Dear RSA Scholars Graduate,

The U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration requires verification of your employment as part of our “payback” reporting system to the grant officers. This is associated with the funding you received as a student in rehabilitation counseling at West Virginia University. As a review, the payback obligation explanation provided in your handbook is as follows:

As of June 1, 1992, the student must satisfy the following employment obligation:
(a) The student must work in a State vocational agency, a non-profit rehabilitation agency, or a related agency, including a professional practice group through which the individual has a service arrangement with the State vocational rehabilitation agency;
(b) The length of the employment obligation is the full-time equivalent of 2 years for each year of scholarship assistance provided;
(c) The period of time that the student has in order to satisfy the employment obligation begins immediately upon the completion of the training and lasts for the duration of the employment obligation plus a grace period of two more years;
(d) The student may work on a part-time basis as long as the employment obligation is satisfied during the period of time referred to in paragraph 3.

A scholar may work on a full- or part-time basis for either the State rehabilitation agency or a related agency, facility, or qualifying organization. If a scholar works part-time, he/she still has an obligation to work the full-time equivalent of two years for each year for which assistance was provided within a period of not more than the sum of the number of years owed and two additional years. [34 CFR 386.34]

The State-Federal programs of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and independent living are the programs intended to benefit from the payback provision. Congress recognized, however, that State rehabilitation agencies often accomplish their mission through agreements with other programs. Thus, the employment obligation may be met by obtaining and maintaining employment in the field in which the scholar was trained, in a nonprofit or related agency providing services under an agreement with a State rehabilitation agency. When seeking employment an RSA scholar should first check with his/her appropriate training institution to obtain a listing of employment sites that meet the statutory and regulatory definition of “acceptable employment.” Second, the student should determine if the potential employer meets the definition of acceptable employment (public or non-profit, or related agency, facility, or service provider). The employer should also be able to provide information regarding whether the program, agency or facility provides services to clients of the State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency, or whether it has a cooperative working agreement regarding the referral or provision of services to VR clients. If additional information is needed, an RSA scholar may wish to contact the State VR agency to obtain additional information.

Note: The grantee (training institution) is required to document that the State rehabilitation agency has an agreement with the RSA scholar's employer in the area of specialty. An agreement may be an arrangement by a related agency to accept referrals and provide services to rehabilitation clients, or a purchase of service or contractual arrangement with a service provider. [34 CFR 386.4; 34 CFR 386.34]
This and more information related to your agreement with the U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration can be found on the RSA Scholars Handbook. A copy is located at http://counseling.wvu.edu/rehab-counseling/scholarships.

The verification must be provided in the form of a letter from your employer on agency letterhead with identifying work site contact information. We require the following information:

- **Title of your position.** If you are not working in a position that is titled Rehabilitation Counselor, please review the definition of rehabilitation counselor provided by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (http://www.crccertification.com/) and provide justification for how your position fits this description.
- **Start date.** This is your first date of employment. If you your entrance date is prior to your graduation date, the first day of payback eligibility is the date of your graduation from the rehabilitation counselor education program.
- **Scholar contact information.** In addition to contact information for the person verifying your employment, we need your address, phone number and email address.
- **Qualifying site.** Scholars working as rehabilitation counselors in the State-Federal programs of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and independent living meet the payback requirement. In addition, employment in the area in which you were trained (rehabilitation counselor) in related agencies (see above Federal Regulation definition) may qualify. Verification of both the agreement with a VR agency (copy of memorandum of understanding or vendor contract) and your role in providing services as part of that agreement must be included.

Send the employer verification form to me no later than September 30. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I will notify you if there are any issues or clarification required by the agency.

Sincerely,

Margaret K. Glenn  
Associate Professor  
Principal Investigator