

Positively UC

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



JAN. 9, 2026

Vol. 7 Issue 1



GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Mobility management is more than scheduling rides or knowing routes—it's about listening, problem-solving, and showing up when it matters most.

Recently, a post on social media caught someone's attention. A woman in our community was desperately searching for transportation so she could attend her mother's funeral. She is wheelchair-bound and had no other options. The service was on a day when UCHRA Public Transportation

does not operate, and time was running out. Instead of seeing barriers, our team saw a need.

Sheri Julian, our Call Center Supervisor, and Lloyd Williams, Assistant Director of Public Transportation, immediately began working together to explore every possible solution. Through coordination, creativity, and a shared commitment to serving others, a plan was put into place.

Stacie Narrin, one of our incredible drivers, volunteered to work on her day off to ensure this woman could attend her mother's funeral. Because of her willingness to step up, a daughter was able to be present, say goodbye, and find comfort during one of the hardest moments of her life. This is mobility management. It's connecting people to more than destinations.

We are incredibly proud of Sheri, Lloyd, Stacie, and everyone who helped make this happen. This is the heart of UCHRA Public Transportation—driving connections when they are needed most.

UC SHIP CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL AEP

Another Annual Enrollment Period is in the books for the Upper Cumberland SHIP team.

Over two months, our dedicated staff and volunteers connected with more than 1,000 Medicare beneficiaries across our 14-county region. The UC SHIP team provided comprehensive, one-on-one counseling—delivered in-person, over the phone, and virtually to help individuals make confident, informed coverage decisions for 2026.

The success of this vital outreach would not have been possible without our incredible team and community partners.

Thank you for your continued service to our region!





CUMBERLAND SCENIC BYWAY NAMED SHOWCASE WINNER

We're excited to share that the Cumberland National Scenic Byway (CNSB) has been selected as the National Scenic Byway Foundation's (NSBF) January Showcase winner!

This national recognition highlights the Byway's natural beauty, cultural significance, and regional impact.

UCDD Public Historian Mark Dudney, who coordinates the CNSB, worked closely with

the NSBF bring this special showcase to life.

The CNSB spans four East Tennessee counties and travels through Fentress, Pickett, Overton, and Clay counties here in the Upper Cumberland, showcasing the landscapes and stories that make our region unique.

Visit nsbfoundation.com/blog to learn more about the recognition and the Cumberland National Scenic Byway.



Did you know? Our brand is more than logos and fonts—it's how UCDD and UCHRA show up every day!

When we use consistent colors, formatting, and messaging, we make it easier for our communities to recognize, trust, and connect with our work. A polished, unified look helps our programs shine and tells our story clearly and confidently.

A copy of the current brand guidelines was shared via email earlier this week. Take a few minutes to review them for helpful tips that support you and help our agencies shine.

Staying on brand helps keep us looking sharp and professional!

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.



Follow us on social media for the latest updates.





BAKER NAMED TO MATCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carrie Baker, UCHRA's Warren County Coordinator, has been named to the MATCH Board of Directors.

MATCH is an interfaith nonprofit dedicated to advocacy, resource management, and program development with a clear mission: creating real, permanent housing for neighbors experiencing homelessness.

Through rapid housing placement paired with wrap-around services and ongoing support, MATCH works alongside local nonprofits, city and county governments, churches, and private citizens to build sustainable, compassionate housing solutions for our community.

As part of this important work, Beyond the Bridge is coming to the Park Theatre in McMinnville on Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. This community event is free and open to the public for anyone interested in learning more about local efforts addressing homelessness.

SIMCOX COMPLETES QC INSPECTOR TRAINING



We're proud to recognize Tommy Simcox, who recently completed training to become a Quality Control Inspector for UCHRA's upcoming Multi-Family Weatherization Program, and received official notice that he successfully passed the 401 GAP Multifamily Quality Control Inspector course.

The Weatherization Assistance Program is a federally-funded program administered by the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA). Weatherization provides basic insulation and weatherization measures for low-income households to increase energy efficiency.

Tommy is a key part of UCHRA's Weatherization program, and we're incredibly proud of the dedication and hard work he continues to bring to his role. *Congratulations, Tommy—well done!*

For more information about UCHRA's Weatherization program, visit uchra.org/communityservices.



PLAN AHEAD: UCDD-UCHRA STAFF TRAINING DATES ANNOUNCED



UCDD-UCHRA's 2026 staff training dates have been announced. Please be sure to mark your calendars.

This information can also be viewed on the UCDD and UCHRA internal calendars. If you do not have access to view these calendars and need assistance adding them, please submit a ticket to IT.

April 24, 2026 (no drivers)

Sept. 25, 2026 (all staff)

These events will be held at the new Putnam County Convention Center in Cookeville. Attendance is mandatory. Please contact your supervisor with any questions.

CONGRATS, CARLEE

Please join us in congratulating Carlee Bean on earning her undergraduate degree in December!

Carlee majored in Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice, and also completed a minor in Psychology.

We're excited to celebrate this milestone with her and are proud of all the hard work that went into this accomplishment.

Way to go, Carlee!



HERALD NAMED TO HART BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jordan Herald, UCHRA Community Services Assistant Director, was elected to the Board of Directors for Homeless Advocacy for Rural Tennessee (HART) during the organization's Annual Meeting held in December. Her election reflects UCHRA's continued leadership and commitment to addressing homelessness across rural Tennessee.

The Annual Meeting, hosted by UCHRA, brought together partners from across the Upper Cumberland and surrounding areas with a focus on warm shelters and collaborative solutions.

Guests shared insights on their local shelter efforts, highlighting the importance of seasonal and emergency housing options.

Shelter partners represented at the meeting included the Church of God of Prophecy in Cumberland County, Praise Church in Harriman, The Community House in Fentress County, For His Glory in Smith County, Cookeville Community Cares, First United Methodist Church in Warren County, Live & Let Live in Smithville, WEMA Shelter in Wilson County, and Seeds of Hope in Sparta.