

Positively UC

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



MAY 9, 2025

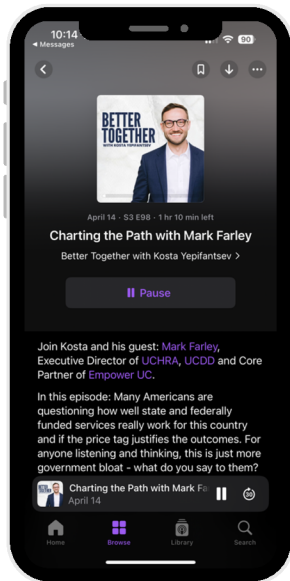
Vol. 6 Issue 17

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES DURING OUTREACH EVENT



We had a wonderful time participating in the Pre-K Outreach event at Prescott Elementary School!

Our team—including new Putnam County Coordinator Mistie Johnson and Mobility Manager Jacklyn Medley—had the opportunity to connect directly with parents and share valuable information about the resources and services we offer. It was a meaningful event centered on building strong community connections and supporting local families.



FARLEY FEATURED ON *BETTER TOGETHER* PODCAST

Mark Farley, Executive Director of the Upper Cumberland Development District (UCDD) and Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency (UCHRA), was recently featured on *Better Together* with Kosta Yepifantsev, a podcast centered on business, parenting, and living life intentionally.

In this thought-provoking episode, Farley joined host Kosta Yepifantsev to discuss the effectiveness of government-funded programs, the realities facing single parents in the Upper Cumberland, and the widening gap between wages and housing costs in communities like Cookeville.

Addressing concerns about government inefficiency, Farley offered a candid and compelling defense of UCDD, UCHRA, and Empower UC's role in transforming lives through targeted, results-driven programs. He highlighted the agencies' deep commitment to supporting over 1,600 children of single parents across the region, emphasizing that breaking the cycle of poverty starts with strengthening families. *Continued on page 2.*

MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Each May, the national Aging Network comes together to celebrate *Older Americans Month* (OAM)—a time to recognize the strength, wisdom and contributions of older adults across the country.

The 2025 theme, *Flip the Script on Aging*, challenges us to reimagine aging—not as a decline, but as a time of purpose, vitality and possibility. It's a powerful reminder that how we talk about aging shapes how we value older adults. *Continued on page 2.*



VOLUNTEERS, TEAMWORK KEY TO COMMODITIES' SUCCESS



Governor Bill Lee has proclaimed May 2025 as Community Action Month in Tennessee, recognizing the essential work of the state's 20 Community Action Agencies (CAAs).

Funded in part by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), these agencies address local needs through services focused on employment, education, housing, health, and civic engagement. Collectively, they serve approximately 337,000 individuals and 170,000 households each year.

With the help of more than 8,500 community partners and nearly 782,000 volunteer hours, CAAs are making a measurable impact across the state. Each agency creates a Community Action Plan aligned with both local goals and the Tennessee Department of Human Services' mission. Tennessee celebrates these agencies for their commitment to Strength, Transformation, Accountability, and Resources—making communities stronger and families more resilient.

Community Action Agencies (CAAs) are public and nonprofit organizations established in 1964 to combat poverty by addressing local needs through community-based services.

FARLEY FEATURED ON BETTER TOGETHER PODCAST, CONTINUED

Farley and Yepifantsev also discussed the urgent issue of housing affordability, underscoring how rising home prices and stagnant wages are making it increasingly difficult for working families to live where they work. Farley called for renewed focus on sustainable development, workforce housing, and policies that prioritize community resilience.

Recorded in Cookeville, Better Together is known for its authentic conversations and fresh perspectives. This episode is a must-listen for anyone interested in the future of public service, economic equity, and building stronger communities across the Upper Cumberland and beyond.

MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH, CONTINUED

During OAM, we honor the 53 million family caregivers who provide an average of 24-plus hours of care each week and help millions of Americans live as independently as possible. Unpaid caregivers save the U.S. an estimated \$600 billion annually!

This year, Tennessee's nine Area Agencies on Aging and Disability (AAAD) are celebrating their 50th anniversary.

The Upper Cumberland AAAD will be highlighting this milestone as well as the 2025 OAM theme, Flip the Script on Aging, at this year's annual Senior and Caregiver Expo which will be held at the Cookeville Life Church campus on Oct. 28. Save the date and plan to join us!



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.

