



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* KANSAS CITY

August 25, 2015

**Grass Roots Engagement at the Kansas City Fed**

During the past year, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City has met regularly with affiliates of the Center for Popular Democracy, including Sunflower Community Action of Wichita, Kan., Communities Creating Opportunity of Kansas City, Mo., and local labor and faith leaders.

Since March, Kansas City Fed staff members have provided Sunflower Community Action with technical assistance on the organization's proposal to create a small-dollar loan program that aims to serve as an alternative to payday lending. Sunflower's proposal will be presented at a meeting for commercial bank officers hosted and organized by the Kansas City Fed on Sept. 24.

Other examples of the Kansas City Fed's engagement with Center for Popular Democracy affiliates include:

- President Esther George met with representatives of FedUp at the 2014 Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium. During the two-hour meeting, participants shared their personal stories of the challenges they faced in the labor market.
- Dec. 19, 2014: Esther George and Kansas City Fed staff held a roundtable with local labor and faith leaders to discuss the Federal Reserve's role in the labor market.
- March 5, 2015: Staff with the Kansas City Fed's Community Development and Economic Research areas attended a rally in Kansas City held by Communities Creating Opportunity about creating economic dignity and spoke with several attendees.
- May 22, 2015: Esther George and staff hosted a labor leader roundtable with 18 local union leaders to discuss employment and labor markets.
- June 22, 2015: Staff from the Kansas City Fed's Community Development and Economic Research areas met with representatives from Communities Creating Opportunity to discuss challenges with payday lenders and early childhood education.

On Sept. 21, the Kansas City Fed will host an event, "The Vanishing Middle: Job Polarization and Workers' Response to the Decline in Middle-Skill Jobs." This program, which is intended for members of community groups, labor organizations and others interested in workforce and employment issues, will highlight recent labor market research conducted by Kansas City Fed economists. It will include an overview of structural changes in the labor market due to job polarization and how workers' responses have differed depending on gender, education and age.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City is proud of its long tradition of responsiveness and engagement with community and labor groups throughout the seven-state district it serves. Through programs, relationship building and research, the Kansas City Fed is committed to assisting stakeholders to respond to emerging challenges in labor markets and to promote fair and impartial access to credit.

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