The 2019 recipient of the NYS AHPERD Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award is Penny Leonard.

Penny graduated from Hannibal Central School District and with pride, returned to teach physical education after graduating from SUNY Cortland. Her middle school curriculum is based on NYS Learning Standards, SHAPE America’s National Standards and Grade Level Outcomes. Penny constructs her daily lessons using the differentiated teaching method, by forming flexible groups and integrating different ability and cognitive levels. By doing this, she has students within groups who can serve as role models for skills and help to provide positive feedback to struggling students. Penny uses a formative assessment at the end of each unit, which enables her to measure student growth and demonstrate knowledge gained. She is a member of the school’s Character Education Committee, Field Days Committee and the District Strategic Planning Committee. Penny coaches modified cross country and girls basketball. She is an active member of Central North Zone and was honored with the Zone’s Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award. Her assistant superintendent wrote, “Teaching middle school physical education can be a challenge since students are experiencing several development changes that can make them feel self-conscious about participating in physical activities. Recognizing this, Penny makes developing her classroom culture a top priority. She is continually seeking opportunities to grow in her content knowledge and engages in school-wide efforts to strengthen students’ literacy skills - a true testament to Penny’s dedication to educating the whole child!” It is an honor to present the recipient of the 2019 Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award, Penny Leonard.