Office of Honorable Mayor Jacques K. Gilbert

Town of Apex

PO Box 250 | 73 Hunter Street
Apex, North Carolina 27502
919.249.1260

October 24, 2026

Ms. Lauren Grace Updyke
Apex, NC 27502

RE: Mayoral Honor of Excellence Award and Mayoral Golden Shoe Leadership of Honor

Dear Ms. Updyke,

On behalf of the Town of Apex, it is my distinct honor and privilege to formally recognize you for your exceptional leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment to community through your instrumental role in bringing the inaugural Apex Half Marathon to life on October 24, 2026.

Through your dedication and collaboration with Alaina Money-Garman, you have accomplished far more than organizing a race. You have helped establish the foundation for what promises to become a cherished Apex tradition—one that brings neighbors together, promotes health and wellness, celebrates perseverance, and strengthens the sense of community that makes Apex so special.

The overwhelming enthusiasm surrounding this inaugural event speaks volumes about your efforts. Reaching the race's full capacity of 1,000 runners, with hundreds more expressing interest in participating, is a remarkable achievement and a testament to the excitement and community spirit you have inspired.

Organizing an event of this magnitude is no small feat. Your impact extends well beyond the 13.1-mile course, inspiring others to embrace new challenges and pursue goals they may have never imagined possible. On a personal note, your efforts have even inspired me to take on my very first half marathon—an experience I will proudly associate with this historic occasion.

In recognition of your visionary leadership, dedication to community, and extraordinary efforts to bring people together, it is my privilege to present you with the Mayoral Golden Shoe Leadership of Honor, a symbolic recognition representing peace, unity, compassion, and perseverance. These values are reflected in your efforts to create an experience that celebrates not only individual achievement but also the collective strength and spirit of our community.

Lauren, your leadership embodies the very best of Apex and demonstrates that when people come together with vision, determination, and a shared purpose, extraordinary things can happen. Your contributions have helped Apex make history while laying the foundation for a lasting community tradition.

With sincere admiration and gratitude, I thank you for your commitment to our community and for inspiring others to reach new heights, one step at a time.

Very truly yours,



Jacques K. Gilbert
Mayor, Town of Apex