

# MEET AET VOLUNTEER

## Maria Fagan Hassani



### Level of AET membership:

Professional

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

Sherman Oaks

### Leadership roles held in AET:

Chair of Membership Committee and Co-Chair of Marketing and Outreach (M&O)

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

20 years

### What brought you to educational therapy?

As a classroom teacher, I was frustrated by my inability to create the learning environment and support necessary for the students who struggled the most. I was eager to learn about the most effective programs, tools, and strategies that provide students who struggle with the best possible chance to be successful learners,

### Areas of expertise:

Teaching struggling readers, writers, and mathematicians the skills necessary to succeed throughout their school career and into adulthood. I also work with middle and high school students and their families on Executive Functioning/Time Management skills to support the development of these skills as the demands of the classroom increase.

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

Early in your educational therapy career, work to expand your network of educational therapists and allied professionals. As the twist and turns of a typical career come your way, those are the professionals you will turn to for support and camaraderie. You will always need others to refer your students to, as well as professionals who are familiar with your work and will refer to you.

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

Being served multiple times with a subpoena to appear on behalf of a child, in family court rocked my world. Each time I was called to testify meant revisiting my previous sessions with the family and the child. While these reviews were intense and painful at times, they also eventually revealed the quality work I had done as an Educational Therapist. I was lucky to have colleagues I could lean on during this incredibly challenging time.

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

I am hopeful that the awareness of Educational Therapy will increase worldwide and therefore increase the number of educators who call themselves Educational Therapists around the globe. There are so many children who struggle with learning that need someone who can provide the type of remediation and advocacy they need to be successful.

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

I am hopeful that the awareness of Educational Therapy will increase worldwide and therefore increase the number of educators who call themselves Educational Therapists around the globe. There are so many children who struggle with learning that need someone who can provide the type of remediation and advocacy they need to be successful.

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

The professional collegiality has been incredibly helpful as I have made my way as a fledgling Educational Therapist in Chicago to a more seasoned professional in both Northern and Southern California. Without my membership, I would have felt alone as a professional. Thanks to AET I have had the opportunity to connect with Educational Therapists as a source of professional support and friendship.

### Hobbies/Leisure Activities:

I enjoy playing the piano, singing, acting and dancing.

