

## **CSEM takes part in festival highlighting city's best innovators**

Winston-Salem is increasingly known as a city revitalizing with innovative initiatives, from biotech to music to education. The CSEM team is proud to be a bedrock of that through its groundbreaking research. That was underscored earlier this month, on Oct. 2, when CSEM was tapped by Wake Forest University to take part in its IdeasCity festival at Bailey Park in the Innovation Quarter, a festival that highlighted 22 of the city's innovators.

The Innovation Quarter, located in the heart of the city's biotech bedrock, served as an ideal site. Less than a mile away, across U.S. 52, and out of sight of the attendees, is East Winston, an area that has been hit decades of poverty and low economic mobility. CSEM is confronting these low mobility issues through research and community engagement that puts common-sense solutions before policymakers, business leaders and the public. "We use good questions to guide us to explore and analyze new data, thinking of innovative solutions that cut across the political spectrum so that we have economic wins for as many parties as possible," said CSEM Founding Director Craig Richardson. "This ends the logjam problem of deciding how to divide a fixed pie of resources."

On the beautiful fall day of the festival, CSEM staff, including Alvin Atkinson, Zach Blizard, John Railey, Coretta Montague and Craig Richardson, met old friends and welcomed new ones, telling CSEM's story through brochures and a video that featured CSEM's work. The video included sneak peaks of its new documentary on Forsyth County's Homeownership program. The homeownership program brings millions in tax dollars back to the county and helps the program participants grow thousands of dollars in home equity, all at minimal costs to the county. CSEM's inclusion in the IdeasCity festival is just another step in its mission of overcoming generational poverty.