

Tribal Talk



Photo credit: Ivey Tupponce

Message from the Chief

Welcome to 2025! This new year brings opportunities to honor our past while building an even stronger future for the Upper Mattaponi Tribe. Reflecting on last year's accomplishments, we must find ways to make this year truly exceptional for our people. I am filled with hope and determination for what lies ahead, and with your hard work and support, we will achieve our shared goals. Let us care for one another, uplift our Elders, and embrace the promise of spring. Together, we remain Upper Mattaponi strong!

With respect and excitement,
Chief W. Frank Adams

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Contact us at info@umitribe.org
for any questions or comments
regarding Tribal Talk.

Announcements



Job Openings

UMT Government

No positions at this time.

UMT Health

- Certified Nursing Assistant
- RN Home Health
- Doctor
- Pediatric Dentist
- Dentist
- Pharmacy Technician
- Dental Assistant
- Pharmacist

More information can be found on our website at www.umatribes.org under "Careers".

2025 UMT Office Closures

- February 17 - President's Day
- May 26 - Memorial Day
- June 19 - Juneteenth
- July 4 - Independence Day
- September 1 - Labor Day
- October 13 - Indigenous People's Day
- November 11 - Veterans Day
- November 27 - Thanksgiving
- November 28 - Native American Heritage Day
- December 25 - Christmas Day
- December 26 - Day After Christmas Day



Shop and Support Our Tribe

Show your Upper Mattaponi pride with exclusive merch! Shop t-shirts, hats, and accessories while supporting tribal events and initiatives.

Scan the QR code to visit: umtmerch.myshopify.com



New Look, Same Spirit: Join the Pow Wow Program Book!

Be part of our redesigned 2025 Pow Wow Program Book! Share your achievements, milestones, or memorial tributes **at no cost** —we want to celebrate and honor our citizens. Submit your content today!

Send photos and text to Lana Real at Lana.Real@umatribes.gov no later than March 31, 2025.



Tribal Government



Photo credit: Canva

The Tribal Census: Shaping Our Future

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe is conducting an important census to help ensure the growth and well-being of our community for future generations. Your participation is key to securing resources, improving services like healthcare and youth programs, and helping our Tribal leaders make decisions that benefit everyone. Completing the census is quick, but its impact will last for years to come.

The census is available online, with additional options by phone or in-person by appointment. Instructions were sent by mail and email, and the Program Management Office is ready to help if needed. All answers will remain confidential.

Every voice matters, and every citizen counts. Let's work together to make this census a success and build a stronger future for our Tribe! For more information about the tribal census, please reach out to Suzanne Soule, Director of the Program Management Office:

Suzanne.Soule@umitribe.gov

(804) 535-0039

Upcoming Meeting Dates

3/22 - Council Meeting
at 9:00am (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

3/22 - Citizen's Meeting
at 10:00am (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

4/26 - Council Meeting
at 9:00am (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

4/26 - Citizen's Meeting
at 10:00am (virtual or at Sharon Indian School)

*Can't make the meetings?
No worries! We offer the option to join all of the citizen meetings virtually through Zoom.*

Tribal Government



Photo credit: Canva

UMT Open Law Library

Explore the Upper Mattaponi Tribe's Constitution and legislation on Open Law Library! This resource offers easy access to the documents that protect tribal sovereignty and define our government's structure, roles, and processes.

Stay informed - scan the QR code to visit: law.umitribe.org



Join the Family Birthday Club

The UMT Council is excited to announce the launch of the Family Birthday Club, a fun and voluntary program designed to celebrate our tribal citizens and their families! By signing up, all tribal families will receive a special birthday card from the Council to honor their big day.

Participation is easy and open to all tribal citizens and their eligible spouses/partners. While each individual can register only once, multiple members of the same household are encouraged to sign up. As an added bonus, the first 200 people to register will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win a \$200 Visa gift card!

Spread the word and don't miss this opportunity to make birthdays extra special while fostering a meaningful connection with your Tribal government. Sign up today using the QR code on the right or the link below:

<https://bit.ly/umtcouncilfbc>



Health & Wellness



Behavioral Health Now Available

Aylett Family Wellness is now offering in-person behavioral health in addition to its telehealth services for citizens who live within twenty-five miles of Sharon Indian School. If you would like to schedule a behavioral health visit, contact the clinic at (804) 769-2015.

Opening Soon: Aylett Family Dentistry

The Tribe's first dental clinic is set to open in mid-February. The team is awaiting the final shipment of supplies and instruments, as well as finalizing the contract with Indian Health Services. Stay tuned for the official opening date via email!



Celebrate American Heart Month

February is American Heart Month, a time to raise awareness about heart disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S., affecting 1 in 3 Americans. Simple changes like eating heart-healthy foods, exercising, managing stress, and staying hydrated can significantly reduce your risk. Take this opportunity to stay active, prioritize your health, and schedule a checkup. Make February a month of heart health by practicing and sharing healthy habits that keep us all Upper Mattaponi strong!



Photo credit: Canva

CSA Produce Boxes

Sign-ups for the UMT Agricultural Department's 2025 CSA Produce Boxes begin in February—don't miss your chance to enjoy fresh, locally grown tribal produce!

Contact Katelynn Tupponce to secure your spot today:

(757) 936-2288

Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov



In the Spotlight



Photo credit: Ivey Tupponce

Christmas Luncheon Brings Holiday Cheer

The annual Christmas Luncheon took place on December 8, 2024, at the Fellowship Hall of Indian View Baptist Church. Catered by Smokey Bottom BBQ, this festive event provided a warm space for tribal citizens to gather, enjoy delicious food, share stories, and celebrate the holiday season. Many thanks to everyone who attended and made this gathering special! Events like this highlight the strength of our community and the joy of celebrating shared traditions. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

In the Spotlight

Little Free Library Comes to SIS

The Sharon Indian School Foundation is excited to announce it has received an Indigenous Library Program Grant from Little Free Library! This grant funds a Little Free Library box at the historic Sharon Indian School, providing free access to culturally relevant books by Indigenous authors. Lana Real, tribal citizen and UMT Legislative Clerk, will serve as the library's steward. A former librarian, she applied for the grant on behalf of SIS, driven by her deep commitment to literacy. The Foundation thanks Little Free Library for supporting this meaningful initiative and the UMT Facilities team for installing the library outside the building. Learn more at www.littlefreelibrary.org.



Photo credit: UMT Facilities Department



Giving Back to the KW Community

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe takes great pride in giving back to its citizens, the land, and the surrounding community, recognizing the importance of supporting those who dedicate their lives to public service. On Tuesday, January 14, 2025, the Tribe demonstrated this commitment by making two generous donations to the King William County Company 1 Firehouse and the King William County Sheriff's Office.



Chief of Fire & Rescue, Ronald Brown, and First Deputy, Marsden Dyson, were honored to accept these donations on behalf of their respective departments, acknowledging the Tribe's continued partnership and support. Representing the Tribe, Assistant Chief Lou Wrotchford (pictured) and Chief's Executive Administrative Assistant, Lauren Hicks, had the privilege of presenting the donations.

Photo credit: Lauren Hicks

In the Spotlight

James Doss: Carrying Tradition Forward Through Lacrosse

The Upper Mattaponi Tribe takes great pride in celebrating one of its own, James Doss, as he represents his people through the game of lacrosse. James is in his first year at Marymount University, where he plays on the men's lacrosse team. Each time he gears up, he carries forward a legacy that reaches back to the earliest days of his ancestors, honoring a sport deeply rooted in Indigenous culture.

Lacrosse, known as "the Creator's Game," has been played by Indigenous peoples for centuries. For many tribes, stickball games were not merely pastimes but held deep cultural and spiritual significance. These contests served as a way to build endurance, resolve conflicts, and bring communities together. Another traditional game, shinny, involved curved sticks and a ball and was played by both men and women, demonstrating the widespread presence of stickball traditions in Indigenous cultures.

James's dedication to lacrosse brings pride to his family and community, inspiring those around him—especially his father, TJ Tupponce, a tribal citizen who is currently working to establish a lacrosse program in King William County. Seeing his son's commitment to the game and its deep roots in Indigenous heritage has strengthened TJ's own passion for expanding opportunities for young athletes. Through his efforts, the sport will reach more players who may not have otherwise had the chance to experience it, further connecting the community to a game that has been played for generations. As James steps onto the field, he carries the strength of his ancestors, representing the resilience and enduring spirit of the Upper Mattaponi Tribe.



Photo credit: The Tupponce Family

Programs & Services

Environmental Updates

This fall has been busy! Liz Buikema attended a U.S. Geological Survey hydrology training in Santa Fe, NM, and installed a monitoring station at Farmhouse Creek. The team joined the EPA's Regional Tribal Operations Committee conference in Richmond and a GIS summit hosted by the Chickahominy Tribe.

Johnathan Oxendine (Haliwa-Saponi) and Carrie Fox (Pamunkey) are continuing work on VCU's vessel this winter, trawling for Atlantic sturgeon and finding many invasive blue catfish.

As warmer weather approaches, the team will expand water monitoring efforts, complete water vessel training, and launch air monitoring with the new Meteorological and Air Quality Station (MAQS) at the Tribal Office.

CSA Boxes Will Expand Offerings to Include Mattaponi River Catfish

The Environmental team is addressing the invasive blue catfish issue in the local Mattaponi River by catching, processing, and freezing fish fillets to include with the Agriculture Department's CSA food boxes. This new addition will roll out this Spring, so please stay tuned for more details!

For questions about the catfish, contact Conor Real, Environmental Operations Manager, at (804) 994-1937 or Conor.Real@umitribe.gov.

To sign up for the CSA Boxes, contact Katelynn Tupponce, Agriculture Department Program and Volunteer Coordinator, at (757) 936-2288 or Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov.



Photo credit: Canva

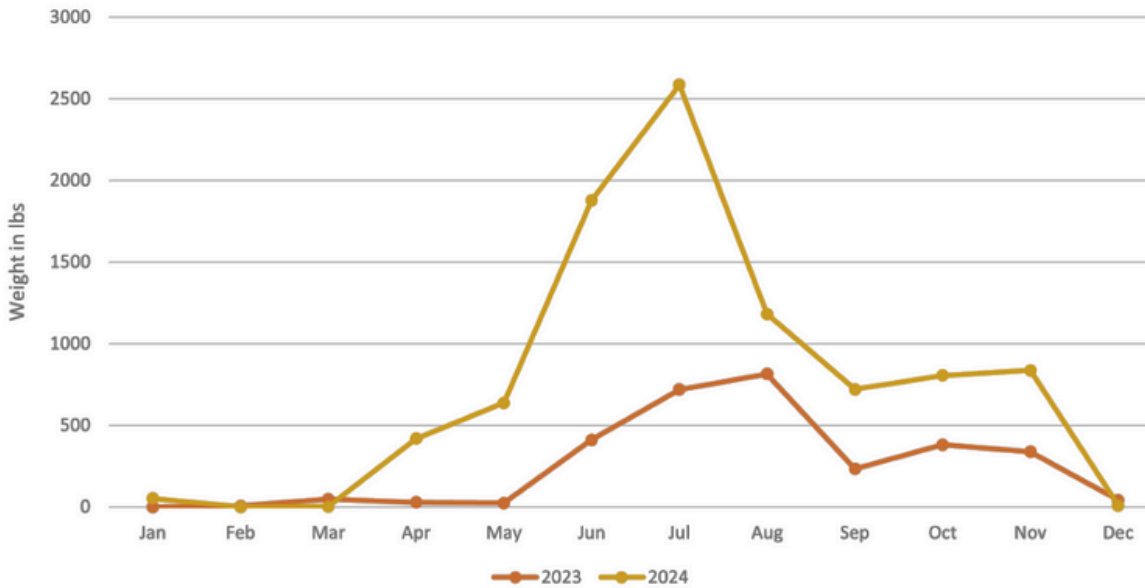


Photo credit: UMT Environmental Department



Programs & Services

UMT Tribal Garden - Harvest Totals



Tribal Garden

Yearly Bounty Breakdown



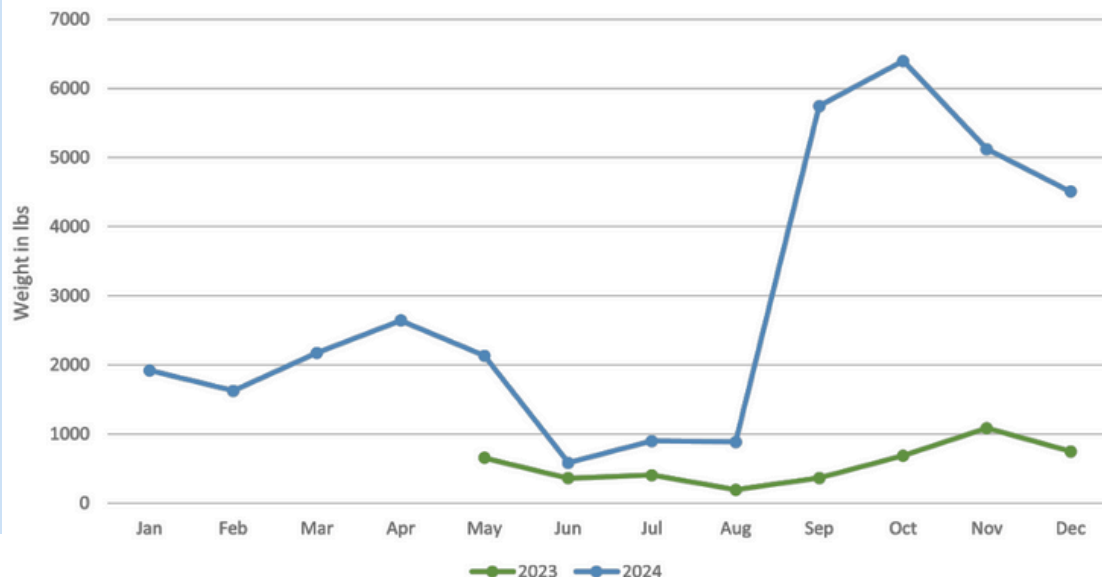
This year, the Agricultural Department proudly harvested 9,120.8 lbs of produce—a testament to the hard work and dedication of the team. This achievement reflects the importance of sustainable farming and the care given to the crops throughout the season. The team looks forward to building on this progress for the benefit of the community.

Tribal Garden

From Scraps to Soil

The Agricultural Department collected 33,916.50 lbs of compostable material this year, reflecting its commitment to sustainability and waste reduction. The department looks forward to further promoting environmental stewardship within the community.

UMT Tribal Garden - Compost Totals



Programs & Services



Help Our Tribal Garden Grow

The Agricultural Team is seeking donations of reusable bags and sturdy 5-gallon buckets! Reach out to Katelynn Tupponce to donate items and support our sustainable gardening efforts.



(757) 936-2288

Katelynn.Tupponce@umitribe.gov

Save the Date: Youth Summer Camp

Join us from **July 21-25, 2025**, at the Upper Mattaponi Tribal Grounds for a week of fun and connection! Children ages 5-17 can enjoy a range of activities that foster community and cultural learning:

- Cultural education
- Arts and crafts
- Outdoor recreation
- Field trips
- Community service
- Environmental stewardship
- Mentorship opportunities (ages 13-17)
- Breakfast, lunch, and snacks provided

This week-long camp runs Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Space is limited, so please stay tuned for upcoming registration details from PMO!

Final Turkey Shoot

Join us for the close of another Turkey Shoot season, hosted by the Youth Council and PMO, weather permitting. Enjoy food and drinks available for purchase and take part in friendly competition for all ages! Please note: stock guns only.

Saturday, March 8, 2025 @ 7:00 PM



Photo credit: Memories Videography

Photo credit: Cail Tupponce

Programs & Services

Photo credit: Lana Real



“Youth & Family Night” Returns

Join us for fun and educational evenings at Sharon Indian School from 6:00–7:30 PM. Check out the exciting programs planned:

- **April 9 & 23:** Learn about hand drums! Each participant will create and take home a small hand drum and drumstick. *Limited to 30 participants; sign-up required.* Reach out to Martin Saniga to register at Martin.Saniga@umitribe.gov or (804) 629-2428.
- **May 7:** Enjoy fishing at Adamstown Pond, complete with grilling and a relaxing evening by the water.
- **June 4:** Discover Native board games and experience the creativity of Indigenous communities from across North America.
- **June 18:** Learn and play the traditional game of shinny.
- **July 9:** Wrap up the summer with a family cookout!

Water Issues From Storms

As many citizens in the Richmond area recently experienced, water issues can result from storms of all sizes. While it is always a good idea to have an emergency water supply, it is particularly important to prepare ahead of known weather events. Follow these tips to better prepare for water disruptions:

- Stock up on 1 gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days.
- Purchase bottled water and keep it sealed until needed.
- Fill a bathtub, washing machine, or buckets with water before a storm to flush toilets if access is lost.
- For emergency drinking water, consider outdoor sources like rainwater, streams, or ponds.
- Treat outdoor water by boiling, chlorinating, or distilling before drinking.



Scan the QR code or visit the “News & Events” page on the UMT website - umitribe.org - to access our new Winter Weather Guide!



Programs & Services

Elder Care Updates

New Housekeeping Assistance Program for Elders

We are excited to introduce a new housekeeping assistance program designed to support our elders in maintaining a clean and comfortable living environment. This initiative aims to ease the burden of daily household tasks, ensuring a safe and welcoming home for those who qualify.

Eligibility for the program is based on income and is limited to a 25-mile service area from the tribal office. Applicants must provide income documentation to verify qualification and determine the appropriate level of assistance. Once approved, participants can select a cleaning schedule—weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly—that best suits their needs. Our dedicated team will provide light housekeeping services, ensuring a tidy and organized space. Be on the lookout for application materials and detailed guidelines, which will be mailed out soon!

Educational Event on Medicaid & Medicare

Do you have Medicaid or Medicare and are unsure of all its benefits? Elder Care will be holding an educational event in February. Details will be in the February Newsletter.

Ride Assistance Reminder

Elder Care currently provides ride assistance for those who are unable to drive and do not have someone living within the home that can drive. We offer rides for appointments, shopping, and UMT events. Remember: We require a 72-hour notice. Please contact Jennifer Tupponce to schedule your ride today.

Questions? Reach out!
We are here to help!

Jennifer Tupponce
Elder Care Supervisor
(804) 856-1961
Jennifer.Tupponce@umitribe.gov

Ann Taylor
Elder Care Specialist
(757) 936-1904
Ann.Taylor@umitribe.gov



Photo credit: Ivey Tupponce

Programs & Services

Community Services Corner

Our Department

Community Services is one of UMT's newer departments, made up of the Housing and Elder Care Departments. Please reach out to our team with any questions or concerns:

- Kathryn Rowell, Director of Community Services, (757) 707-5099, Kathryn.Rowell@umitribe.gov
- Tavia King, Housing Program & Grant Manager, (804) 246-0145, Octavia.King@umitribe.gov
- Karlia Washington, Housing Case Manager, (804) 393-1180, Karlia.Washington@umitribe.gov
- Jennifer Tupponce, Elder Care Supervisor, (804) 856-1961, Jennifer.Tupponce@umitribe.gov
- Ann Taylor, Elder Care Specialist, (757) 936-1904, Ann.Taylor@umitribe.gov
- Kayla Knott, Elder Care Housekeeper, Kayla.Knott@umitribe.gov



Photo credit: Canva

New Rental Properties

The Housing Department now has two rental properties available for citizens—both are three-bedroom, two-bath homes in Aylett, VA. Purchased with HUD grant funds, these homes must serve lower-income citizens. The application will be released within the next week or two, and details will be emailed and mailed to citizens. For more information, contact Tavia King at (804) 246-0145 or Octavia.King@umitribe.gov.

From the Enrollment Office

- **Recently moved?** Please update your address, phone number, and email with the Enrollment Office to receive important tribal information and news.
- **New baby?** Remember to submit an enrollment application packet to ensure their tribal enrollment.
- **Is your birth certificate on file?** You can contact the Enrollment Office to verify that your required enrollment documents are on file.

If you have any questions or need information regarding tribal enrollment, please email Wilma Hicks at Wilma.Hicks@umitribe.gov.



Photo credit: Canva

Resources

Elected Officials Directory

- Chief W. Frank Adams
- Assistant Chief Lou Wratchford
- Speaker of the Council Rob Adams
- Councilperson Ken Adams
- Councilperson Owen Adams
- Councilperson Desiree Dyer
- Councilperson Eithna "Beth" Gondos (At-Large)
- Councilperson Wilma Hicks
- Councilperson Harry "Sonny" Knighton

- Frank.Adams@umitribe.gov
- Lou.Wratchford@umitribe.gov
- Rob.Adams@umitribe.gov
- Ken.Adams@umitribe.gov
- Owen.Adams@umitribe.gov
- Desiree.Dyer@umitribe.gov
- Beth.Gondos@umitribe.gov
- Wilma.Hicks@umitribe.gov
- Sonny.Knighton@umitribe.gov

Visit Us

UMT Tribal Office
 13476 King William Rd,
 King William, VA 23086
 (804) 769-0041

Open
 Monday - Friday
 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM



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THE UPPER MATTAPONI TRIBE

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KING WILLIAM, VA 23086



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