

# MEET AET VOLUNTEER

## Gail Werbach



### Level of AET membership:

Retired BCET

### Type and location of practice: (City, State)

Children and Adults, Tarzana, California

### Leadership roles held in AET:

President, Editor of the Newsletter, Chair of Certification Committee

### How long have you been an educational therapist?

45 years

### What brought you to educational therapy?

I was a high school French teacher when I moved back to Los Angeles. My husband was in training at Cedars Sinai where he met a woman in charge of a training program in Educational Therapy. There was an unexpected opening, and I was hooked.

### Areas of expertise:

Children and adults with learning issues. I learned a lot from my husband who is a psychiatrist, and I gradually took on more cases with the need for interventions with parents. Much of the time, I worked to get the parents into therapy.

I especially like to work with adults with learning problems many of whom were undiagnosed. At one time I worked with two college professors who both told me "I can't read." I helped adults who were changing professions and needed to take tests. Many had executive functioning deficits and needed help with time management.

### What is the best career advice you can give to new ETs?

Network, join a study group and be open to new ideas and techniques. Gradually get to know the relevant schools in your area.

### Describe a challenge you have faced as an educational therapist:

As a beginning ET I was referred a client with a myriad of problems; educational, psychological, and motoric. I told the referring psychiatrist that "I would take care of the problems". After one meeting, I realized that the scope was too large for me, and I needed to refine my goals.

### Describe a highlight of your educational therapy career:

Appreciation from parents and grandparents when their student is successful. It is wonderful to meet a parent 10 years after treatment and hear that the student has finished a training course, had a job, or graduated from college. It is a thrill to have a career where hard work produces good results, interesting colleagues, and continued learning.

### What do you think the future of the educational therapy profession will look like?

I think there will always be a need for our type of work. Hopefully, our organization will grow and be able to provide continued training and support for the ET community.

### How have you benefited from your membership in AET?

I can't imagine practicing without a peer group of professionals to discuss cases, and network. Educational Therapy has many facets, and it often takes a village to figure out how to treat a client. I was given the opportunity to take a leadership role in the organization and to hone my writing and research skills. I was honored to work alongside and become good friends with ETs such as Dorothy Ungerleider, Susan Fogelson, and Ellen Opell who taught me so much.

### Hobbies/Leisure Activities:

Hiking, cooking, knitting, yoga and exploring our new home in Pasadena with my husband.

