

**NEWS**

## Member Represents Citizen Schools Locally & Beyond

**JOHN GILSON SPEAKS FOR ORGANIZATION IN CHARLOTTE AND D.C.**

05.2013

Financial Services Member and Citizen Schools North Carolina Advisory Board Chair John Gilson gave opening remarks and a speaker introduction at Citizen Schools' "Celebrating Community Collaboration" Breakfast at the Mint Museum Uptown on May 15.

Gilson encouraged breakfast attendees to "take a leap" to become involved with the organization. "These kids are amazing. They want to be inspired," he stated. Citizen Schools students, MLK Jr. Middle School Principal Jennifer Dean, Bank of America and The Belk Foundation were honored at the event for recent contributions and accomplishments.

In March, Gilson's Citizen Schools involvement took him to Washington, D.C., where he joined other members of the Citizen Schools leadership team for the annual Hill Day to raise awareness of the effects of the sequester and budget cuts to student-focused programs. Gilson represented Citizen Schools' North Carolina team, alongside Executive Director Jake House and UNC Charlotte freshman Mary Espinosa. He shared his personal Citizen Teacher experience, and Espinosa shared how Citizen Schools inspired her pursuit of higher education. The NC team advocated the importance of extended learning time and programs such as Citizen Schools.

"As a former Citizen Teacher, I was (and continue to be) incredibly proud to listen to Mary [Espinosa] speak and to witness the success of one of our former students first-hand. I challenge the members of our community in Charlotte and Durham to go and tell the Citizen Schools story for an hour or an entire day so that they can feel that same sense of (re)inspiration that I felt on my flight home from Washington!" Gilson stated.