



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104

Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5520

www.adph.org

Public Health leaders honored

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Jennifer Sumner
(334) 206-7988

The Alabama Public Health Association recently recognized persons from across the state who have demonstrated exceptional merit during the past year in the field of public health. The following individuals were honored at the association's 60th Annual Meeting and Health Education Conference in Opelika April 7.

The Anne M. Smith Public Health Nurse of the Year Award was presented to nurse educator **Marilyn Knight, M.S.N., R.N.**, of Tuscaloosa. The recipient of this award must exemplify the mission of public health nursing in Alabama, that is "to assure conditions in which individuals, families and communities can be healthy utilizing the unique expertise of public health nurses to assess, plan and implement programs which promote health and prevent disease."

For the past eight years, Ms. Knight has assisted new nurses in orientation and integration of public health services. With the desire to see all nurses thrive in their roles, she enjoys learning new concepts. Supporters praised her positive attitude, willingness to go beyond the call of duty to accomplish the mission, dedication to her role, and commitment to public health.

The Frederick S. Wolf Award was presented to **Doug Turnbull** of Dothan. This award was established in 1982 to recognize an individual who has been active in public health at the local level for more than 10 years; who has demonstrated efficiency, dedication and professionalism in delivery of public health services; and who has provided unselfish community services in areas unrelated to public health.

Turnbull is an environmental supervisor for the Coffee, Crenshaw, Geneva and Houston county health departments. He holds the nationally recognized Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS/RS) credential. A strong supporter of community organizations, he has served as a judge and volunteer for the high school Envirobowl competitions of Legacy: Partners in Environmental Education since 2006. In 2010 he took his first step in the three-day, 60-mile Susan G. Komen Walk for Breast Cancer, has participated five times, and raised close to \$12,000 to promote awareness, self exams, mammograms, early detection and treatment of breast cancer. He plans to participate in his sixth walk this year.

Shawanda Surles of Prattville, formerly of Selma, was awarded both the D.G. Gill Award which honors an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to public health in Alabama and the Virginia Kendrick Award which recognizes an individual who has provided notable service to the people of Alabama while serving in a supporting role in the field of public health.

Ms. Surles is the office manager for the Montgomery County Health Department and actively serves in several organizations related to public health. She consistently exhibits determination to supply clients, workers and others with the best experience possible. Described as “dependable, efficient and extremely supporting” and a leader who has been a tremendous asset to her church and community, she was praised for her warm and cheerful attitude that finds her handling difficult situations with “remarkable patience and admirable tact.” She is the first recipient of two awards from the association in a single year.

Karl Bryant of Montgomery was presented the Guy M. Tate Award, an award given annually to a public health employee, group or agency with 10 years or less in public health for outstanding current or recent service or contribution to public health. Letters of support stated Bryant “epitomizes the spirit of public health—always willing to help, professional, creative and responsible” and for his professionalism, kindness and courtesy. Colleagues praise him for completing multiple projects with a high level of expertise in graphic design and for his assistance with all aspects of projects.

Judy Smith, R.N., M.P.H., of Cullman was presented the Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence in Public Health. This award was established in 1987 to honor Dr. Myers for his accomplishments by recognizing an individual, group or organization who, through excellence in work, has made a significant impact on some aspect of public health in Alabama.

Ms. Smith has worked in the Alabama Department of Public Health for 45 years and has been involved at all levels, beginning as a local public health nurse and progressing through various levels to administrator of a seven-county area. Throughout her sterling career a consistent theme has been a determination to make things better for those she serves, including securing funding for many grants and seeing the construction of new county health departments.

Two Alabama Department of Public Health employees were inducted into the Alabama Public Health Association Hall of Fame, Class of 2016: **Sandra Blakely** of Eclectic and **Dr. Bernard H. Eichold** of Mobile. The Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the enhancement and advancement of the association.

Mrs. Blakely, a 25-year member, was recognized for assisting everyone with the highest level of professional skill, regardless of the scope of the request and for treating the public with the utmost respect and courtesy in her work. As Mobile County health officer, Dr. Eichold was praised for his dedication to the field of public health at the county, area, state and national levels and his staunch support of the association since he joined in 1990.