

## | RESPECT Institute Speakers

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The RESPECT Institute is a program which began in December of 2000 at Fulton State Hospital that partners with those who have experienced firsthand the effects of mental illness and the long road to recovery and trains them to share their stories. The RESPECT Institute emphasizes the Mission, Vision and Values of Fulton State Hospital concentrating on “Rehab and Recovery”. Rehabilitation or Rehab describes current technologies used programmatically to assist consumers in establishing or reestablishing a sense of comfort and safety in the community at large by increasing social and self-care skills, while decreasing behaviors that are unsafe of stigmatizing.

*“RESPECT Institute means a lot to me because it gives me the opportunity to help others understand mental illness and what its effects can be on someone who has it.” – RESPECT Institute speaker.*

Recovery describes the consumer’s work to establish or reestablish a sense of “self” as a person with human dignity and an appropriate sense of empowerment and integrity in the community. Telling ones story is a very powerful tool used towards healing and recovery. The RESPECT Institute uses feedback from consumers to empower programs to become even more beneficial to other consumers. By working with those who have experienced the rigors of regaining their mental health, it creates hope for other consumers in various stages of the recovery process.

*“We didn’t ask for a mental illness. It happens, just like people don’t ask for sugar diabetes. We are trying to learn how to overcome and live with our mental illnesses.” – RESPECT Institute speaker.*

The RESPECT Institute serves the value of integrity by *empowering* consumers to promote human dignity and practice those values in concrete ways.

*“What I would like people to learn from me is, the definition of stigma in those with a mental illness is, the rejection and blaming of people with a mental illness whose conditions are considered so fearful and disgraceful that they are judged to deserve their fate.” – RESPECT Institute speaker.*

For more information about the RESPECT Institute, please contact Fulton State Hospital.