Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska hosts Esther George and Omaha Branch Board of Directors

July 22, 2021

Kansas City Fed President Esther George, Omaha Branch Executive Nate Kauffman and Omaha Branch Directors learned firsthand about the local economy.

Ho Chunk, the traditional name of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, means people. People, and their stories, were central to a recent tour and meeting for the Omaha Branch Board of Directors, Bank President Esther George and Omaha Branch Executive Nate Kauffman in Winnebago, Neb., on July 8-9.

Omaha Branch Director Annette Hamilton is chief operating officer of Ho-Chunk Inc., which is the economic development arm of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. Ho-Chunk Inc. works to create economic opportunities to help the Tribe achieve self-sufficiency and improve the community. As part of the visit, Omaha Branch directors and Esther heard about the history and mission behind Ho-Chunk Inc. from CEO Lance Morgan and Annette. The group then toured the village of Winnebago and some of Ho-Chunk’s local businesses and projects.

The tour included a visit to Educare of Winnebago, an early childhood development program based in research to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children ages 0 to 5 with activities that honor local culture and traditions. A stop at a spec house provided a firsthand look at how Ho-Chunk Inc. is working to overcome housing challenges facing tribal members. The group also heard from Aaron LaPointe, business manager of Ho-Chunk Farms, about the changing dynamics of farming on the reservation.

The Kansas City Fed values the real-time knowledge and insights gained through personal interactions with business and community leaders.

“It’s our job as the central bank to understand the economy broadly, but the data can only tell you so much,” Esther said. “Being able to visit communities gives you insights into the successes and barriers people face on a day-to-day basis. Hearing these stories tells us a lot about how to think about the direction of the economy.”

Activities on July 8 concluded with a traditional dinner and educational demonstration by The Many Moccasins Dance Troupe. The Winnebago Tribe also presented Esther with a blanket in appreciation of the visit.
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https://www.kansascityfed.org/omaha/winnebago_offsite_board_meeting/

Media

Esther George visiting the Honoring-The-Clans Sculpture Garden with the Omaha Board of Directors.

Esther George and Omaha Board of Directors listen to a presentation at Ho-Chunk Inc..

Esther George learning about the early childhood development program Educare of Winnebago.
The Winnebago Tribe presenting Esther George with a blanket in appreciation of the visit.

Esther George and The Many Moccasins Dance Troupe.