Parents, teachers, friends and members of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City’s Student Board of Directors programs in Tenth District cities of Kansas City, Omaha, Denver, Oklahoma City and Albuquerque marked the completion of a successful year for the program during special ceremonies this spring.

The Bank is committed to ensuring that its programs reach underserved populations in the education realm, especially majority-minority high schools, inner city high schools and all girls’ high schools. As part of this commitment, the Bank conducts the Student Board of Directors program to offer high-achieving high school students the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Kansas City Fed and local businesses to better understand the economy and the role of the nation’s central bank. The composition of the Student Boards of Directors reflects the diverse demographic makeup of those schools and communities.

Bank President Esther George, along with members of the Kansas City head office’s Board of Directors, attended the ceremony in Kansas City and mingled with the 25 student board participants and their families beforehand. Jeanine Smith, mother of student board member Janée Taylor, a senior at Wyandotte High School in Kansas City, Kan., was thrilled when her daughter joined the Student Board of Directors program last fall.

“She’s gotten so comfortable speaking in front of people and sharing her story,” Jeanine said. “She’s had the chance to speak to a professional audience and work on her presentation skills.”

Student board member Sonia Badji, a senior at Lincoln College Prep Academy in Kansas City, Mo., has enjoyed all of the advice and workshop experience she collected from the program.

“I’ve learned values that are integral to
Twenty members of the Denver and Albuquerque Student Board of Directors were recognized at pinning ceremonies to formally close the school year. Denver had 11 student board members and Albuquerque’s student board had nine. During the programs, each student shared their most important lessons learned from the program. Their answers ranged from the importance of Federal Reserve in the economy to the wisdom imparted to them by local business leaders.

The Omaha Branch recognized 14 students from Omaha Central, Omaha South and Omaha Bryan High Schools for completing the 2015-2016 Student Board of Directors Program. During the recognition ceremony, John Bourne, international representative with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and chair of the Omaha Branch Board of Directors, spoke to the students about the importance of life-long learning, and the students gave presentations on what they gained from the program.

Members of the Oklahoma City Student Board were recognized at a pinning ceremony where they participated in a panel discussion and shared their most important lessons from the program. Fifteen students from seven Oklahoma City high schools completed this year’s program. Lessons shared by the students ranged from the importance of sending a thank you card to a better understanding of economics and personal finance.

“We covered a lot of topics, from banking to business etiquette to budgeting,” said Jordan Cole of John Marshall High School in Oklahoma City. “Everything I learned as Student Board member I can take with me the rest of my life.”

Another student board member noted how the experience enhanced her understanding of the nation’s central bank.

“I liked that the Student Board program humanized the Fed and the Fed’s role in our economy,” said Samaiyah Harpe of Harding Charter Preparatory High School. “It showed me how multifaceted and interesting the economy can be.” The Omaha office had 14 students from this high school complete the program.

During the closing address for Kansas City student board members, Bank President George addressed the students and congratulated them for completing a year with the student board program.

“What makes the economy work has to do with individuals and the choices people make,” she said. “We are delighted that one of your first choices was to be part of our program.”

For more information about the Student Board program, visit the Bank’s website at https://www.kansascityfed.org/education/foreducators/student-board.