IN FOUNDING THE FEDERAL RESERVE MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO, Congress recognized the importance of connecting the nation’s central bank to the Main Streets of America. The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City carries out this role through its president and its programs and activities throughout the Tenth District, nation and welcoming countries. Here is a glimpse at the recent activities of President Esther L. George and the staff of the Kansas City Fed.

George visits with alumni Board of Directors of the Kansas City Fed’s Denver Branch. From left, Alison Felix, Denver Branch executive and economist; Mary Ann Hunter, a former Denver Branch Manager; alumni directors Lu Cordova; Kate Paul; and Jo Marie Dancik, President George; and alumni director Barb Mowry.

On behalf of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, President Esther George received a framed copy of a World War I Liberty Bond poster from the Boy Scouts of America Heart of America Council, headquartered in Kansas City, Mo. Heart of America Council’s Board Director Jim Hinson, left, and Kendrick Miller, scout executive, presented the poster during a ceremony at the Kansas City Fed’s headquarters in January.

In February, George, pictured with Will Pryor, an audit senior manager at Grant Thorton, spoke at the Centurions Leadership Program in Kansas City, Mo. Since 1976, Centurions, which is a program of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, has been a training ground for future Kansas City leaders.

During a recent trip to Oklahoma, George, right, toured The Pioneer Woman Mercantile in Pawhuska. Esther is pictured with Ree Drummond, also known as The Pioneer Woman, center, and Rose Washington, chair of the Kansas City Fed’s Board of Directors.

George visited the Boxyard shopping and entertainment district in Tulsa, Okla., with Rose Washington, right, chair of the Kansas City Fed’s Board of Directors, and Casey Stowe, center, developer for the Boxyard.
Building relationships ...

Reception provides networking opportunities
Alison Felix, Denver Branch executive, right, is pictured with Denver Branch Board directors Taryn Edwards, center, and Richard Lewis during a recent reception at the Denver Branch.

Networking with local partners
Alison Felix, Denver Branch executive, center, and Ariel Cineros, community development advisor, right, speak with Belinda Hooks, market president, Mountain Plains Minority Supplier Development Council, during a recent networking reception and business discussion with local business and community partners at the Denver Branch office.

Employees volunteer to help students with financial concepts
Denver office employees such as Rachel Herr pictured above, volunteered to help more than 100 students from M. Scott Carpenter Middle School in Denver learn about personal finance through a hands-on, realistic simulation experience at Junior Achievement’s (JA) Finance Park.

Sand Springs business forum, tour and roundtable
Oklahoma City Branch Executive Chad Wilkerson, center left, spoke to the Sand Springs Chamber of Commerce and participated in a business roundtable and tour of a local manufacturing company with Rose Washington, center, right, executive director of the Tulsa Economic Development Corporation and chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Board of Directors.

Oklahoma City Branch hosts holiday reception
Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City President Esther George spoke to more than 200 bankers and business leaders in December 2016, including former Oklahoma City Director K. Vasudevan, Bartlesville, Okla., who attended the Holiday Reception at the Oklahoma City office.

Evening at the Fed for educators
The Oklahoma City office hosted an Evening at the Fed in January, which is a professional development event for Oklahoma educators. Attendees heard an economic presentation from Oklahoma City Branch Executive Chad Wilkerson, above, and participated in a nationwide conversation with Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen via video conference.
Omaha Fed hears from area labor leaders

Kansas City Fed President Esther George speaks with members who participated in an area labor leaders roundtable discussion organized by Omaha Branch Board of Directors Chair John Bourne, who is an international representative with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Not pictured, but also in attendance, was Nathan Kauffman, Omaha Branch executive.

Porcia Block, an officer with the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, was recently inducted into the Black Achievers Society of Greater Kansas City for her career accomplishments, educational achievements and community impact. Founded by U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver in 1974, the society honors local African American leaders in business and industry. The society has inducted more than 450 members in the past four decades.

“I am humbled by the recognition,” Block said. “To the extent that my achievements are inspiring to others and I am able to serve as a role model, I am grateful and feel very blessed.”

Block was honored at the 2017 Black Achievers Society dinner in January after being nominated for the award by the Kansas City Fed’s senior leadership team in December.

“I am glad to be a part of an organization that has, at its forefront, a mission of supporting young people and providing opportunities for them to further their education,” Block said. “Education has represented a real pathway to success for me, so I am glad to be a part of a group that awards scholarships to deserving young people.”

Block joined the Kansas City Fed in 1998 as an assistant examiner trainee after graduating with a degree in finance from Creighton University. In 2004, she left the Fed and worked in various auditing and banking positions, while attending graduate school to earn her MBA from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kan. In 2010, she returned to the Kansas City Fed and served in several management positions. She was promoted to assistant vice president in 2016. Last year, she graduated from the Graduate School of Banking in Boulder, Colo.

To learn more about the Black Achievers Society of Kansas City, visit www.blackachieverskc.com.

Session focuses on growing business within communities

Senior Community Development Advisor Dell Gines spoke at the Omaha Startup Collaborative for the Heartland 2050 Series on growing entrepreneurial ecosystems to promote more and stronger minority businesses.

Kauffman shares economic insights

Omaha Branch Executive Nathan Kauffman discussed Nebraska economic conditions at a meeting of the Omaha Downtown Rotary Club.

Notes from around the Tenth District

Kansas City Fed’s Block inducted into Black Achievers Society of Greater Kansas City

Porcia Block of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, left, is pictured with Kansas City Fed President Esther George and Senior Vice President Kevin Moore.