

MEET AET VOLUNTEER

Jeanette Rivera



Level of AET membership:

BCET

Type and location of practice: (City, State)

Individual - private - home office
Winnetka, CA

Leadership roles held in AET:

AET President 2012-2014; Immediate Past President - Executive Committee 2014-2016; Governance Committee Chair; Membership Chair; Membership Flex Committee; NJCLD Representative; Member and Public Information Committee Co-Chair; (I'm sure there are several other roles I don't remember.)

How long have you been an educational therapist?

Since 1992

What brought you to educational therapy?

I always knew I wanted to teach. I wanted a career that combined education and psychology; my two degrees were a BA in psychology and an MA in Special Education with a concentration on Learning Disabilities. Educational Therapy gave me the opportunity to work in different settings with individuals and small groups. It also gives me the flexibility I wanted in terms of teaching in a way that aligned with my teaching philosophy and where I could run a private practice.

Areas of expertise:

- Reading (reading development, reading comprehension)
- Writing (From mechanics to essay writing)
- Executive functioning

Hobbies/Leisure Activities:

Exploring nature (especially hummingbirds), photography, street art hunting, crafting, improv acting

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

1. Commit to being a life-long learner.
2. Remain flexible, with your approach, with students, with parents, with teachers...with everything and everyone.
3. Listen with the 3rd ear, like Dorothy would say. Listen to what is said and what is not said.
4. When you face challenges, do an honest self-reflection, consult a colleague when necessary, learn from the experience, and move committing to incorporate what you've learned.
5. Above all, have fun with your students. If you love what you do, remain sensitive to the students' needs, and have fun while you work, you will be able to develop strong therapeutic alliances.

Describe a challenge you have faced as an educational therapist:

A challenge I have faced is not always being able to have parents or teachers understand their children/students or the process of educational therapy. The issues with parents or teachers, like not always doing what I consider to be in the child's best interest, stem from lack of information or difference in priorities, not from lack of care.

Describe a highlight of your educational therapy career:

It's difficult to just pick one...

Realizing the impact of my work with students, the moments where you see the spark on a student's face who just overcame a challenge.

Being president of AET allowed me the opportunity to share my vision with members and the AET Board, hopefully having contributed positively to the development of our profession. Meeting many strong, committed, and smart professionals who are dedicated to improving the lives of others.

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

With an increase in training programs and recognition of the work we do, educational therapists will be commonly recognized globally as essential to an intervention team, along with psychologists and other allied professionals. All of us who do the same work will come together under this profession...I feel like I should break out in song. :)

How have you benefited from your membership in AET?

The AET community and the resources it offers are extremely valuable to me. I have met incredible colleagues with whom I have shared many hours of learning and mutual support.

