



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Durham Teacher Honored as Southern District Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year**

RESTON, VA, March 6, 2017 — Durham, NC resident Lara Brickhouse of Durham Public Schools will be honored as the Southern District Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year by SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators at its 132nd National Convention & Expo in Boston, March 14-18.

SHAPE America's Southern District represents 13 states from Virginia to Texas. The award is given in recognition of outstanding teaching performance at the elementary, middle and high school level and the ability to motivate today's youth to participate in a lifetime of physical activity.

Brickhouse, an adapted physical education (APE) teacher for the past 10 years, two with Durham Public Schools, will vie with two other district winners for the distinguished honor of National Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year. At the convention, SHAPE America and Sportime featuring SPARK — innovators of equipment and evidence-based programs for physical educators — will celebrate the 28th anniversary of this Teacher of the Year awards collaboration.

The National Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year award recipient will be announced on Friday, March 17 at the SHAPE America Hall of Fame Banquet, sponsored by Human Kinetics, an employee-owned company committed to serving the physical activity field, and Sportime featuring SPARK. *USA Today* National Sports Columnist Christine Brennan will be inducted into the SHAPE America Hall of Fame that evening.

The award-winning educator says a great deal of her time is devoted to understanding how each student communicates his/her wants and needs and how each student learns.

“My aim is to establish and maintain a learning environment that is positive, supportive, nurturing, inclusive and above all else, fun!” says Brickhouse. In her class, each day is an adventure for students. One of her favorite things to do is teach students an activity or sport they have never attempted or even heard of.

Lara prides herself on the ability to think outside of the box and strongly encourages fellow educators to do the same. “Adapted PE is so much more than basic skill-building with modified equipment and IEP goals. It's a way of life. It's a way for students to develop social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills needed to lead healthy, safe, and successful lives across all settings. Students are praised for mini

victories and classroom teachers and parents are encouraged to celebrate these victories to help build students' confidence!"

Her strong foundation and understanding of how to meet the needs of students with disabilities led her to single-handedly develop and implement an APE program from the ground up for Pitt County Schools in North Carolina. More than 100 teachers and families rely on her program as a primary source for putting students on a path to leading a physical active life, both inside and outside of school.

Brickhouse says in a profession with little to no budget and limited resources, she has been awarded 11 financial grants related to APE. The funds have assisted in purchasing equipment, implementing recreation and leisure programs, community-based opportunities, and more.

"What stands out about Lara is her dedication," says Katheryne Rhys Myrick Potts, a behavioral consultant and colleague. "She spent countless hours researching and observing APE programs to create a service-based program that led to hiring three full-time APE teachers. Because of Lara, students with disabilities have been taught aquatics, bicycle safety and have been introduced to a variety of vocational skills."

Her professional affiliations include SHAPE America, its Southern District Association and state affiliate, North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance, and Sport Management (NCAAHPERD-SM).

She has been recognized as the NCAAHPERD-SM APE Teacher of the Year and is heavily involved in the organization as a convention presenter.

Brickhouse received her bachelor's and master's degrees in physical education and APE from East Carolina University, respectively.

For more information about SHAPE America's National Convention & Expo, visit the [website](#) and follow #SHAPEBoston.

### **About SHAPE America**

SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators is the nation's largest membership organization of health and physical education professionals. Since its founding in 1885, the organization has defined excellence in physical education, and our National Standards for K-12 Physical Education serve as the foundation for well-designed physical education programs across the country. We provide programs, resources and advocacy to support health and physical educators at every level, from preschool to university graduate programs.

SHAPE America has 50 state affiliates and is a founding partner of national initiatives such as the Presidential Youth Fitness Program, Let's Move! Active Schools and the Jump Rope For Heart/Hoops For Heart programs. "50 Million Strong by 2029" is our commitment to empower all children to lead healthy and active lives through effective health and physical education programs. For more information, visit [www.shapeamerica.org](http://www.shapeamerica.org).

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