

By Nicole Brumbaugh, Rutland Herald

At the commencement exercises Saturday, Castleton State College President David S. Wolk shared some good news.

Wolk announced that the school would receive a \$400,000 federal grant to initiate a nursing program.

"We could not do it without Congressman Peter Welch," Wolk said.

Castleton has offered an associate's degree in nursing for almost 50 years. However, soon they will also be offering a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Earlier this year the college announced it would launch a four-year nursing degree program.

The new program is intended for a nursing student to get a license after three years. Their first year will be used studying general education and then two years will be used for nursing training and the fourth year will be to finish up.

The program will be essential to those with nursing degrees. The U.S. Department of Health has asked for more nurses to have advanced degrees.

The urge for more nurses to have advanced degrees is because recent studies have shown there is less risk to patients who are cared by nurses with bachelor's degrees.

Before the program, which will be available in the fall, nursing students would have to travel to

the University of Vermont, Norwich or Southern Vermont College to further their education.

The new program will make it easier for those interested in nursing to get an advanced education without having to travel outside of Rutland County.

The college will have 35 positions available for new freshman and 20 spots open for established nurses.

Admission information on the bachelor's degree program are already available on the Castleton State College website.

In March officials said that they already had 300 plus applications.