



Connie Gipson has devoted her professional life to bettering the educational and workforce development experiences of others. As one of the first sex equity coordinators in the nation, a position mandated by the 1976 Vocational Education Amendment, Connie committed to making gender equity part of the career technical education discourse, even having testified before Congress on the reauthorization of Perkins legislation in 1981. Connie also was a respected member of the task force for Title IX, a law that continues to ensure that equitable access to education is available to all girls and women. In addition, as the former legislative chair of the Vocational Education Equity Council (now known as CTEEC), Connie represented all states where negotiations were held with women organizations and legislators for the 1986 Perkins reauthorization.

Connie was instrumental in instituting gender equity in her home state of California, and she took action to ensure that gender equity became not only a regular conversation held in public policy forums but also a reality in California schools. She developed a sex equity grant program and disseminated those grants to each school district in the state, enabling all districts to implement programs to eliminate bias and stereotyping in career technical education (CTE). Always attuned to access, equity, and diversity, Connie understood the diversity of the state's citizens and required that printed materials speak to Latino/a and African American students, included persons of color on her staff, and, in some instances, required school districts to collaborate with community-based organizations to serve diverse populations. Connie went beyond the duties of a sex equity coordinator and sought to broaden the scope of secondary CTE programs by including aviation, construction management, and environmental education programs.

Connie is recognized as having a lifetime of achievement because of her dedication to equity and to NAPE, an organization she was instrumental in creating. She served on the NAPE formation committee and championed California in becoming one of the first NAPE member states, which significantly contributed to establishing a national office. Connie's fearlessness as a gender equity advocate in a time when such roles were met with hostility by some, her perseverance in establishing gender equity for all, and her dedication to NAPE are just three of the many reasons why we celebrate Connie with a 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award.