

Positively UC

A moment to focus on the good our team is doing every day



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UPPER CUMBERLAND HOSTS POVERTY ALLEVIATION SUMMIT

The 2025 Poverty Alleviation Summit brought together leaders, changemakers, and community advocates from across the state to focus on one shared goal: building lasting solutions to end poverty.

Empower Upper Cumberland (Empower UC) was proud to take part in this impactful event, showcasing how collaboration, innovation, and personalized support can change the trajectory for families in our region.

See page 3 for additional information and photos from the event.



UCDD-UCHRA Executive Director Mark Farley welcomes attendees to the Poverty Alleviation Summit held at the Upper Cumberland Development District office earlier this week.



UC SHIP RECOGNIZED FOR JOB WELL DONE

Recently, the Upper Cumberland SHIP program was recognized for meeting all of its performance measure goals for FY2024–2025.

These goals reflect the team and volunteers' hard work and dedication, including benchmarks for client contacts, outreach events, enrollment assistance, and efforts to reach hard-to-reach populations.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this achievement possible!

TY WALKER: THE ULTIMATE GRADUATE SURVIVOR

In the game of life, outwit, outplay, and outlast takes on a whole new meaning—and Ty Walker has done just that!

From the challenges of coursework to the tribal councils of late-night study sessions, Ty has conquered them all to emerge victorious.

Congratulations, Ty, on earning your graduate degree in Environmental Informatics from Tennessee Tech University. The tribe has spoken—and they say, you're a champion!

Ty is a GIS Specialist at UCDD.





UCDD EMPLOYEES COMPLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
Megan Reagan, Community Development Planner; Alli Hammock, Options Counselor; and Morgan White, Tourism Recovery Coordinator, recently graduated from a 10-month leadership program put on by IMPACT Leadership.

IMPACT Leadership is a local and inclusive organization that develops and encourages civic-minded leaders to actively participate in the betterment of the community and effect positive social change for all.

Congratulations, ladies!

EMPOWER UC TEAM VISITS FICOSA



The Empower UC team recently toured Ficosa's 267,000-square-foot facility, meeting with employees and managers to learn about their manufacturing processes, open positions, and workplace culture.

Ficosa employs around 650 people from across the Upper Cumberland and has recently launched new employee engagement initiatives. The team was impressed by the facility's cleanliness, organization, and strong safety record—341 days accident-free—as well as its commitment to both employees and environmental responsibility.

Visit empoweruppercumberland.org to learn more about Empower UC.

UC RECOVERY WRAPS UP WELLNESS TRAINING

UC Recovery recently participated in WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) training, deepening their commitment to empowering individuals on their recovery journey.

Through this evidence-based program, staff gained valuable tools to support wellness, self-advocacy, and resilience—continuing their mission to foster hope and healing across the Upper Cumberland.

Visit uchra.org/ucrecovery to learn more about UC Recovery.



WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

get plugged in.

Follow us on social media for the latest updates.



CELEBRATING SENIORS IN SMITH COUNTY DURING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Each May, communities across the nation celebrate Older Americans Month, recognizing the contributions of older adults and promoting their well-being. The 2025 theme, "Flip the Script on Aging," encourages a fresh perspective on aging by challenging outdated stereotypes and highlighting the positive aspects of growing older.

Smith County marked the occasion with two events that brought together older residents, community leaders, and local partners. On May 7, 2025, the Smith County Senior Center hosted its annual Older Americans Day, welcoming 88 attendees for a day of games, food, vendor booths, door prizes, and live entertainment—including a ukulele performance by Senior Center participants.

The event was supported by several community organizations and leaders, including UCDD, Gentiva Hospice, Hearing Health Center, Smith County Health and Rehab, Beracdi Insurance, DTC, Riverview Regional Medical Center, Caris Healthcare, County Mayor Jeff Mason, Gordonsville Mayor John Potts, The Palace, and the Carthage Rotary Club.

Through these events, Smith County proudly reaffirmed its commitment to honoring and uplifting its aging population.



UPPER CUMBERLAND HOSTS POVERTY ALLEVIATION SUMMIT, CONTINUED



During the summit, Empower UC shared powerful stories of transformation—real families finding hope, growth, and opportunity through our network of support.



From job training and education pathways to wraparound services and mentorship, Empower UC is helping break the cycle of poverty one family at a time.

Special thanks to all who attended this insightful event and to those who worked behind the scenes to make this event a success!