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**PG&E and CCWC ANNOUNCE WINNER OF  
SHE MAKES A DIFFERENCE AWARD**  
[www.CCWC-Fresno.org](http://www.CCWC-Fresno.org)

Pacific Gas and Electric Company and the Central California Women's Conference (CCWC) have announced that Trisha Cooper is the winner of the 2017 *She Makes a Difference Award*. Cooper will be recognized at the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Central California Women's Conference on Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2017, at the [Fresno Convention & Entertainment Center](#).

The PG&E/CCWC *She Makes a Difference* award acknowledges one woman who has overcome obstacles to change her life, her family or her community with her courage, strength and wisdom to make a positive impact. Anna Brooks, Senior Manager of Public Affairs for PG&E says, "Trisha Cooper's unstoppable contributions embody all three of these traits. One person really can make a difference!"

When Cooper's son, Brandon was diagnosed with Autism in 2005, Trisha knew she had to find support to help Brandon develop. Her commitment to his needs helped create special educational programs that have helped nearly 30,000 students. Cooper is a founding member of the Autism Awareness Committee in the Central Unified School District. The committee helps the District understand the unique approach to teaching students with Autism and promotes awareness and acceptance on every school campus.

Above and beyond her commitment to Brandon and her community, Cooper has helped raise nearly \$500,000 for the EPU Children's Center, a community benefit organization that supports children and families facing developmental delays. Cooper serves as the President EPU's Board of Directors and she shares her story and encourages parents as a member of EPU's Family Faculty.

Alene Istanboulian nominated Cooper. "For those whose lives have been touched by Trisha's commitment," said Istanboulian, "she is the ultimate example of a mother who turned her grief into support, support into empowerment, empowerment into to advocacy, and advocacy into leadership. Advocating for children and families with special needs is truly Trisha's divine purpose."

According to Cooper, "While it is challenging to raise a child with unique talents and gifts, it has been one of my life's greatest blessings. Because it is challenging, we as parents can't do it alone. It takes a community of support, an open mind and heart filled with patience and love. I am grateful for my journey, this award and the hope that it will bring to children and families like mine."

CCWC Board President Nené Casares, "Trisha is a tireless and courageous advocate for her son and for all children. CCWC could not be more thrilled to honor her on September 19 with this award. She is a light for us all."

PG&E/CCWC will award a grant of \$5,000 to Exceptional Parents Unlimited in honor of Cooper at a reception to be held in late Spring 2018.

The theme of this year's CCWC is Embrace Your Journey. Attendees will be inspired to celebrate and embrace the good and challenging areas of their lives, including careers, relationships, and, most importantly, their own personal growth – for that has made them into the woman they are today. Paralympic snowboarding medalist, Amy Purdy, is they year's celebrity keynote speaker.

Tickets are still available and can be purchased at [www.CCWC-Fresno.org](http://www.CCWC-Fresno.org)

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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).