

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.** You can also participate by calling 1-877-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone, or you can complete the survey over the internet at [LINK]. Login credentials will be emailed to you.

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. Your responses will be used for research purposes only, and your responses will be kept confidential except as required by law. RTI maintains a secure environment for all collected data, and will never use your data for purposes other than the RGEES pilot study. The risk of participating in this study is small and relates to data security. Your survey responses will be kept in secure and protected data files.

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, please call 1-800-647-9657, 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

Authorization and Confidentiality of Information

The National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education is authorized to conduct this survey under U.S. Code, Title 20, Section 9543. RTI International is administering this study for the U.S. Department of Education. Your participation is voluntary. Be assured that your answers will only be used for statistical purposes and that your individual responses will be protected to the fullest extent allowable under law (U.S. Code, Title 20, Section 9573).

(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).

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, 1-800-647-9657, or send an e-mail to 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

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**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 1-800-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone, or you can complete the survey over the internet at [LINK]. Login credentials will be emailed to you.

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.

Will my answers remain confidential?

Yes, your answers will remain confidential except as required by law. Your answers will not be disclosed and will not be used for any purpose except for improving the RGEES.

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,

Earlier this 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** token of appreciation (payable by PayPal or check) 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.

If you do not wish to mail your answers, you can call the study's toll free number 1-800-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone, or you can complete the survey over the internet at [LINK]. Login credentials will be emailed to you.

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 1-800-647-9657 or by email at GradSurvey@rti.org.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.
Director, RGEES 2015

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(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 a pilot test of the Recent Graduates Employment & Earnings Survey (RGEES). I have written previously, but we have not yet received your completed survey.

Your Participation, while voluntary, does entail a \$25 cash compensation token of appreciation (payable by PayPal or check) for your time answering the **five minute** 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.

If you do not wish to mail your answers, you can call the study's toll free number 1-800-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone, or you can complete the survey over the internet at [LINK]. Login credentials will be emailed to you.

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 1-800-647-9657 or by email at GradSurvey@rti.org.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.
Director, RGEES 2015

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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.

Participation in this pilot test will help improve the survey for your fellow students and the institution you graduated from. Your responses will be kept confidential except as required by law, and your answers will never be associated with your name or any other personally identifiable information.

If you do not wish to mail your answers, you can call the study's toll free number 1-800-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone. You can also complete the survey confidentially over the internet by going to [LINK] and entering your login credentials, which are listed below.

<<LOGIN>>

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 1-800-647-9657, 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

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<Fname> ,

Recently we've been trying to get in touch with you about the pilot study 2016 Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey (RGEES). RGEES will enable technical schools, colleges, and universities to compute the average earnings of their graduates from programs subject to Gainful Employment regulations.

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

As a graduate of Gainful Employment program, your participation will help improve RGEES for future graduates! Your responses will be confidential except as required by law and used for research purposes only.

Last week we sent you the RGEES survey in the mail with a postage paid envelope. Please return your survey, call 1-800-647-9657 to complete the survey over the phone, or use the login credentials sent to you through email to complete it on the web.

**Complete your 5 minute survey today
to receive \$25 via PayPal or check.**

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