

BANK REMEMBERS DEBRA BRONSTON DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) is proud to recognize cultural holidays throughout the year and celebrate employees for promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace. Annually, ODEI hosts the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Change Agents Champions Retreat in March, a month known as [Women's History Month](#), a time to celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of women.

The DEI Champions Retreat is geared towards enhancing the knowledge of Tenth District employees around DEI topics and recognizes the 2021 Diversity Change Agents and Connect 10 Winners. This year, President Esther George opened the award ceremony with remarks, followed by First Vice President, Kelly Dubbert and Senior Vice President, Tammy Edwards leading the award presentation. As Dubbert reflected on the accomplishments of the 2021 Diversity Change Agent recipients, he announced this year's award was in honor of former Bank colleague, Debra Bronston, the first African American female officer.



Debra began her career at the Bank in 1979 and worked in both Bank Supervision and Human Resources. During her distinguished career, Debra worked to establish the Bank as a founding partner of the Kansas City Chapter of the Urban Financial Services Coalition. She also led the implementation of a number of programs and initiatives designed to foster and enhance diversity at the Bank. Debra retired as an Assistant Vice President in the Human Resources Department in 2011.

Born in Alexandria, La., Bronston received her Bachelor of Science degree from Grambling State University in 1979 and a master's degree in business administration through the Executive Fellows Program from Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Mo., in 1993.

She passed away in 2021, and is remembered as a dynamic leader who strived to make personal connections across the Bank.

"When I joined the Bank 40 years ago, I shared a workspace with Debra and learned so much from her," said Bank President Esther George. "She taught me about banking supervision and people more generally."

After spending several years in the Supervision division, Debra moved to Human Resources, where she was asked to expand the Bank's diversity efforts.

"Before OMWI was established, Debra was the Bank's first diversity officer and her impact is still felt today," Esther said.

Senior Vice President Donna Ward remembers Debra as a caring person whose work at the Bank informed the organization's approach to diversity initiatives.

"Many of the Bank's current diversity programs and initiatives can be traced back to Debra," Donna said. "She worked closely with senior leaders to develop an early version of the Bank's diversity strategy, built community partnerships, established early diversity recruiting plans, and developed internal diversity employee programs and training."

Debra was a dynamic person who used her great influence to benefit those around her.

"Debra's spirit was larger than life and her energy and passion could lift a conference room of people," Donna said. "She was kindhearted and cared about those around her on a personal level. Debra made a lasting impression on me and many other employees during her long career at the Bank."

Senior Vice President and General Auditor Porcia Block remembers how welcoming Debra was to her when she was hired in the banking supervision division.

"Debra definitely left a lasting impact on our organization, whether it be recruiting and welcoming people of color into the fold or showing them what was possible," she said. "When I joined the Bank, Debra was one of the Black leaders who I looked up to. She was cool, caring and generous with her time, advice and wise counsel. Debra will be missed."