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, and beyond. Here is a glimpse at the recent activities of President Esther L. George and the staff of the Kansas City Fed.

George spoke at a luncheon May 12 for 240 business and community leaders in Albuquerque, N.M.

George (below) speaks with members of the Fairfax Industrial Association during a luncheon May 19 in Kansas City, Kan.

In May, George, center, took time for a photo (below, right) with Nebraska Bankers Association past chairmen, from left, Samuel Baird, Craig Brewster, Matthew Williams, John Stinner, Jeff Krejci, Michael Nelson and Ronald Kranz.
George met with Jun-ichiro Kuroda, left, Minister of Economy, Trade, Industry and Energy at the Embassy of Japan, and Ichiro Soné, chief executive director of Japan External Trade Organization-Chicago, on March 24 at the Kansas City Fed’s main office.

George hosted the Kansas City Labor Leader Roundtable May 16 at the head office of the Kansas City Fed. George, center, is pictured with (from left) Stephen White, Joseph Blanco, Reginald Thomas, Greg Chastain, Fred Ersery, Terry Akins, Jack Bainbridge, Patricia Jones, Eric Hall, Pat “Duke” Dujakovich, Amber Gibson, Fred Voigt, Kevin Kuritz, Scott Grandon, and Kevin O’Neill.
In support of Small Business Week, the Kansas City Fed’s Denver Branch office, in partnership with the local office of Small Business Administration (SBA) had an event commemorating Colorado Women in Small Business. The event included a panel of local women entrepreneurs discussing the issues, challenges and rewards of owning and running a small business. The keynote speaker was SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet. She highlighted the importance of small businesses in the community and their impact on the local economy.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City’s Investment Connection was recently held in Albuquerque and Denver. This program has helped match financial institutions, corporate enterprises and community foundations with organizations that have CRA-eligible community and economic development proposals in need of an investment, grant or loan. Sixteen proposals were presented to more than 130 potential funders during the two events. Since 2011, Investment Connection has connected nonprofits with more than $26 million in funding. Additional events are planned in Omaha, Oklahoma City and Kansas City for later this year.

The Kansas City Fed’s Denver office conducted regulatory update seminars in Denver and Albuquerque in April. The seminars focused on current issues and strategies relevant to state member banks and holding companies. Topics covered during the updates included the economy, current banking conditions, and executive highlights of safety and soundness and consumer compliance regulatory guidance.
Outstanding economic students recognized

The Oklahoma City office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and Oklahoma Council on Economic Education honored 12 students at the Sixth Annual Outstanding Economics Student Awards on April 28. This program recognizes exemplary students and highlights the importance of economics in Oklahoma curriculum and shines a light on students who exhibit an economic way of thinking.

“Economics is all around us, so if students can be taught and inspired in the analysis of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, they will have great tools to be successful in any field they choose,” said Amy Lee, executive director of the council.

Community leaders meet at roundtable in Oklahoma City

Tammy Edwards, vice president of the Kansas City Fed’s Community Affairs Department, spoke with a group of community leaders during a roundtable discussion at the Oklahoma City office on April 13. Community members in attendance represented groups from local nonprofit, housing and community organizations. The group provided a diverse perspective of local community development efforts, challenges and opportunities.

Wilkerson speaks with emerging leaders in community banking

Chad Wilkerson, branch executive and vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Oklahoma City office, spoke to a group of Horizon Leaders during a community bankers meeting March 1 at the Oklahoma City office. He discussed the national monetary policy outlook, trends in Oklahoma’s economy and banking conditions in the state.
FDIC Banker Roundtable

The Nebraska Bankers Association hosted a roundtable for bankers with Thomas Hoenig, vice chairman of the FDIC, on May 18 at the Omaha Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City to discuss regulatory relief. Kansas City Fed President Esther George and Omaha Branch Executive Nathan Kauffman, Mark Quandahl and Kelly Lammers with the Nebraska Department of Banking, NBA Board members and Omaha area bank leaders attended the session.

Sharing the importance of entrepreneurship

Community Development Advisor Dell Gines spoke on the importance of youth entrepreneurship education at the Nebraska Entrepreneur Educator Workshop on April 15. The Kansas City Fed offers a number of classroom resources to help equip educators to teach entrepreneurship. The Bank also provides resources for economic developers and small businesses owners, including the Grow Your Own model entrepreneurship-based economic development.

Board meeting, forum take look at local economy

The Omaha Branch Board of Directors met in York, Neb., on April 7 and 8. As part of the agenda, Board members and Fed staff toured Monsanto’s facility outside of Waco, Neb., to learn about their operations and role in the local economy.

In conjunction with the offsite Board meeting, the Omaha Branch had an Economic Forum in York with approximately 170 business, banking and community leaders in attendance. Omaha Branch Executive Nathan Kauffman provided an update on the Nebraska economy, and Kansas City Fed President Esther George spoke on the economic outlook and monetary policy.