Dear IU Alumni Panelist,

It’s that time again … when we fulfill our promise to sum up all we’ve learned from our IU Alumni Panel in the last six months of surveys (October 2013 – March 2014). Please read on to learn more about how your feedback has and will continue to be used. And never forget that IU is a better, smarter, and healthier organization for your efforts!

*Our results*

There are a handful of problems that plague researchers nationwide:

- Too many do-it-yourself, online survey solutions
- Too many survey requests
- Too few responses
- Too many inattentive respondents

Despite such dim realities for others, IU is fortunate to have you guiding us behind the scenes through our own online research panel. Because of rock star panelists like you, we continue to get feedback from a wide variety of alumni. And, you help IU collect that feedback quickly and economically. Thank you!

Since our last report in late September, we can continue to boast of …

**Extremely high participation/response rates.** Of our 1,211 alumni panelists, 67% completed at least three of the four surveys. Overall panel response rates during this time period ranged between 68% and 72% (compared to 16% for non-panel, random sample surveys conducted during the same time period).

**High-quality, impassioned verbatim comments.** Below are some representative comments that we received from alumni through recent surveys.

**IUAA Ad Campaign Survey:**

“All for you’ brings back great memories of IU and I can hear the song in my head! Please ensure that IU or Indiana is creatively linked to the phrase within the ads just to provide a link for some that do [not] immediately connect!”

**IU Alumni Panel Incentive Survey:**

“Any gift is appreciated!”

**Postcard Series Campaign Survey:**

“For the photograph, perhaps a picture with more focus on the water and the child in soft...”
focus within the background would convey the message of water more strongly than [the] current format. [I] thought the postcard had something to do with childhood education initially.”

IU Foundation Website Survey:
“Frankly, once I moved into some of the sections within the highlighted ‘About IUF,’ I found the content—primarily financial, investments, etc.—very interesting and informative. But I would never have gone there without your prompting to do so for this survey.”

**Specific outcomes and trends**

Between October 2013 and March 2014, we fielded the four surveys listed below. The smaller number of surveys was intentional to avoid over-burdening you during holiday vacation times.

- IUAA Ad Campaign Survey (October)
- IU Alumni Panel Incentive Survey (December)
- Postcard Series Campaign Survey (January)
- IU Foundation Website Survey (March)

Some of the initial findings and recommendations that came from your feedback are catalogued below. Please keep in mind that IU often continues to derive insights, and take actions, many months after surveys are completed!

**October: “All for You!” Hits the Mark**

Our IUAA Ad Campaign Survey helped us determine that the “All for You!” campaign concepts evoked the emotional and behavioral reactions we intended. About three of four respondents thought the slogan made sense, and the majority liked and recognized it.

Even before seeing the application of the slogan in creative concepts, respondents described the slogan in mostly positive terms. For those who recognized the slogan from the IU fight song, it was a pleasant reminder of days past. Even for those who did not recognize it, the slogan reinforced that the IUAA exists to serve all alumni.

Some alumni suggested that the ads could have even wider appeal with more red and IU branding, subtle illustrations of place (e.g., showing the Sample Gates instead of mentioning them), larger text (possibly due to seeing the ad on screen), and less hyperbole (“IU is in my soul.”).
While the ads with a license plate giveaway scored the best across audiences (life members, annual members, and nonmembers), alumni cautioned that a gift incentive may not always be warranted or appropriate.

This IUAA campaign continues to run, but the ads were updated to reflect the more common criticisms.

**December: Thank You Incentives on Everyone’s Wish List**

In addition to updating your demographic info, this survey invited you to weigh in on your annual thank you gift for panel participation. There are always a handful of you who decline this token of appreciation, but most panelists look forward to a little something for their time and opinions. From our perspective, you earn it!

In addition to random prize drawings for panelists, we typically send an annual gift valued at $5 to each panelist. To avoid additional mailing fees, we send e-gifts. Hot on alumni wish lists are Amazon and Starbucks gift cards. You can see how alumni voted in Figure 1 on the next page.
But, we would be remiss if we did not mention that many of you have written us to request some kind of IU spirit paraphernalia. Spoiler alert: You have another gift coming your way in the next few months, and we plan to mail this IU-related gift to your home address. If you’ve moved since you updated your mailing address in December, send us your latest address. You won’t want to miss out on this one!

**January: IU Postcard Campaign Needs Stronger Messaging**

In this survey, we invited you to comment on the first in a series of postcards to be mailed to alumni. You said the most appealing part of the IU Postcard Series was the headline, “Your Gift Matters.” Three of four respondents gave it high appeal ratings of “4” or “5” on a five-point scale. By comparison, about half of respondents found the overall design, photo, and quote appealing. Only half of you said you liked the postcard as is, because the message wasn’t strong.

This is why we do research, right? When something isn’t hitting the mark, you tell us. As a result of the survey, the creative team modified the design and copy to reinforce how a gift to IU improves the world’s water quality.

We also learned that some IU subjects matter to alumni more than others, and some matter more as alumni age. The subjects that follow top the charts, regardless of age:
• How IU provides a well-rounded, high-quality education; 93%
• How IU prevents/treats major health problems (cancer, obesity, Alzheimer’s disease, etc.); 91%
• How IU maximizes research and discoveries; 87%
• How IU develops leaders that solve current world problems; 83%
• How IU makes college more accessible; 80%

A few of these bullets are a gentle reminder that alumni think IU’s focus should always include a well-rounded, accessible education. You can bet the postcard series will now include evidence of how IU hasn’t forgotten its core mission!

March: Alumni Panel Insights Inform an Upcoming IU Foundation Website Redesign

When alumni are driven to evaluate the IUF website, the majority of respondents seem satisfied with many aspects of the site. They understand what the IUF does, how to give, and whom to contact with questions. They think the website’s navigation is intuitive.

However, many alumni are not visiting the IUF website on their own accord. Almost 90% of panelists have made a financial gift to IU at some point in their lives, but most of you have visited the IUF website a few times a year or even less often. Why?

Our survey suggested that your disengagement is, in part, because the IUF website does not do enough to inspire you to learn more or give more.

Here are some opportunities the creative team is considering as a result of your feedback:

• Using one strong umbrella theme to link a variety of departmental/research impact stories throughout the site
• Adding a “Why Give?” section to the site, clearly articulating why all kinds and sizes of charitable giving—and specifically gifts to IU—are necessary and important to academic excellence and rankings, research, local and global communities, and more
• Updating the site’s overall feel and design
• Giving IUF news headlines greater prominence than social media on the home page
• And, finally, developing a one-stop website hub for alumni, so that giving-related content is seamlessly woven into other alumni-related content

Closing reminders

Once again, THANK YOU for your ongoing participation and valuable feedback!
If you haven’t yet completed your April survey on the *IU Alumni Magazine*, you have until April 23 to do so.

You can expect to receive future survey invitations *every other month, or as needed*. Remember that the email subject lines of all our panel survey invitations and reminders include the words “IU” and “panel.” This should help you quickly identify if a survey is coming from us. It doesn’t mean that other IU survey requests are invalid. It simply means that other surveyors may not follow the same guidelines for use of data that we have committed to and published on our panel website.

Need a reminder of panel expectations, surveys in the field, or who won the latest random prize drawing? The panel website is an archive of all things past and present, including a downloadable PDF of this document.

Bookmark your go-to resource at:
http://alumni.indiana.edu/panel

Finally, if you have suggestions for improving your panel experience, or if you no longer wish to participate, please contact us at iumrktg@indiana.edu.

Happy spring!

*Angela & Joanna*