for the degree have been presented.

You have made a difference at Castleton. Now go out and make a difference in the world.
Ladies and gentlemen ...the Class of 2017.

I would like to ask Sam Rodgers to come forward in front of the stage to lead your classmates in singing the Castleton anthem. Please join us in singing our anthem. At the conclusion, graduates should remain standing, but I ask the audience to please be seated so that everyone has a good view of the recessional.

CASTLETON ANTHEM

There's a place we'll ne'er forget
As the twilight deepens
Hallowed halls we'll long recall
As we sing of our dear Alma Mater.

Castleton our voices raised
Ever mindful of those days
Ere we go our sep'rate ways
Alma Mater, thee we praise.



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Sing it always clear and strong
Sing it ever after
Show the spirit of us all and the
Love of our dear Alma Mater.

Castleton our voices raised
Ever mindful of those days
Ere we go our sep'rate ways
Alma Mater, thee we praise.