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.

President Esther George with Debby Ballard, left, chair of the Central Exchange of Kansas City, and CiCi Rojas, right, CEO and president of the Central Exchange, following George’s speech on the state of the economy Feb. 2 at the Central Exchange. The Central Exchange is one of Kansas City’s largest women’s network dedicated to the professional development of leaders.

More than 11,500 people attended speeches by Esther George in 2015.

On Feb. 23, Esther George discussed the Federal Open Market Committee and monetary policy with hosts Kathleen Hays and Pimm Fox on the Bloomberg Radio show “Taking Stock.”
In early February, members of the 2015-16 Denver Branch Student Board of Directors in Denver and Albuquerque (pictured above) did a Student Leadership Challenge training designed for young adults. Lead by Duane Buchanan, a Kansas City Fed human resources specialist, the two boards met via video conference to discuss the skills and practices that actual leaders employ. The students had an opportunity to measure their current leadership strengths and weaknesses, to make a plan for improvement, and to commit to growing as a leader.

**Partnership helps students become marketable adults**

Through a partnership with Goodwill Industries of Denver, Public Affairs staff in the Kansas City Fed’s Denver office regularly participates in mock interview sessions for students at West Career Academy, most recently on January 8. West Career Academy provides an educational pathway for students who have aged out of traditional programs, but lack the credits required to graduate or who are at risk of dropping out prior to graduation. Having the opportunity to practice their interview skills and receive constructive feedback provides students with the necessary skills to become marketable adults in the workforce.

**Student boards participate in leadership challenge**

President Esther George, right, Bill Mitchell, president and CEO of Bankers’ Bank of the West, center, and Kevin Moore, senior vice president of the Kansas City Fed’s Supervision and Risk Management Division, take time for a photo at the Denver office’s holiday reception.
New exhibits on display in Oklahoma

The Oklahoma City Branch recently installed interactive exhibits to educate visitors about the economy, historical currency and Federal Reserve history. Guided tours and programs are available for sixth-grade-level groups and above, including students, educators, bankers and community organizations by appointment.

Session focuses on affordable housing

The Kansas City Fed’s Community Affairs Department partnered with the Oklahoma Coalition for Affordable Housing to present a session on affordable housing options in Oklahoma. Attendees learned about the Community Reinvestment Act and how to leverage it with banks in the community to support affordable housing options. Ariel Cisneros, a senior community affairs advisor, led the session with an overview of the Community Reinvestment Act and facilitated a panel discussion with Oklahoma bankers.

Wilkerson speaks at Chickasha forum

Chad Wilkerson, economist, branch executive and vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Oklahoma City office, spoke Feb. 11 at an economic forum in Chickasha, Okla., where he discussed the national monetary policy outlook, the state of Oklahoma’s oil and gas industry and local economic information about Grady County. After the forum, the Oklahoma City Branch hosted a business roundtable with business and community leaders from the area to gain a deeper understanding of Chickasha’s economy.
Students learn the art of business

Members of the 2015-2016 Omaha office Student Board of Directors toured Film Streams, a nonprofit theater in north downtown Omaha, to learn about nonprofit entrepreneurship. Brooke Masek, program and outreach coordinator at Film Streams, talked about the process of becoming a nonprofit, its goals and how it serves the community. The students also learned about operating a nonprofit theater, with principal programs in Art in Education and Community Development. The visit concluded with the students exploring different entrepreneurial paths. The 2015-2016 Omaha Branch Student Board includes 14 members from Omaha Central, Omaha Bryan and Omaha South high schools.

Financial education the focus of interactive simulation

Nearly 80 sophomores from Omaha high schools participated in an interactive budgeting simulation on Feb. 19 at the Kansas City Fed’s Omaha office. The students were part of the Academy of Finance programs at Omaha North and South high schools, as well as the Academy of Business and Entrepreneurship at Omaha Benson High School. Pictured above are Nicole Connelly, left, and Michele Wulff, far right, with the Omaha office.

Mentoring Student Board directors

As part of the Student Board of Directors program, Kansas City Fed officers and staff mentor student directors about professional development. For example, President Esther George spoke to members of the Student Board of Directors in Omaha about her role at the Bank and in the Federal Reserve System.