

HOME FOR EVERY AMERICAN

INNOVATOR OF SPECIAL MERIT- HOUSING AWARD

Dr. Priscilla Ridgway

Dr. Priscilla Ridgway is the pioneer and innovator credited with the concept of permanent supported housing. As she describes: “My work has always concerned human rights, recovery, services that support recovery, and amplifying the voice of mental health consumers.” To that end, she early on understood the important role of housing in meeting the aspirations of those in recovery from mental illness, and the critical role of services that support both recovery and housing stability.

Dr. Ridgway has done innovative work on consumer preference needs assessment methods; created supported housing models and conducted housing research; synthesized information on a variety of evidence-based practices; prepared and delivered recovery education for staff and people in recovery; assessed recovery-enhancing practice; and undertaken efforts that support the transformation of mental health programs and systems.

Dr. Ridgway is currently Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry Program for Recovery & Community Health at Yale University School of Medicine, where her work involves developing and evaluating consumer recovery education programming and expansion of peer support initiatives in Connecticut. Her work in the field of mental health spans more than 30 years, from being a psychiatric aide, case manager, and advocate for psychiatric inpatients, to program director in an innovative psychosocial rehabilitation agency, and coordinator of research and planning for a state mental health department. For the last 20 years she has worked within organizations committed to innovation and building recovery paradigm knowledge, including the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University, the University of Kansas Office of Mental Health Research and Training, and Advocates for Human Potential, Inc.

Her education includes a BA, MSW, and PhD in Social Work, and she has had the personal experience of recovery from brain trauma and post traumatic stress disorder. Her recent work includes co-authoring *Pathways to Recovery: A Strengths Self Help Workbook* for personal recovery; national research on a team primarily of consumer researchers in the *What Helps and What Hinders Recovery?* Project; work on recovery and resilience, hope, and spirituality; and defining elements of a recovery and recovery facilitating system and the development of recovery performance indicators.