The 2017 recipient of the NYS AHPERD Joy of Effort Award is Rod Mergardt.

Currently enjoying his 54th year in education, Rod Mergardt spent 31 years in the Bedford Central School District as a teacher and director of health, physical education and athletics. After retirement in 1996, he was an interim director in five school districts, and served as adjunct professor of sport law at Manhattanville College. For the past 20 years, Rod has been a supervisor of student teachers for SUNY Cortland and is also the national Director of Professional Development and Coaches Safety Certification for Bigger, Faster, Stronger, Inc. Rod has trained and certified more than twelve hundred coaches as an instructor of the New York State Coaching Certification courses. On the state level since 2012, he has served NYS AHPERD as president and is currently on the Board of Directors. Rod has presented extensively at the local, state and national levels. He has been inducted into the Fox Lane High School Sports Hall of Fame, received the NYS Athletic Administrators Association Chapter One Honor Award, and was named several times ‘Coach of the Year’ for Section One Boys and Girls Gymnastics. In supporting Rod for this award, a colleague wrote, “Rod accomplishes everything with a huge smile and positive attitude. His energy and passion is unparalleled. He is first to reach out to students and first to take a student aside and give the fatherly advice so badly needed in some cases. If anybody exemplifies the JOY in this profession, it is personified in Rod Mergardt. He does this not just in words, but by example, attitude and commitment.”

President Wolfe, it is my honor to present to you the recipient of the 2017 Joy of Effort Award, Rod Mergardt.