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## **FIVE WOMEN EMBRACE THEIR JOURNEYS AND RETURN TO COLLEGE THROUGH AT&T CCEOC CCWC SCHOLARSHIP**

AT&T, the Central California Women's Conference (CCWC) and Fresno State Central California Educational Opportunity Center (CCEOC) honored five women at a luncheon reception Tuesday, Oct. 24. These students were recognized and awarded a scholarship for their courage and conviction in turning their lives around and re-entering college. Attendees included the honorees families, counselors, friends, teachers, college presidents and others that mentored the college students along their journey. Scholarship recipients range in age from 25 to 41 and are thriving despite challenges and setbacks which made their journey more difficult.

"These ladies did not give up on their dream of a college education while dealing with significant life issues," said Jenny Amaro, CCEOC Director. "Too many times it is easier to accept defeat when we have fallen; it is much harder to dust ourselves off and keep trying. What's important is not that we have fallen but how high we rise after that fall. That is the true sign of character, which these students have shown in the face of many difficult obstacles in life."

Honorees Veronica Aguilar, Anita Flores, Alejandra Gomez and Desiree Mesta are pursuing careers in the Juvenile Justice/Criminology system, Elementary School Education, Nursing, Social Work and Counseling. Their chosen pathways are all in the helping arena as each wants to give back, pay it forward and make life better for others.

The AT&T, CCWC, CCEOC Scholarship program is made possible by a grant from AT&T. "AT&T is proud to partner with CCWC and CCEOC in support of the re-entry scholarship program," said Julie Tone, Director – External Affairs, AT&T California. "We are honored to support these five inspiring women in the Central Valley so that they can complete their college degrees."

Earlier in the year the scholars attended and were recognized at the 2017 Central California Women's Conference. "The theme of this year's CCWC was Embrace Your Journey and these women certainly exemplify this sentiment," said Nené Casares, CCWC Board President. "They have overcome incredible odds and their decision to change their lives by getting a college degree is inspirational. We are honored to honor them!" Casares believes that the AT&T, CCWC, CCEOC scholars exemplify the mission of CCWC in the support of women and children.

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The **CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE** was founded in 1988 by the late State Senator Ken L. Maddy of Fresno, Calif. The conference is a 501(c) (3) non-profit, non-political organization, and the event is designed to educate, motivate and inspire women to be the best they can be in their professional and personal lives. (Tax I.D. #77-0178140).