

NAJIT bio Helen Eby

I was the co-chair of the NAJIT Advocacy Committee that led our members to Capitol Hill. At that time, our Committee got to know NAJIT members by doing surveys so we could accurately represent our members with the handout that would represent the association. Our goal was that all members would identify with the Advocacy Priorities they took to Capitol Hill.

As a result, NAJIT members who went to Capitol Hill were full of energy, ready to represent their colleagues. Today, members are ready to advocate for the profession regarding new issues that affect us. With careful planning and unbiased surveys, NAJIT can develop positions that accurately reflect the needs and concerns of all members of the profession.

I have been an interpreter and translator for over 30 years. I am an Oregon Certified Court Interpreter and an Oregon Certified Healthcare Interpreter. I am also ATA certified in English to Spanish and Spanish to English translation. I am not a language company. I am a solopreneur, a freelancer with a business name so I can have direct contracts with businesses.

I have developed ways to contribute to the profession during my entire career. As such, I helped Oregon Court Interpreters get a raise after 15 years of stagnant rates, we founded the Oregon Society of Translators and Interpreters, I developed trainings for medical interpreters to get certified in Oregon, I applied interpreting training principles to develop a successful training to prepare for the ATA certification exam, I joined the Oregon Council for Healthcare Interpreters when there were very few interpreters at the table, I have volunteered at ATA in the Spanish Division and the Interpreters Division, I worked with colleagues to found the Spanish Editors Association, and I have supported NAJIT in whatever way was available to me at the time.

During all this time, I have seen that work that lasts has to be done in teams. Teamwork enriches our perspective and gives us a sounding board. It makes our work more durable: more ideas are incorporated, and our mistakes can be corrected before we go live. I look forward to being part of the NAJIT board team and working with the larger team of NAJIT members.