



Greater Cleveland
Food Bank

 **Citizens Bank®**

NEWS RELEASE

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Photo, interview opportunity at 2 p.m. today

**Back to school time marks new season for
Greater Cleveland Food Bank's School Market Program**

Citizens Bank donating \$70,000 to the program to make nutritious food, wellness programming more accessible to students, families in Northeast Ohio

Friday, September 28, 2018— Cleveland, OH— Back to school time marks a new season for the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's School Market Program, and Citizens Bank today announced a \$70,000 contribution to that program. The School Market Program, an initiative aimed at reaching more children and families in the Northeast Ohio region, brings a truck load of food to schools where it is distributed to students and their families and others in the surrounding community.

Citizens Bank presented the contribution today at the School Market at Garrett Morgan High School. With support from donors like Citizens Bank, the monthly program will be available at 40 schools in the city of Cleveland and throughout Cuyahoga County this year. With the support of Citizens Bank, the program was expanded to 11 new sites in 2018 and is expected to expand to another five sites in 2019.

The School Market Program provides nutritious food to low-income children and families, as well as residents of the surrounding neighborhood. The program's components include distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables, nutrition and health education, physical fitness, wraparound services with community partners and SNAP outreach. Students and families can pick up food conveniently during their school's monthly market, just as they would from a local pantry.

"Our School Market Program is a critical component to serving the hunger needs of our community," said Kristin Warzocha, President and CEO, Greater Cleveland Food Bank. "We know children are going hungry at home some evenings and on weekends and the school markets will help address that. This program relies heavily on donations from partners like Citizens Bank, which has been our committed partner in northeast Ohio for more than 20 years."

Citizens has provided more than \$1.3 million to hunger relief efforts through the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and an additional \$475,000 for efforts throughout Ohio since 2005, said Ralph Della Ratta, State President, Citizens Bank, Ohio. "Citizens Bank is committed to helping our customers, colleagues and communities reach their potential, but children with empty stomachs can't focus on school work and parents who skip meals can't be their best at work," said Della Ratta. "The School Market addresses a critical need for food for students and families served by Garrett Morgan High School and others schools across the county – helping them reach their potential."

Garrett Morgan High School is located in Cleveland's historic Ohio City neighborhood. At the school, students learn to use the same industry-leading 3D-design software used by companies like Pixar and explore aerodynamics, astronautics and space life science. The school's emphasis on healthy living for students, staff and the community has earned it Ohio's first-ever national gold award in the Healthy Schools Program.

"This program is a tremendous benefit for our students and families," said Eric Gordon, CEO of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. "It's no secret learning is accelerated with proper nutrition and rest. By helping make food and wellness options more accessible, we're boosting the general well-being of our students and families. It's not something anyone should have to worry about and we're grateful to the Food Bank and Citizens for easing a potential stress and improving access to what our growing students need."

In addition to supporting Greater Cleveland Food Bank's School Market Program, Citizens Bank is a longtime supporter of the Harvest for Hunger program— an annual collaboration between northern Ohio regional food banks that has become one of the largest food and fund drives in the U.S. over its 26 years. This year's campaign raised 22 million meals with the help of Citizens, other corporate partners, and thousands of individuals in Northeast Ohio.

About Greater Cleveland Food Bank

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank is the largest hunger relief organization in Northeast Ohio, having made possible over 55 million meals in 2017 to hungry people in Cuyahoga, Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Ashland and Richland counties. The Food Bank's mission is to ensure that everyone in our communities has the nutritious food they need every day. We do this through both food distribution and SNAP outreach efforts. For more information, please visit www.GreaterClevelandFoodBank.org.

About Citizens Financial Group, Inc.

Citizens Financial Group, Inc. is one of the nation's oldest and largest financial institutions, with \$153.5 billion in assets as of March 31, 2018. Headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island, Citizens offers a broad range of retail and commercial banking products and services to individuals, small businesses, middle-market companies, large corporations and institutions. Citizens helps its customers reach their potential by listening to them and by understanding their needs in order to offer tailored advice, ideas and solutions. In Consumer Banking, Citizens provides an integrated experience that includes mobile and online banking, a 24/7 customer contact center and the convenience of approximately 3,300 ATMs and approximately 1,150 branches in 11 states in the New England, Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions. Consumer Banking products and services include a full range of banking, lending, savings, wealth management and small business offerings. In Commercial Banking, Citizens offers corporate, institutional and not-for-profit clients a full range of wholesale banking products and services, including

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