For three weeks this summer, Charter One colleagues and customers and members of the community donated new pencils, folders, glue, notebooks and other supplies at Charter One branches.

Gear for Grades initiative serves more than 2,000 children in Cuyahoga County

and more than 27,000 across the Citizens Financial Group footprint

CLEVELAND – Volunteers from Charter One stuffed backpacks with new school supplies as part of the bank's Gear for Grades initiative, an effort to help local children in need go back to

school with the gear they need to learn.

Shoes and Clothes for Kids (SC4K) will distribute the backpacks to children in need throughout Cuyahoga County
. SC4K is the only nonprofit organization in greater
Cleveland
providing new shoes and clothes to thousands of children in need at no charge throughout the year.

Through Charter One's Gear for Grades initiative, 2,000 children in Cuyahoga County will receive new backpacks and school supplies. This year, more than 27,000 backpacks filled with new school supplies will be distributed to children across the Citizens Financial Group footprint.

For three weeks this summer, Charter One colleagues and customers and members of the community donated new pencils, folders, glue, notebooks and other supplies at Charter One branches.

"Many of us are fortunate enough to remember the excitement that came with going back to school – the chance to buy new school clothes, supplies, backpacks and lunch boxes," said Ken Marblestone, president, Charter One, Ohio.

"Unfortunately, thousands of local children don't have this experience because for them, school supplies are a luxury. Charter One hopes to make going back to school a little more exciting for local school children by giving them the gear they need to succeed this year."

This is the second year that Charter One has partnered with Shoes and Clothes for Kids to provide backpacks to children in greater Cleveland through the Gear for Grades initiative.