

UPPER CUMBERLAND
DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND
UPPER CUMBERLAND HUMAN
RESOURCE AGENCY



ANNUAL REPORT

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OUR LEADERSHIP



MARK FARLEY
Executive Director
UCDD-UCHRA

UC::DD
Upper Cumberland
Development District

UC::HRA
Upper Cumberland
Human Resources Agency



TOMMY LEE
Deputy Director
UCDD



SHERRY THURMAN
*Administrative
Director/Office Manager*
UCDD



GINGER STOUT
Director
Finance



SHERRY BILBREY
Field Manager
UCHRA



LANELLE GODSEY
Deputy Director
UCHRA



HOLLY WILLIAMS
Director
Area Agency on Aging and
Disability



TOMMY LEE
Director
Community Development and
Planning



MEGAN CHOATE
Director
Economic Development



MYRA WALKER
Director
Housing



CHERYL COX
Director
Community Intervention



LANELLE GODSEY
Director
Community Services



MEGAN SPURGEON
Director
Empower Upper Cumberland



HOLLY MONTTOOTH
Director
Public Transportation

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This has been a monumental year for our two agencies!

In 2023, we have been able to implement multiple new programs to address the needs of our fellow citizens. This past year has seen us help young families in ways that we have never been able to before.

Through Empower Upper Cumberland, we have tackled barriers to work, built new resources to train our workforce, and provided true case management for families.

This year has also seen us take on important work in assisting individuals suffering from substance use disorder. We now have licensed clinical staff working with our clients and guiding them as we continue to build the regional ecosystem to tackle this problem.

We are committed to our shared vision for our region, where families have a home to live in, economic security, and a quality of life unique to the Upper Cumberland region.

Mark Farley

Executive Director, UCDD and UCHRA



VISION & MISSION



VISION

A region abundant in resources, fostering a productive and vibrant life for the people of the Upper Cumberland.

MISSION

To help the Upper Cumberland region cultivate self-sufficiency and build true wealth through innovation, collaboration, and leadership.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

UCDD AND UCHRA

In 2018, the Upper Cumberland Development District (UCDD) and Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency (UCHRA) entered into a shared management agreement in which both agencies would be led by the same Executive Director and Administrative team.

Both UCDD and UCHRA are very much their own unique organization; each tasked with specific

responsibilities and obligations within the 14-county Upper Cumberland region. There are also many similarities between the two.

While each agency maintains its own unique DNA, UCDD and UCHRA are very much sibling agencies, and the branding is mirrored between the two agencies - distinctively different but, at the core, united.



WORKING TOGETHER:
STAFF TRAINING DAYS



UCDD and UCHRA team members came together for annual training in Spring 2023. These training days provide staff an opportunity to learn required components as well as learn more about the programs and services offered by each agency.

UC: BY THE NUMBERS



22.9K

HOUSEHOLDS PROVIDED WITH COMMODITIES



250.5K

MEALS SERVED OR DELIVERED TO SENIORS



227

AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS



\$42.6M

GRANT FUNDS AWARDED (2023 CALENDAR YEAR)



78

JOBS CREATED THROUGH LOANS WITH CAIC



72

GRANTS SUBMITTED DURING 2023 CALENDAR YEAR (AND COUNTING)



305.9K

TRIPS PROVIDED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



3.29M

MILES DRIVEN BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



16

LOANS GRANTED TO SMALL BUSINESSES



3.6M

DOLLARS INVESTED IN THE REGION THROUGH EMPOWER UC PILOT FUNDS



213

FAMILIES SERVED BY EMPOWER UC

Based on FY 2022-23 data.

LEADERSHIP

UCDD & UCHRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CANNON COUNTY

Greg Mitchell, County Executive
Andy Duggin, Mayor-Woodbury
Roger Turney, Mayor-Auburntown
Fred Howell, Industrial Representative

CLAY COUNTY

Dale Reagan, County Mayor
Luke Collins, Mayor-Celina
Doug Young, Industrial Representative

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Allen Foster, County Mayor
Emmett Sherrill, Mayor-Crab Orchard
R.J. Crawford, Crossville
Don Dowdey, Pleasant Hill
Ethan Hadley, Industrial Representative

DEKALB COUNTY

Matt Adcock, County Mayor
Josh Miller, Mayor-Smithville
Russell Bradshaw, Mayor-Alexandria
Pam Redmon, Mayor-Dowelltown
Audrey Martin, Mayor-Liberty
Suzanne Williams, Industrial Representative

FENTRESS COUNTY

Jimmy Johnson, County Executive
Harvey Stowers, Mayor-Jamestown
Yvonne Gernt, Mayor-Allardt
Jacob Rosenbaum, Industrial Representative

JACKSON COUNTY

Randy Heady, County Mayor
Lloyd Williams, Mayor-Gainesboro
Troy York, Industrial Representative

MACON COUNTY

Steve Jones, County Mayor
Jerry Wilmore, Mayor-Lafayette
Kenneth Hollis, Mayor-Red Boiling Springs
Richard Thomas, Industrial Representative

OVERTON COUNTY

Steven Barlow, County Executive
Curtis Hayes, Mayor-Livingston
Shannon Cantrell, Industrial Representative

PICKETT COUNTY

Stephen Bilbrey, County Executive
Sam Gibson, Mayor-Byrdstown
Bruce Elder, Industrial Representative

PUTNAM COUNTY

Randy Porter, County Mayor
John Martin, Mayor-Baxter
Lisa Chapman-Fowler, Mayor-Algood
Mark Farley, Vice Mayor-Monterey
Laurin Wheaton, Mayor-Cookeville
Amy New, Industrial Representative

SMITH COUNTY

Jeff Mason, County Mayor
Stephen Babcock, Mayor-Carthage
Joey Nixon, Mayor-South Carthage
John Potts, Mayor-Gordonsville
Patrick Geho, Industrial Representative

VAN BUREN COUNTY

David Sullivan, County Executive
Alisa Farmer, Mayor-Spencer
Stacy Mills, Industrial Representative

WARREN COUNTY

Terry Bell, County Executive
Ryle Chastain, Mayor-McMinnville
Joel Akers, Mayor-Centertown
Trent Prater, Mayor-Viola
Sue Anderson, Mayor-Morrison
Marvin Lusk
Wendy Sneed, Industrial Representative

Denotes Executive Committee Members

WHITE COUNTY

Denny Wayne Robinson, County Executive

Jerry Lowery, Mayor-Sparta

Ray Spivey, Mayor-Doyle

Rodger McCann, Industrial Representative

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS

Representative Cameron Sexton

Senator Paul Bailey

UCHRA POLICY COUNCIL

Elected Officials/Local Representatives

Randy Heady, Jackson County Mayor

Sam Gibson, Mayor-Byrdstown

Charlene Whittaker, McMinnville Electric Systems

Keisha Richards, Crossville Housing

Cindy Putman, WCTE Central Tennessee PBS

Brent Anderson, Cookeville Police Department

Consumer Representatives

Misty Phy, Overton County

Barbara Wheeler, Jackson County

Don Hollingsworth, Van Buren County

Bob DePriest, DeKalb County

Linda Pastrick, Pickett County

Marilyn Davis, Warren County

Provider Representatives

Terri Dunn, Department of Human Services

Kristi Paling, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

Marie Ferran, Aging Services for the Upper Cumberland

Bill Gibson, Power of Putnam

Anne Stamps, Volunteer Behavioral Health

Michael Burton, Tennessee Department of Corrections

Minority Representative

Marvin Lusk, Warren County



UPPER CUMBERLAND BOOTCAMP



WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP

Community of the Year

MACON COUNTY & CITY OF LAFAYETTE



FAST FACTS:

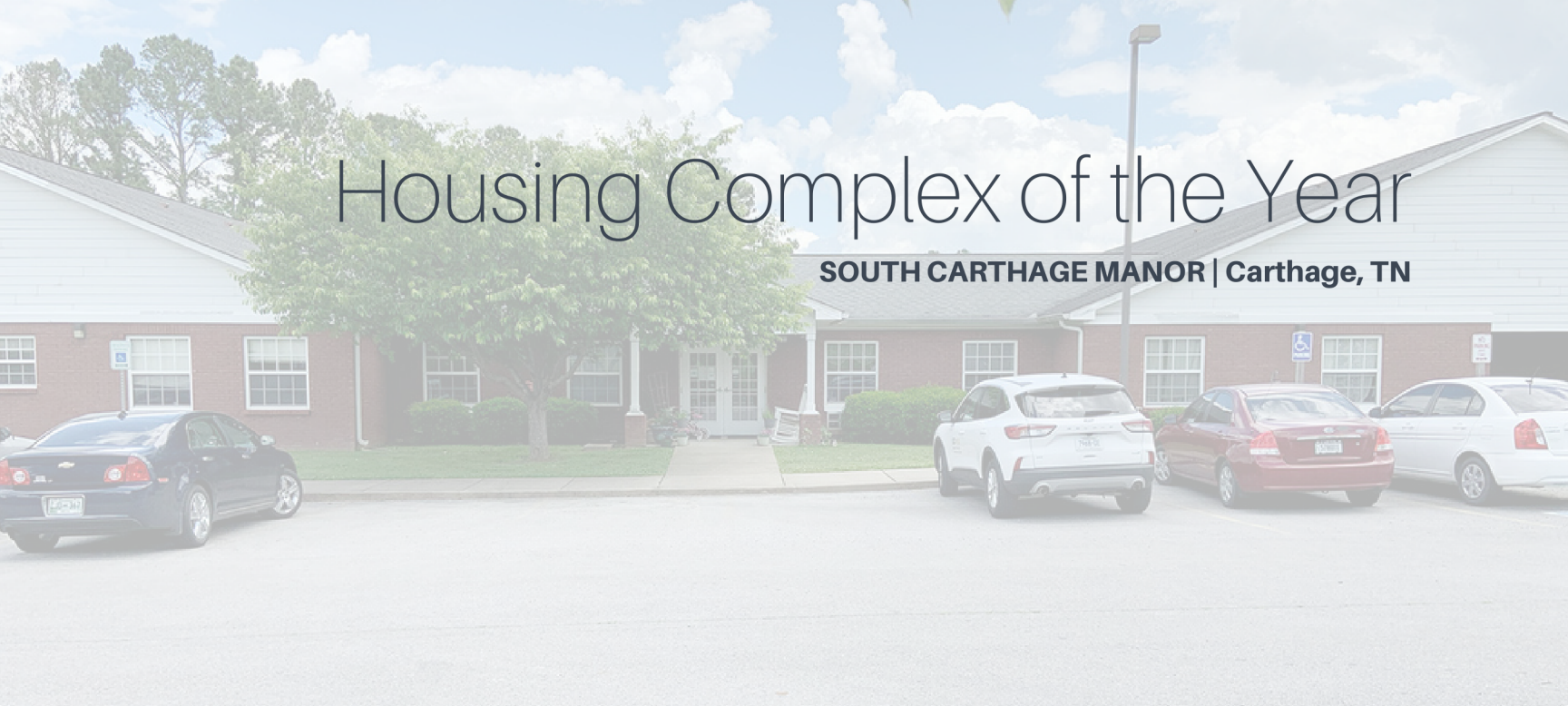
MACON COUNTY & CITY OF LAFAYETTE



The commitment and dedication of both entities to the enhancement and upliftment of their communities have not gone unnoticed. The impressive \$1 million grant awarded to Macon County and the City of Lafayette, along with their contribution of \$1.6 million, reflects their forward-thinking vision for economic growth, their commitment to economic development, and self-investment in the procurement of an industrial site. Macon County's commendable endeavors in infrastructure development are evident in the over \$2.8 million in grants for water line installations; including \$330,000 for new patrol vehicles and a \$267,000 grant for the construction of a new water tank for an existing industry. Significant steps have also been taken to ensure the safety and transparency of its law enforcement with a \$91,000 grant for various items. Similarly, the City of Lafayette's relentless pursuit of progress is evident in the allocation of over \$2.6 million in grants for sewer rehabilitation and water line installations. The city has also received an \$80,000 grant for creating a walking track and shelter at a local park and \$72,000 to provide cutting-edge equipment and technology for police.

Housing Complex of the Year

SOUTH CARTHAGE MANOR | Carthage, TN



FAST FACTS: SOUTH CARTHAGE MANOR

South Carthage Manor, located in Smith County, is a 14-unit complex for residents 62 years and older. Residences are one-bedroom units that include a full bathroom, kitchen, and living room. This complex sits adjacent to the local senior center building and the Smith County Fitness Center. Residents enjoy activities in the community room including bingo, crafts, and potlucks. Outside organizations are always visiting the facility to provide treats (e.g. meals, gifts, and more) for the residents. Tenants are encouraged to make this facility their home. Their artwork is displayed along the hallways and community rooms of the facility. Beautiful plants are carefully tended to by tenants and can be spotted indoors and outside on the porch (as the weather permits). South Carthage Manor's live-in manager, Joey Hoot, works tirelessly to keep the facility clean and take care of maintenance needs. Residents also take great pride in the appearance and condition of their collective home and work alongside Joey to ensure the facility stays tidy.



Legislators of the Year

MICHAEL HALE | Tennessee State Representative

District 40: Cannon, DeKalb, Jackson, Smith, and part of Wilson counties

KEN YAGER | Tennessee State Senator

District 12: Campbell, Clay, Fentress, Macon, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Roane, and Scott counties



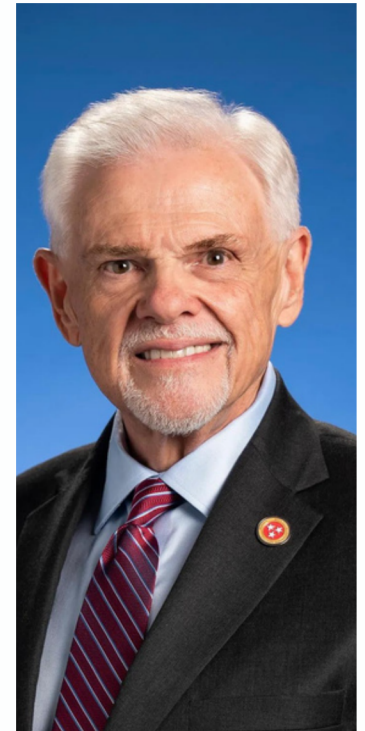
FAST FACTS: MICHAEL HALE & KEN YAGER

Representative Hale

- Member of the Commerce Committee and Commerce Committee of 1st Extraordinary Session, Local Government Committee and Local Government Committee of 1st Extraordinary Session, Business & Utilities Subcommittee and Business & Utilities Subcommittee of 1st Extraordinary Session, and Cities & Counties Subcommittee and Cities & Counties Subcommittee of 1st Extraordinary Session.

Senator Yager

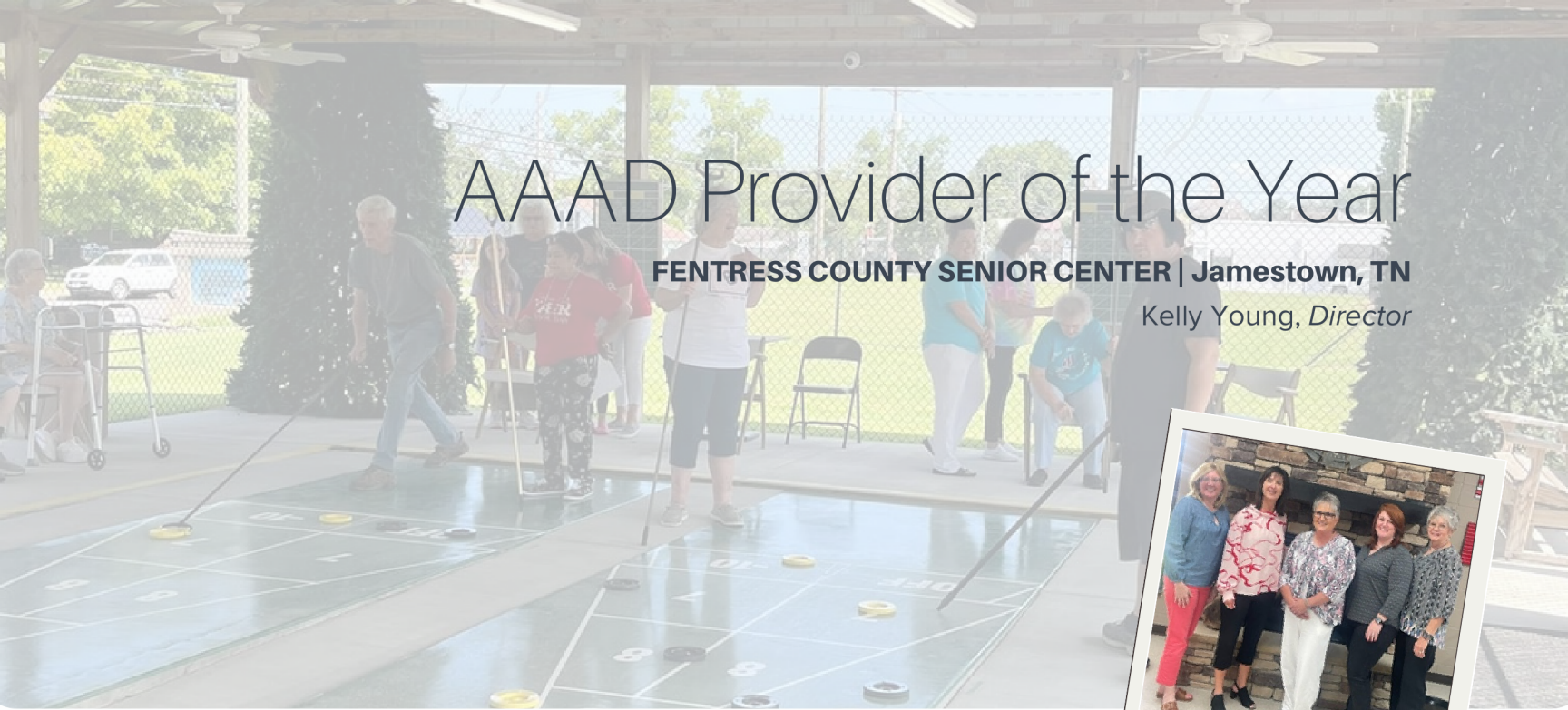
- Served as Chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus
- Previous chair of the Senate State and Local Government Committee and the Joint Fiscal Review Committee
- Member of the Commerce and Labor Committee; the Finance, Ways and Means Committee; the Fiscal Review Committee; and State and Local Government Committee



AAAD Provider of the Year

FENTRESS COUNTY SENIOR CENTER | Jamestown, TN

Kelly Young, *Director*



FAST FACTS:

FENTRESS COUNTY SENIOR CENTER

The Fentress County Senior Center is the Area Agency on Aging and Disability's FY23 Provider of the Year. The center offers a multitude of activities and also serves as a Tennessee Senior Olympics host site for the singles and doubles shuffleboard competition. In FY23, the center had 274 older adults participate in 14,090 activities. In addition, they had 2,827 transportation vouchers used by local older adults in need of public transportation within and outside of the county. The staff delivered 15,260 daily, hot meals to 84 Fentress County residents and served 14,796 congregate meals to senior center attendees. When the state increased the reimbursement rate for meals this past year, the center elected to keep the lower rate so they could serve more people in their county. The staff is consistent in the quality of services provided, always going above and beyond to meet the needs of seniors in their community, and serving as mentors to other senior centers. They strive to meet all expectations during quality assurance compliance monitoring and are quick to implement new requirements when necessary.

Fentress County Senior Center

- Exercise classes, shuffleboard, chair yoga and chair volleyball, and line dancing
- Music and art classes
- Health and general education events
- Intergenerational programs

OUR TEAM

Meet the staff of UCDD and UCHRA

At the Upper Cumberland Development District and Human Resource Agency, we are passionate about helping people. Through our wide array of services, we connect individuals, families, businesses, and local officials with the resources they need to improve their quality of life. UCDD and UCHRA employ approximately 500 of the region's most passionate and skilled individuals to better meet the needs of the Upper Cumberland.

UCDD is designated by the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability (TCAD) as the **Area Agency on Aging and Disability (AAAD)** to provide care, nutrition, transportation, and other services to older or physically disabled Middle Tennesseans. The AAAD's three primary functions are advocacy services, information and assistance, and provision of services.

UCDD offers a variety of **Planning & Community Development** services to communities across the region including grant writing, administration, and technical assistance related to land use and zoning, solid waste, historic preservation, and housing. UCDD provides data collection and analysis. These services are often used for planning, grant applications, presentations, and publications.

The **Economic Development and Lending** department works with community leaders to secure grant funds primarily for industrial development as

well as offering loans to small businesses seeking to expand and create jobs. UCDD staffs the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which provides free counseling, technical support, and connection to financing including the business development loan fund through UCDD. The department has also partnered with Empower Upper Cumberland as a core partner focused on removing barriers to entering the workforce and advancing families' economic standing.

UCDD's **Housing and Family Services** provides affordable housing to low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. The department also administers programs that provide support to relative caregivers and housing repairs to those in need.

UCHRA offers a variety of **Public Transportation** services from door-to-door rides, scheduled shuttle services, and inner-city bus routes. The transportation call center, in addition to new soft-

ware rolling out in Fall 2023, uses innovation and technology to find the “right fit” solution for customers; allowing riders to quickly and easily schedule a trip and simply enjoy the ride to their destination.

UCHRA’s **Community Intervention** department provides alternatives to incarceration for juvenile and adult offenders, driver education, corrective education programs, judicial system advocacy for children, and residential programs for troubled youth. The department also oversees the day reporting center program. Day reporting centers (DRCs) provide supervision and services in 12 Upper Cumberland counties offering a variety of programs and services designed to address rehabilitation, supervision, treatment, education, programming, and re-entry services through a carefully designed curriculum.

The **Community Services** department administers a number of programs offering support to vulnerable populations including utility assistance vouchers, weatherization, commodities distribution, childcare nutrition, in-home care, and protective services for the elderly. Through a federal grant, the department provides a range of services aimed at reducing poverty and encouraging self-sufficiency. This department also oversees the Van Buren County Head Start.

UCHRA’s **UC Recovery** team offers a comprehensive list of support services to clients from emergency and transitional housing, reentry to the workforce, transportation, and case management through a variety of grants and pilot programs.

UCHRA staffs an office in each county that gives access to the programs described above through personal service and community outreach. Clients receive hands-on assistance with applications and information. UCAssist.org is a web-based database designed to provide online access to resources and services available in the region.

Led by UCHRA, the designated backbone organization, **Empower UC** is tasked with serving the most vulnerable populations of the 14-county Upper Cumberland region which includes the counties of Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, and White with a core objective of lifting 1,600 children and their families out of generational poverty by 2025.

CANNON COUNTY



By the Numbers



920
Units of commodities
provided to eligible
households



259
Households provided with
utility assistance



4,260
Meals served or delivered
to seniors



5,311
Trips provided by Public
Transportation



99,841
Miles driven by Public
Transportation



CELEBRATING CENTER VOLUNTEERS

Cannon Co. Senior Center Celebrates Volunteers

Earlier this year, Cannon County Senior Center held its Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. The theme, You Keep Us Afloat, consisted of a pool party-themed day with Beach Boys music, door prizes, and a catered meal along with ice-cream floats served by Deborah Leach, Senior Center Director. Board members were recognized for their hard work and support along with the top 10 senior volunteers with the most volunteer hours. The Volunteer of the Year, 91-year-old Joyce Rice, had 795 volunteer hours. Their support and dedication to the senior center and the community is greatly appreciated!



CLAY COUNTY



By the Numbers



1,394

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



547

Households provided with utility assistance



19,025

Meals served or delivered to seniors



8,596

Trips provided by Public Transportation



185,860

Miles driven by Public Transportation

Engaging the Community for a Brighter Future During Clay Co. Open House

The Clay County community came together for a unique and valuable event that strengthened local connections and provided residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions. UCHRA's Clay County office hosted an Open House and Focus Group event, inviting all community members to attend.

This event aimed to bridge the gap between the community and the office, offering a platform for residents to interact with the team, see the facilities, and, most importantly, share their thoughts and feedback regarding the community's needs. Whether attendees were long-time residents or newcomers to Clay County, their input was invaluable in shaping the future of the community.



CUMBERLAND COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,282

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



961

Households provided with utility assistance



37,970

Meals served or delivered to seniors



33,035

Trips provided by Public Transportation



379,592

Miles driven by Public Transportation

UCHRA Partners with Avalon Center to Provide Transit Passes for Local Violence and Assault Victims



UCHRA's Cumberland County team donated 20 city route bus passes to the Avalon Center of Crossville to be shared with their clients. The Avalon Center provides support and services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims. They serve Bledsoe, Cumberland, Fentress, Morgan, Rhea, Roane, and Van Buren counties.

We are One: Community Partnerships in Action

*UCHRA joined numerous churches, nonprofit organizations, and local businesses to provide trips and connect attendees with resources during the **We Are One** outreach event. There, more than 4,100 individuals were provided with food. More than 7,500 bags of food, plus hundreds of boxes of produce were given to people from 22 counties. More than 50 zip codes were represented.*



COMING TOGETHER IN CUMBERLAND CO.

DEKALB COUNTY



By the Numbers



1,492

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



382

Households provided with utility assistance



8,983

Meals served or delivered to seniors



11,724

Trips provided by Public Transportation



221,242

Miles driven by Public Transportation



UC Bootcamp: Using Fictional Families to Navigate Real-Life Scenarios

Approximately 60 local elected officials, community leaders, and support staff attended the 2023 Upper Cumberland Bootcamp in May. This educational session provided an opportunity for UCDD and UCHRA to inform attendees about the variety of services and supports available through both agencies.

The four-hour event included a panel of seven program leaders representing both agencies and support staff from various departments; discussing four common

scenarios seen by agency staff including families with multiple generations living in the household, homelessness, and substance abuse.

By presenting these scenarios in a story format, the audience was able to walk alongside the fictional families as members of the panel provided information on available resources to navigate the obstacles they faced. This marks the second bootcamp session the agencies have held. Plans to hold future sessions are in the works.

FENTRESS COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,430

Units of commodities
provided to eligible
households



1,008

Households provided with
utility assistance



30,045

Meals served or delivered
to seniors



8,475

Trips provided by Public
Transportation



152,464

Miles driven by Public
Transportation



UCDD Team Visits Fentress County's Roane State Campus

UCDD members traveled to Fentress County and joined state and local partners for a familiarity tour of the new Roane State Community College (RSCC) in Clarkrange earlier this year.

The new facility is nearly triple the size of its former location and is equipped with a computer lab, study areas, a student lounge, offices, and six classrooms, all equipped with video conferencing technology. RSCC has nine campuses in Tennessee with two campuses located in the Upper Cumberland (Cumberland, and Fentress counties).

UCDD values its community partnerships and this visit exemplified the successful outcomes of partners working together. The future of Fentress County and the entire Upper Cumberland region looks brighter with the addition of this newest higher-education facility!



UCDD TEAM VISITS RSCC

JACKSON COUNTY



By the Numbers



1,177

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



599

Households provided with utility assistance



14,877

Meals served or delivered to seniors



5,769

Trips provided by Public Transportation



90,716

Miles driven by Public Transportation



Jackson County Staff Attends Red Sand Project Event

Jackson County UCHRA team members partnered with the local health department to spread awareness of the Red Sand Project. The Red Sand Project is a collaborative installation designed to shed light on human trafficking. Participants pour red sand in sidewalk cracks to draw attention to trafficking victims who fall through the cracks of society. Globally, an estimated 50 million individuals are being trafficked or living in modern slavery, whether in forced marriages, forced labor, or for sexual exploitation.

UC DELEGATION SHINES AT NADO AND DDAA EVENT

The Upper Cumberland made a strong presence at the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) event in Arlington, VA, in March. Our region was also represented by Jeff Mason, Smith County Mayor and Vice Chairman of UCDD and UCHRA boards and Randy Heady, Jackson County Mayor and Chairman of UCDD and UCHRA boards. Throughout the conference, attendees participated in sessions that centered on regional development, the federal landscape, and the crucial programs and policies that hold significance for Regional Development Organizations and their stakeholders.



MACON COUNTY



By the Numbers



736
Units of commodities
provided to eligible
households



469
Households provided with
utility assistance



10,880
Meals served or delivered
to seniors



6,384
Trips provided by Public
Transportation



117,477
Miles driven by Public
Transportation

SWEET SURPRISE FOR STAFF

Macon County UCHRA office staff and the Public Transportation team have helped Markus get to dialysis appointments three times per week for more than a year. He was able to receive a kidney transplant and is doing great!

To express his thanks to the team, Markus stopped by the Macon County UCHRA office with a beautiful cake; stating that all of the drivers and staff have been so good to him and that UCHRA Public Transportation was a blessing throughout his journey.



EMPOWER UPPER CUMBERLAND RAMPS UP



WCTE's Ready to Learn program is up and going in Macon County. Families have been enjoying this time together networking with other families and completing activities with their kids.

Nearly one year after officially launching, Empower Upper Cumberland held a re-engagement summit. There, partners, staff, leadership, and others convened for an afternoon of project updates, future plans, and a call to action to get involved with county Circles meetings by volunteering to be an Empower Ally. Empower UC is actively working with nearly 400 families.

"Roughly 75 percent of those are single moms," Mark Farley, Executive Director, relayed during the October UCHRA Policy Council meeting.

OVERTON COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,288

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



511

Households provided with utility assistance



22,017

Meals served or delivered to seniors



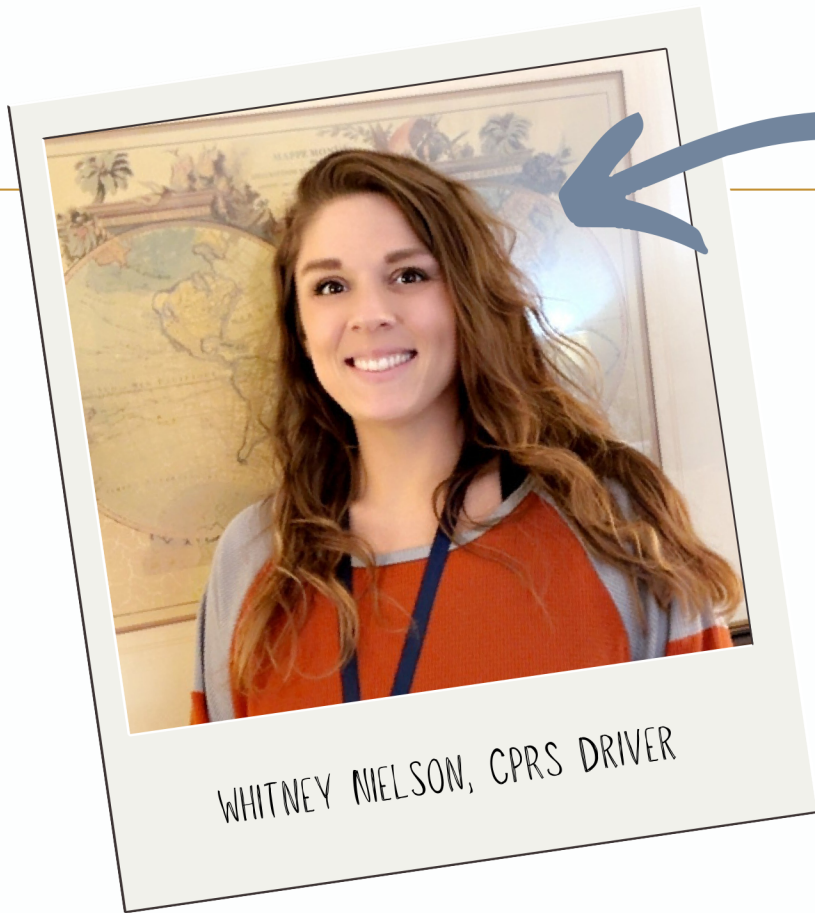
7,599

Trips provided by Public Transportation



132,738

Miles driven by Public Transportation



WHITNEY NIELSON, CPRS DRIVER

Driven to Succeed

UCHRA Public Transportation was one of only three entities in the country to receive grant funding to staff Ride-to-Recovery with a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS) driver. Grant partners include the Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug & other Addiction Services (TAADAS); UCDD; and the Overton County Recovery Court system. Ride-to-Recovery helps those in early recovery succeed by providing 90 days of transportation to recovery support services such as treatment, meetings, mental health or probation appointments, and other recovery-related activities at no cost to the participants. Whitney Nielsen (right) became one of the first CPRS drivers for UCHRA after completing the 40-hour CPRS training through the Tennessee Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and became one of the first CPRS drivers for the agency.

Class Act

The Overton County School System partnered with the local UCHRA office to help feed the community through a food drive. Each of the five schools held a friendly competition to collect items and the winner in each school received a pizza party from UCHRA and Renea Stover, UCHRA Overton County Coordinator. With help from focus group member Deanna Savage from the Overton County School System, UCHRA delivered the pizzas to each school. The kids and teachers collected around 2,500 items! Thank you to all who made this food drive a success!



PICKETT COUNTY



By the Numbers



1,049

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



259

Households provided with utility assistance



9,306

Meals served or delivered to seniors



4,997

Trips provided by Public Transportation



93,710

Miles driven by Public Transportation



PICKETT COUNTY SUMMER
STRATEGY SESSION

PICKETT CO. LEADERS, PARTNERS GATHER TO TALK STRATEGY

Byrdstown and Pickett County officials met with representatives from state, regional, and local agencies this summer for an economic development strategy session focusing on the community. These sessions provide an excellent opportunity to plan for the future and address the needs of today by bringing all economic development partners together. UCDD coordinates these strategy sessions each year; bringing together representatives from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Workforce Development, the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, and many more.

Being Nice is Contagious

Sheryl Stephens, Pickett County Driver, brought in a deliciously sweet Butterfinger Blizzard ice cream cake for her team to enjoy on “Do Something Nice Day.” One of her co-workers says Sheryl “always goes above and beyond to be nice and thoughtful to everyone!”

UCDD and UCHRA staff celebrated the day by bringing treats to share, leaving kind messages for their teammates, and spreading kindness to clients and teammates alike.



PUTNAM COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,366

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



1,471

Households provided with utility assistance



32,894

Meals served or delivered to seniors



146,941

Trips provided by Public Transportation



854,729

Miles driven by Public Transportation

UCDD Hosts Opioid Summit, Discusses Abatement Funding



Thank you to all of the panelists, mayors, and subject matter experts who attended the Upper Cumberland Opioid Abuse Summit at the Upper Cumberland Development District office on Jan. 31. During the summit, panelists and attendees discussed the best uses of opioid abatement funding. About the abatement funding: Tennessee has joined a broad coalition of states and subdivisions in reaching a \$26 billion settlement with four companies to resolve legal claims for their role in the opioid crisis. Tennessee's share of the settlement funds is expected to exceed \$600 million over 18 years.

UCHRA Recognizes TUTCO as Community Partner

In June, Tutco, LLC, invited UCHRA representatives to visit their facility and see their community project in action! UCHRA presented the TUTCO team with a certificate recognizing their continued support of UCHRA's commodities program. Several TUTCO employees regularly volunteer to pack commodities bags and have established an assembly area on-site to facilitate the process. They also plan to assist with distribution events as well. We are incredibly grateful and thankful for their support and look forward to a continued partnership with our friends at TUTCO!



SMITH COUNTY



By the Numbers



968
Units of commodities
provided to eligible
households



396
Households provided with
utility assistance



7,116
Meals served or delivered
to seniors



10,089
Trips provided by Public
Transportation



186,904
Miles driven by Public
Transportation



Working to Provide Affordable, Quality Childcare in the UC

Access to affordable, quality childcare in the Upper Cumberland and beyond is a growing challenge. UCDD team is working with existing facilities and would-be new providers to alleviate the strain. In addition to providing technical resources and removing barriers, UCDD was able to provide an \$80,000 loan toward the establishment of Little Sunshine's Academy in Carthage; providing 20 new jobs and childcare for the community's youngest residents. UCDD's loan options have also assisted other Upper Cumberland childcare facilities either to open their doors or expand, helping address the childcare shortage. UCDD representatives took a field trip in the fall to visit some of these facilities and spend time with the children.



UCDD TEAM VISITS CHILDCARE CENTERS

VAN BUREN COUNTY



By the Numbers



1,301

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



327

Households provided with utility assistance



10,317

Meals served or delivered to seniors



1,707

Trips provided by Public Transportation



47,348

Miles driven by Public Transportation

Building Community Connections

Shelia Robinson and Jacklyn Medley attended the Headstart Annual Fair in Spencer, TN, where they set up a booth and interacted with various people. Jacklyn also connected with vendors, including the Avalon Center, and learned about using Narcan. Overall, it was an enriching experience that helped promote UCHRA Public Transportation's services and expand their knowledge.



During the summer break, representatives from UCDD and UCHRA met at the Van Buren County Head Start office for in-service training. There, Head Start staff participated in Finance, Communications, Agency 101, and IT-related training ahead of the 2023-2024 school year.

WARREN COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,319

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



855

Households provided with utility assistance



21,810

Meals served or delivered to seniors



41,416

Trips provided by Public Transportation



511,706

Miles driven by Public Transportation

Wish You Were Here Returns

A new season of *Wish You Were Here: Adventures in Tennessee's Upper Cumberland* aired in 2023. The second season premiere included scenes from Rock Island State Park, located in the northern portion of Warren County. *Wish You Were Here* is a tourism television series championing the beautiful and unique amenities offered throughout the 14-county Upper Cumberland region.

"The Upper Cumberland region is home to some of the most biodiverse geography, culture, and history in the southeast United States," says Hannah Carroll, UCDD's Tourism Recovery Coordinator. "This tourism series showcases the natural beauty and unique businesses offered throughout the Upper Cumberland region."

Visit whatdouc.org/wywh to learn more and view past episodes.



WHITE COUNTY



By the Numbers



2,182

Units of commodities provided to eligible households



588

Households provided with utility assistance



21,073

Meals served or delivered to seniors



13,876

Trips provided by Public Transportation



214,537

Miles driven by Public Transportation

Hit the Upper Cumberland Geo-Trail for Adventure



Embark on an adventure along the Upper Cumberland Geo-Trail! Uncover the hidden gems of the Upper Cumberland and immerse yourself in its natural beauty. Your epic expedition commences right here in Sparta, the gateway to an extraordinary journey. Prepare to discover sites teeming with wilderness, rich history, and boundless wonders. Begin your quest by visiting whatdouc.org to learn more.

Providing efficient and compassionate transit service

Suzanne Anderson, a White County passenger, lost her grandmother's cherished ring during one of her rides with UCHRA Public Transportation. Unsure if it went missing on the van or elsewhere, Suzanne contacted our office for help. Sandra Ashburn, one of our dedicated team members, launched a search mission and successfully found the ring, returning it to Suzanne.





Tennessee's Upper Cumberland

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