

## **Appendix 3—Respondent Contact Materials for RGEES Pilot Test**

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<date>

«casenamenosuffixALLCAPS»

«addr1»

«addr2»

«city», «state» «zip»

Dear «casenamenosuffix»:

I am writing to ask for your help with a pilot test of the Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey (RGEES). When the RGEES survey is ready, career and technical colleges and other colleges and universities will be able to use it to capture accurate annual earnings of recent program graduates in relation to the amount of federal student loans they've taken out to help cover the cost of their attendance. The survey will support an institution's appeal under the Gainful Employment regulations (Section 668.405 & 668.406).

The questions in RGEES survey will also be used to collect employment and earnings information as part of the 2016 Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) conducted by the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). ATES helps educators, policymakers, and researchers better understand work-related education, training, and credentials for all adults in the United States.

The pilot RGEES is very brief and takes only about 5 minutes to complete, depending on your answers. **You will receive \$25 as a token of our appreciation, payable by PayPal or check, if you complete and return the enclosed pilot survey in the business reply envelope by <Date>.** .

The RGEES pilot study is being conducted on behalf of NCES by RTI International. You were randomly selected to participate from among all federal aid recipients who completed a gainful employment program between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2011.

Your participation in this pilot study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits you receive. Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific individual. We will not provide information that identifies you to anyone outside the study team.

I have enclosed a letter from the NCES Commissioner, Dr. Peggy Carr. In it, she provides more information about the RGEES and answers some frequently asked questions.

If you have other questions about the study, or prefer to complete the survey over the phone, please call 1-877-677-2766, or send an e-mail to GradSurvey@rti.org. In addition, I can be reached directly at 919-541-6870.

Thank you for your participation and assistance with this important study.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Director, RGEES 2015

(date)

(casename)

(address)

City, state zip

Dear (casename),

In being selected to participate in the pilot study of the Recent Graduates Employment & Earnings Survey (RGEES), you will have an opportunity to help refine and improve a survey that may end up being used by your institution, and others throughout the country, to respond to the U.S. Department of Education's Gainful Employment requirements. The federal Gainful Employment regulations are in place to ensure that graduates are able to repay the student loan debt they incurred to attend college. For more information, search on "gainful employment" on the Department of Education's website ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)).

On page 2, I provide answers to many commonly asked questions about the RGEES pilot study. If you have other questions or concerns not addressed there, please feel free to contact the study's toll free number, 1-877-677-2766, or send an e-mail to [GradSurvey@rti.org](mailto:GradSurvey@rti.org). In addition, the NCES project officer for RGEES, Dr. Sharon Boivin, can be reached directly at 202-502-7627.

Thank you for your help with this important pilot study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peggy Carr  
Commissioner

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT  
THE RECENT GRADUATES EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS SURVEY**

**How do I participate in the Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey pilot study?**

*You have already been selected to participate in the RGEES pilot study. All you need to do is fill out and send us back the survey that is included in this package. Alternately, if you do not wish to mail your answers, you can call the study's toll free number 1-877-677-2766 to complete the survey over the phone.*

**Who is conducting the RGEES pilot study?**

*RTI International is conducting the RGEES pilot study on behalf of the US Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.*

**How and when will I receive my \$25 incentive?**

*At the end of the survey, you will be able to choose to receive your \$25 incentive either by Paypal or by a mailed check.*

**Do I have to participate?**

*No. You are under no obligation to participate in the RGEES pilot study.*

**How long will it take to complete the survey?**

*It should not take any longer than 5 minutes to complete the survey.*

**How will you use my answers to the survey?**

*Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific individual. We will not provide information that identifies you to anyone outside the study team.*

**Where can I get more information about the Gainful Employment Regulations?**

*For more information about the regulations, please visit:*

*<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/10/31/2014-25594/program-integrity-gainful-employment>*

(date)

(casename)

(address)

City, state zip

Dear casename,

In <month>, you received an invitation informing you that you have been randomly selected to participate in the Recent Graduates Employment & Earnings Survey (RGEES). We have not received any response from you regarding your participation.

Participation, while not mandatory, does entail a **\$25 cash** token of appreciation for your time answering the **five question** survey.

Participation in this pilot test will help RTI International and the U.S. Department of Education further develop and finalize the RGEES. This survey will be used by your fellow students and the institution you graduated from, as well as thousands of other institutions across the country. Your participation actively helps your institution, fellow institutions, and fellow students.

Your participation will also help the U.S. Department of Education gather better information, and make better decisions, about education and training for adults in this country.

I hope you will consider participating in the RGEES pilot study. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact us at 1-877-677-2766 or my email at [GradSurvey@rti.org](mailto:GradSurvey@rti.org).

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Director, RGEES 2015

(date)

(casename)

(address)

City, state zip

Dear casename,

In <month>, you received an invitation informing you that you have been randomly selected to participate in the Recent Graduates Employment & Earnings Survey (RGEES). I have written previously, but we have not yet received your completed survey.

Your participation, while voluntary, entails a **\$25 cash** compensation for your time answering the **five question** survey.

Participation in this pilot test will help RTI International and the U.S. Department of Education further develop and finalize the RGEES. This survey will be used by your fellow students and the institution you graduated from, as well as thousands of other institutions across the country. Your participation actively helps your institution, fellow institutions, and fellow students.

Your participation will also help the U.S. Department of Education gather better information, and make better decisions, about education and training for adults in this country.

This package is being sent by Priority Mail because of the importance of **your** response.

I hope you will reconsider participating in the RGEES pilot study. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact us at 1-877-677-2766 or by email at [GradSurvey@rti.org](mailto:GradSurvey@rti.org).

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Director, RGEES 2015

Dear (casename),

You have been selected to participate in the Recent Graduates Employment & Earnings Survey (RGEES) pilot test. The RGEES is being developed by RTI International and the U.S. Department of Education. We have not yet received a response from you.

**You will receive \$25 as a token of our appreciation, payable by PayPal or check, if you complete and return the enclosed pilot survey in the business reply envelope by (date).**

Participation in this pilot test will help improve the survey for your fellow students and the institution you graduated from. Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. A letter from the Commissioner of the Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics answers commonly asked questions about the RGEES (including laws and regulations concerning data storage) and can be viewed online at <website>.

If you have other questions about the study, or prefer to complete the survey over the phone, please call the study's toll free number 1-877-677-2766, or send an e-mail to GradSurvey@rti.org.

Please consider participating in the RGEES pilot study.

Respectfully,

Jennifer S. Wine, Ph.D.  
Director, RGEES 2015

«Nicole»,

We're offering **\$«25»** to thank you for completing the **X question** Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey (RGEES) pilot survey.

The RGEES will enable career and technical schools, colleges, and universities to compute the average earnings of its graduates from programs subject to Gainful Employment regulations.

This RGEES pilot survey will help determine if the questions are effective in collecting high quality data.

As a graduate of a Gainful Employment program, your participation will help improve the RGEES for future graduates! Your responses will be used for research purposes only.

**Complete by Mail**  
**Or call 1-877-677-2766**

The Recent Graduates Employment and Income Survey is a survey of graduates of Gainful Employment programs, as defined by the Department of Education. RTI International is conducting this study for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences.

