

Candidate: Laura Mraz, OTD, OTR/L

Nomination: President-Elect

drlauramraz.com | info@drlauramraz.com |

## **Position Statement**

With nearly two decades of experience working with clients and families, bridging academia and clinical practice, and growing an innovative pediatric therapy practice, I am the perfect candidate for the President-Elect of the Illinois Occupational Therapy Association. I believe policy impacts every day practice affecting pay, caseloads, client outcomes, and, ultimately, job satisfaction. It is critical that practitioners are made aware of current trends and have the resources to act with clarity and confidence to achieve outcomes that matter to us all. I believe in collaboration and will strive for strong representation both within our field and across all allied health professions.

As President-Elect, I will steward ILOTA's advocacy efforts, manage its resources wisely, and strengthen communication with members to advance ILOTA's mission of supporting practitioners, groups, and the populations we serve. I bring a deep commitment to advocacy, inclusion, and evidence-based care. I am honored to be considered for this role.

## **Professional Experience, Education & Honors**

I am a licensed Occupational Therapist and the Founder and CEO of Eyas Landing, Blue Bird Day, and Merlin Day Academy, three organizations that service neurodiverse children known as *Three Birds One Mission*. I received my Bachelor Degree in Developmental Psychology from Loyola University Chicago in 2007 and became a certified Developmental Therapist in Early Intervention. I then earned my Master of Science in Occupational Therapy at University Illinois Chicago in 2010 and my Post-Professional Clinical Doctorate in Occupational Therapy at University Illinois Chicago in 2011.

Since becoming an Occupational Therapist, I have remained committed to bridging the gap between academia and clinical practice by mentoring students, maintaining relationships with local OT programs and sharing my experiences through various lectures and AOTA presentations. In 2025, I was honored with the University of Illinois Chicago Department of Occupational Therapy's *10 Years of Service Faculty Award*. In 2020, I was honored with College of Applied Health Science at the University of Illinois Chicago's *New Alumni Award*. I have been recognized as an innovator in pediatric therapy by creating unique service models to best meet client and clinician needs. In 2014, we launched Blue Bird Day, an innovative therapeutic preschool model designed specifically for neurodiverse children, which has since become a leading example in the field and featured in the textbook *An Evidence-Based Guide to Combining Interventions with Sensory Integration in Pediatric Practice*.

~Thank you for your consideration.