



Castleton University

HELLO CLASS OF 2018!

Please, let's give our families, the staff and faculty another round of applause.

I am honored that I have the opportunity to say congratulations to you all before you venture off into your future!

Four years ago, my parents dropped me off at a place that I would unknowingly consider my home.

I lived in Adams with four amazing young women who I would experience my first few months of college with. Elly, Tori, Maddie, and Amelia, thank you for being my second family as we started this crazy journey together!

I would also like to thank my professors, my family, my boyfriend, and his family. You all pushed me to be the best version of myself, and I couldn't thank you enough. You watched as I grew from a nervous high school student, to an outspoken young adult.

As most of you know, in order to graduate, we need to not only finish our major courses, but general education as well. Many of us met through our gen ed classes, but we bonded in our major classes. We talked about our grades, what we had to do for homework, possibly vented a little, and also the casual "What did you put for question five? That's not what I put."

College is a time when we are able to find what we are truly passionate about, not just what we are told we should be doing. During the four or more years in college, you might have changed your major, and you might have realized the thing you wanted to be your whole life, is no longer in your plan.

I started Castleton as a Political Science major. After my first semester, and my first history course, I found that history was where I was meant to be. My passion had always been in government, and I found a way to incorporate what I loved with what I am passionate about. During my four years, I have grown in confidence, and in advocacy. I push boundaries when it comes to public education because I believe all students, young and old deserve the best quality that is available.

Through advocacy, I have been a representative for Vermont's pre-service educators throughout the country. When the funding of public education was threatened, I used my voice. I used my experiences to speak with state senators, governors and representatives nationwide. I did so because our younger generation had not yet found their voices. Look at them now.



Castleton University

College for most is not an easy venture. It's emotionally, physically and as we all know, financially draining, but look at the people around you. WE MADE IT THROUGH. We struggled, but we persevered.

The message that I want you all to remember is that our generation has an obligation to make a difference. We did our time, and now we need to use the knowledge we gained and make the most of it. We may not succeed the first time, or even the second time; as Winston Churchill said, "Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm." Keep your head up, and you will all do amazing things.

So, Class of 2018, WE DID IT!