

Office of Management and Budget officials visit YPG

By Mark Schauer

A group of officials that included Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Deputy Associate Director Mark Sandy and John Whitley, Assistant Director of the Army for Financial Management, visited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) in late June, seeing a variety of YPG assets that support six of the Army Futures Command's Cross Functional Teams building the Army's future force.

Their visit was particularly focused on observing a test fire that was part of the Extended Range Cannon Artillery (ERCA) program, which support's the Army's top modernization priority: long-range precision artillery fires.



Office of Management and Budget Deputy Associate Director Mark Sandy (left) discusses YPG's mission with Col. Ross Poppenberger, commander, during a recent visit. "It's a wonderful opportunity to better understand both the mission here and the people conducting the mission," said Sandy. "To the extent this is a priority for the Army, we want to better understand that priority." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

"It's a wonderful opportunity to better understand both the mission here and the people conducting the mission," said Sandy. "To the extent this is a priority for the Army, we want to better understand that priority."

The Army aspires to field systems capable of accurately firing at targets 100 kilometers away in the next four years, a dramatic increase over the 30 kilometers a currently-fielded 155mm howitzer shell is capable of when fired at top zone with rocket assistance. YPG testing has already achieved significantly increased distances in test fires conducted at

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From customer to commander: CRTC's Todd looks to future

By Mark Schauer

It is vital that all military equipment work wherever in the world American Soldiers need it, and even a cursory examination of our nation's history shows that extreme cold is a weather condition American troops have had to contend with more

than once.

From Korea to Afghanistan, the lives of American Soldiers depend on functioning equipment in inhospitably frigid environments, and nowhere else in the world can provide extreme cold weather testing like the U.S. Army's Cold Regions

Test Center (CRTC), in Delta Junction, Alaska.

CRTC commander Lt. Col. Loren Todd was aware of the importance of this mission and the Army's only place to conduct it long before he assumed command in May 2018.

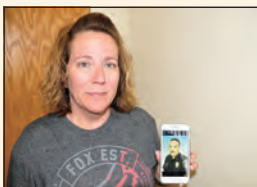
"I had my eye on CRTC for a

while, and when I saw it amongst the commands that were available I had to jump at the chance to get there," he said.

Earlier in his career, Todd was responsible for managing a weapon

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FUTURE

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system program that he and his team tested in CRTC's brutal cold.

"I was a CRTC customer back in 2013. We found some things during testing at CRTC that were pretty useful to us, and because of that data, we were able to fix the system afterward."

His first encounter with the test center dated back two years earlier.

"I was in the Operational Test Command as my first Army acquisition job and did a site survey for the Lightweight Counter Mortar Radar at CRTC, so I spent a few days up there in 2011."

In command for more than a year, Todd contends that cold weather testing is even more vital than ever, and in his time here has taken this message to high level visitors that include now-acting Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper, who came to CRTC last August.

"It is a great mission and something the Army and DOD needs," Todd said of CRTC. "The National Defense Strategy says we need to be concerned about four areas in the world when it comes to near-



U.S. Army's Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) commander Lt. Col. Loren Todd and Jeff Lipscomb, technical director, stand side-by-side with the Acting United States Secretary of Defense, Dr. Mark T. Esper during his visit to CRTC.

peer competition, and three of those areas get extremely cold in the winter time. It's been a long time since the military fought in a cold place against a major power competitor, and CRTC's mission is a key component in preparing for that threat."

Recent testing has reflected this: the Marine Corps' Amphibious Combat Vehicle underwent intense testing last winter. Todd is keenly aware of grim historical precedents such as that experienced by Soldiers and Marines during the Korean War

at the Chosin Reservoir in November 1950. Badly outnumbered and entirely surrounded, American Forces fought Chinese invaders through brutal cold for 17 days. The troops' equipment and uniforms were wholly inadequate for the frigid conditions—weapons malfunction and frostbite were rampant throughout the ordeal.

"So not only is it the roughest fight you've ever been in, it's the roughest fight you've ever been in when you're battling an injury you've never had before. What could be worse than facing down a well-equipped, well-trained, and determined adversary and your rifle doesn't work? CRTC exists to ensure that we don't have to learn those lessons again."

Tasked with testing military equipment in one of the world's coldest places, CRTC's employees spend countless winter hours outside in the natural environment, in temperatures where nostrils freeze and breathing hurts. Todd lauds the technical expertise and grit of the CRTC workforce.

"The competence of the workforce is unparalleled. A lot of these folks have been here a long time and are experts in their field of testing and in operating in an extremely rugged, cold environment. CRTC is the only

place the Army can go to find both of those skill sets in the same people."

Among other capabilities, CRTC boasts a three and a quarter mile long automotive test track. Both military and commercial customers have access to a desirable facility that boasts a 1,000 foot by 800 foot lateral acceleration pad, a 200 foot by 1,200 foot skid pad, and grades ranging in steepness from 20% to 60%. Last winter was the track's busiest season ever, hosting testing from the first freeze to the final thaw. Though military customers take priority, private industry customers utilized the facility from wire to wire.

"It's not our primary mission, but if we have availability it's mutually beneficial to work those customers in."

He has less than a year in command left, but as the test center gears up for another winter test season Todd intends to continue putting forth the message about CRTC's necessity.

"I hope there is renewed emphasis on ensuring that all of the combat systems we need to defend against near-peer adversaries get a good shakeout at CRTC. It matters not only for combat, but for training. Being prepared for cold weather is a readiness issue as much as it is a modernization issue."



Lt. Col. Loren Todd assumed command CRTC in May 2018. "I had my eye on CRTC for a while, and when I saw it amongst the commands that were available I had to jump at the chance to get there," he said. (Photos by Sebastian Saarloos)

THE OUTPOST

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Men's Health—take charge of your health before it's too late

By Ana Henderson

YPG recently marked Men's Health week with a series of free seminars. Employees may think the seminars are just another mandatory training—however there is a lot more purpose and intent behind them.

Wellness Coordinator Michele Dominguez explains, "YPG's Health and Wellness program is developed to enhance mission readiness, unit performance, and the health and fitness of Military Service members, and DA civilian employees by creating a culture within YPG that values health, fitness, and an injury-reduced environment."

It's that culture of valuing one's health that YPG employee, Kimberly Celaya wants people to embrace. Celaya shares some advice that comes from a place of much sadness. Her children (eight and 10 years old at the time) lost their father, Hilbert Celaya, 10 days after he was diagnosed with stage four bladder cancer.

"It was just a world wind from the ER to the time he passed in 10 days" says Celaya.

Cancer.net explains, "The general 5-year survival rate for people with bladder cancer is 77%. The overall 10-year survival rate is 70% and the overall 15-year survival rate is 65%. However, survival rates depend on many factors, including the type and stage of bladder cancer that is diagnosed."

The key phrase here is the stage of when the illness is diagnosed.

For Celaya, she knows her children's father failed to go to the doctor when he felt the symptoms. "Men are the worst at neglecting their own health. Whether it's because of their strength,

their fear, or just putting it off because they have too many things to do."

Her husband was a very strong man. He served in the Air Force, served as a police officer. When the pain of his undiagnosed illness started to affect this work he was basically forced to see a doctor— but that time it was too late.

"The short amount of time we had to really comprehend and deal with his sickness was shocking."

Celaya recommends, getting regular check-ups, paying attention

"The short amount of time we had to really comprehend and deal with his sickness was shocking."



Kimberly Celaya's two children lost their father 10 days after he was diagnosed with bladder cancer. Now, she's hoping to motivate others to be proactive about their health. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

to simple things that feel "different," and following through— don't procrastinate.

These steps might seem like a hassle or unimportant if you are feeling healthy but they can catch any changes that might turn into something bigger down the road. If you do not want to take these steps for yourself Celaya recommends, do

it for those who love you.

It has been years since his passing, yet Celaya still feels a lot of paining knowing her husband did not take those steps. "It was about him not thinking of how it would affect us, if he neglects himself," adding, "My son just graduated high-school and he would have really liked to have this Dad there."

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YPG Fire Department, showered CW4 Carl D'Alessandro Jr. and the C-27 he flew on his last flight as a salute his hard work and dedication of 27 years of active duty military service. His wife Blair and daughter Isabella were by his side however, his son Alan is following his father's footsteps and is currently at boot camp in Georgia. (Photo by Casey Garcia)

Chaplain's Corner

Liberty is not a destination, it is a journey

By Chaplain Ronald Beltz

On July 3, in 1776, George Washington wrote a letter to his wife. In part, these were his words: "In a few days, you will see a Declaration setting forth the causes which have impelled us to this mighty revolution and the reasons which will justify it in the sight of God. I am fully aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost to maintain this Declaration and support and defend these states; yes, through all the gloom, I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory." The Father of our country was no naive dreamer or empty-headed revolutionist. He knew the cost of freedom in toil, blood and treasure.

One hundred years after that the issue was still in doubt, and another President spoke the words at

Gettysburg that any schoolchild ought to be able to quote. The question still remained, "Whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, could long endure." Abraham Lincoln knew the cost of liberty, also. He never spoke of liberty without coupling that word with responsibility, without tying it inseparably to an unfinished task.

These leaders knew what every great statesman of our nation has known and what every patriot and citizen knows—that liberty is NOT a destination, it is a journey. We are still on that journey. The cost of human freedom is still high. It still takes toil and blood and treasure. It still takes responsibility and dedication. May God continue to bless the United States of America.



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City News Radio Interview



YPG Commander Col. Ross Poppenberger and Command Sgt. Maj. Jamathon Nelson visited with City News Thursday hosts Dave Nash and Carrie Ring on KCYK 1400 AM. Topics of discussion included YPG's test support for the Army Futures Command's Cross Functional Teams, YPG's high-level visibility across the Army, and the YPG 2020 open house scheduled for February 15, 2020. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

VISIT

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both the proving ground and the nearby Barry M. Goldwater Range.

“The Army is executing its most significant reform in acquisition since the Vietnam War,” said Travis Stalcup, a program examiner with OMB. “It’s good for us to know when we are looking at information about buying several billion dollars worth of equipment that when the Soldiers take it into combat it is what they need and informed by their experiences as

Soldiers. It’s also cost effective—if it hasn’t been tested properly and it breaks, or something is not right, it’s much more expensive to fix than if it has been tested first.”

YPG supports six of the Army Futures Command’s Cross Functional Teams building the Army’s future force, which seeks to retain overmatch with near-peer adversaries in a high intensity conflict while maintaining the competency in waging irregular warfare that has been achieved since the 9/11 attacks.

After a comprehensive briefing from YPG commander Col. Ross Poppenberger, the visitors got up

close and personal with a variety of radars, high-speed cameras, artillery bore-mapping apparatus, and other specialized equipment used to support the YPG test mission. They visited an active gun position and witnessed an artillery test in progress and also heard about YPG’s test efforts with other current and future platforms, including the Armored Multi-Purpose

Vehicle and the Future Vertical Lift unmanned aircraft. At the conclusion of their visit, they saw how things operate in one of YPG’s mission control rooms.

For their part, the YPG personnel who supported the tour felt it was

valuable.

“These are folks who make high level decisions,” said Ross Gwynn, Aviation Systems and Electronic Test Division chief. “For them to see at a working level how integrated we are with Army Futures Command and the future of how we test equipment is pretty important.”

“I think they leave here with a better understanding of what a test center does,” added Larry Bracamonte, YPG technical director. “One individual commented that he didn’t know the magnitude of what we did here. That, to me, tells me that the visit was impressive and that they

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to better understand both the mission here and the people conducting the mission,” said Sandy.



A group of officials that included Office of Management and Budget Deputy Associate Director Mark Sandy and John Whitley, Assistant Director of the Army for Financial Management, visited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) in late June, seeing a variety of YPG assets that support six of the Army Futures Command’s Cross Functional Teams building the Army’s future force.

felt wowed by what they saw.”

For their part, the visitors gave particular praise to the dozens of members of the YPG workforce that they interacted with during the day.

“I think both the technology and, more importantly, the individual

commitment was just astounding,” said Sandy. “It’s a team of really dedicated professionals who in many cases have been here for well over a decade. Their commitment to the mission really came through loud and clear.”



YPG test customers have long received impressive footage of test objects in flight, which is produced thanks to the skill of operators of the proving ground’s fleet of Kineto Tracking Mounts. With most of the KTMs serving faithfully for the better part of three decades, the Army has long sought upgrades or replacements for them. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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Conditioning Chambers section transports close to six-million pounds of explosives yearly

By Ana Henderson

If you are on a munitions test site, you know once the white truck with the 'explosives' sign arrives it is go time.

That truck is manned by one of the nearly 40 members of the conditioning chambers shop. These are the men who are responsible for getting the ammunition to each and every test site on YPG.

"We are so spread out on the range, we have some testing as far north as almost Quartzsite and then all the way on the east end of the range, as well as the far west of the range" said Billy Hamner, conditioning chambers supervisor.

Each piece of ammunition is handled at least twice, even three or four times by the conditioning chambers crew, explained Victor De La Rosa, section chief, "The initial time, we pick it up from the ammunition plant and transport it to the gun position where it's requested. From there it's loaded from the stake bed to the

conditioning box to condition at the required temperatures."

After the ammunition is conditioned for the required amount of time, usually 24 to 48 hours, the crew picks it up and delivers the ammunition to the gun.

Their duty does not end there, De La Rosa added. "Once a test is complete, if there is ammunition remaining its touched again there to be loaded back in the truck in its original packing and taken back to the ammunition plant."

Such is the process for delivering ammunition to each test site.

Last fiscal year, this section along with the help of Ammunition Storage transported close to six-million pounds of explosives and nearly 675,000 items of ammunition.

In a typical week the crew supports 10-15 programs per day. De La Rosa gives an example of how a work week might look:

"Monday can be a heavy day of loading 200 rounds, as the week progresses we can be transporting

and handling up to 1,000 rounds, if not more to support the following week's tests. That's not including small arm rounds."

The weight of those round differs significantly as well. "It goes anywhere from small arms which can be a 50 caliber and its box weighing 75 pounds to a 155-mm round weighing roughly 110 pounds."

It would not be an understatement to say the job is very physically demanding. "It is a very physical job and with this heat on a daily basis, it can put a good wear on you," said De La Rosa.

This section works in shifts to cover night-time testing as well.



In addition to transporting ammunition, conditioning chamber personnel constantly monitor the chamber's carbon dioxide (CO2) levels used to maintain the cold temperatures.

Night shift also relocates the mobile conditioning chambers as well as pumping carbon dioxide (CO2).

Aside from transportation aspect of the position, the condition chambers section is responsible



Once the test officer call for the ammunition, conditioning chambers personnel, like Joe Moreno III, get the ammunition from the secured condition chamber and transport it to the gun position.



This is the inside of one of the freezing conditioning chamber units. Temperatures range from -60 to +160 degrees Fahrenheit.



Francisco Guerrero retrieves the ammunition from the conditioning chambers, while Neto Lizarraga happily watches.

for maintaining the temperature-controlled chambers.

Tests call for rounds to be conditioned at various temperatures, from extremely hot to extremely cold: that's where these conditioning chambers come into play.

YPG owns about 100 mobile and stationary chambers combined.

These chambers are at each test site throughout YPG.

Their responsibilities include constantly monitoring the chamber's CO2 levels used to keep them at the

lower temperature. Temperatures range from -60 to +160 degrees Fahrenheit.

The conditioning chambers team is the link between the ammunition plant and the testing sites. Their work is done to meet the needs of the test officers to make sure the ammunitions is where it needs to be when it needs to be there.

Like most processes at YPG, it's a team made up of different sections working together to get the mission done.



Tommy Medina (far back) and Nate Henderson (front right) move an ammunition container into the bed of the transportation vehicle to transport it to the gun position. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Lifeguard twins at Kahuna Lagoon share the fun of being a pair

By Ana Henderson

If you have been to the Kahuna Lagoon on Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) main post this summer you might have thought your eyes were playing tricks on you when meeting the new lifeguards and swimming instructors.

"There is a lot of confusion. Every time someone sees us together they get really confused... it's really fun," said Isabellah Moyaral Ortega.

Isabellah and Jwliannah Moyaral Ortega are identical twins! That's right, twin lifeguards

working at the same pool, at the same time. This is their first summer working at YPG and they are having fun time seeing how people react to them.

"The little kids get confused and don't know who is whose teacher, but that's part of the fun," said Isabellah.

The twins do eventually give the kids some tips on how to tell them apart, Jwliannah explained. "I usually don't tell anybody at first because I want them to try to figure it out and it's just fun to see people struggle, most of time after a while I just tell them the little differences like birthmarks we have around our faces."

In May, the 18 year old

twins graduated from Yuma High School, Isabellah said. "Graduation was great, it was really exciting and really emotional. I got to accomplish something really great, which was being valedictorian, with my sister salutatorian and that was a special thing for me."

For the record, the ladies had separate interviews, one day apart, for the position at YPG.

Recreation Supervisor, Steve Ward knew the ladies were sisters but did not realize they were twins until the second sister interviewed.

"When I got interviewed I felt like he thought that I was the same person as my sister, but he knew I wasn't. At the end of the interview he said that my answers were really similar to my sister's answers, which was kind of crazy," Isabellah said.

After this summer the sisters will head to Tucson together to tackle college at the University of Arizona.

"I am studying civil engineering" says Jwliannah and "I am studying biomedical engineering" says Isabellah.

They will continue to live together and drive their shared car with a license plate that reads, "Twins car."



Isabellah and Jwliannah Moyaral Ortega are identical twins. They currently work at the Kahuna Pool as lifeguards and swim instructors. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Vacation Bible School takes over the YPG Chapel

By Ana Henderson

Vacation Bible School also known as VBS is a staple in the lives of many school aged kids around town. Chapel staff at Yuma Proving Ground made sure the children on base had the same opportunity, "We try to be just as big and just as great as the churches in town do, even though we are smaller here at YPG," said Megan Yingst-Coats, Religious Education Coordinator for the YPG Chapel.

Though she's attended many, this summer was Yingst-Coats first time planning VBS. She had a lot of help from chapel staff and community volunteers. "It takes an Army to run VBS and I am just fortunate that we had that many people step up and help."

This summer about 20 volunteers stepped up and 45 kids attended.

Volunteers started their duties a



LEFT: "It's really exciting to bring kids that aren't usually at the chapel to know the lord and just to have fun" says Yingst-Coats. CENTER: It was a labor of love transforming the chapel into a jungle for the theme. The paper leaves which lined the entire hallway from the sanctuary to the backrooms where the children learned, were hand-cut and hung by staff. RIGHT: A typical day consisted of dinner, song and dance in sanctuary, a skit performed by the grownups related to the lesson for the day. Then the kids would disperse into one of the five classes. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



week early, by cleaning the chapel and decorating. This year's theme was 'roar.' The theme comes from a publishing company that many churches in Yuma work with.

It was a labor of love transforming the chapel into a jungle for the theme. The paper leaves which lined

the entire hallway from the sanctuary to the backrooms where the children learned, were hand-cut and hung by staff.

There were pallets to simulate walking on a wood bridge, and inflatable alligators throughout the chapel as well as palm trees, volcanos and just about everything else you imagine in a jungle. All made with the hands of volunteers.

The décor set the stage for VBS, Yingst-Coats said. "It's really exciting to bring kids that aren't usually at the chapel to know the lord and just to have fun."

Adding, "Usually the kids are really shy on the first day, not here.

The kids were on stage singing and dancing. They didn't even know the moves but they were just going with it....this in itself, the first five minutes was worth all the planning."

A typical day consisted of dinner, song and dance in sanctuary, a skit performed by the grownups related to the lesson for the day. Then the kids would disperse into one of the five classes, then rotate, "Each one they are doing a different activity where they learn something different."

Devlin Randall is attending this year. "It's fun here, and I like it. I have been doing all sorts of cool things and learning about God."



"Usually the kids are really shy on the first day, not here. The kids were on stage singing and dancing. They didn't even know the moves but they were just going with it....this in itself, the first five minutes was worth all the planning" said

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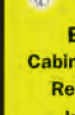
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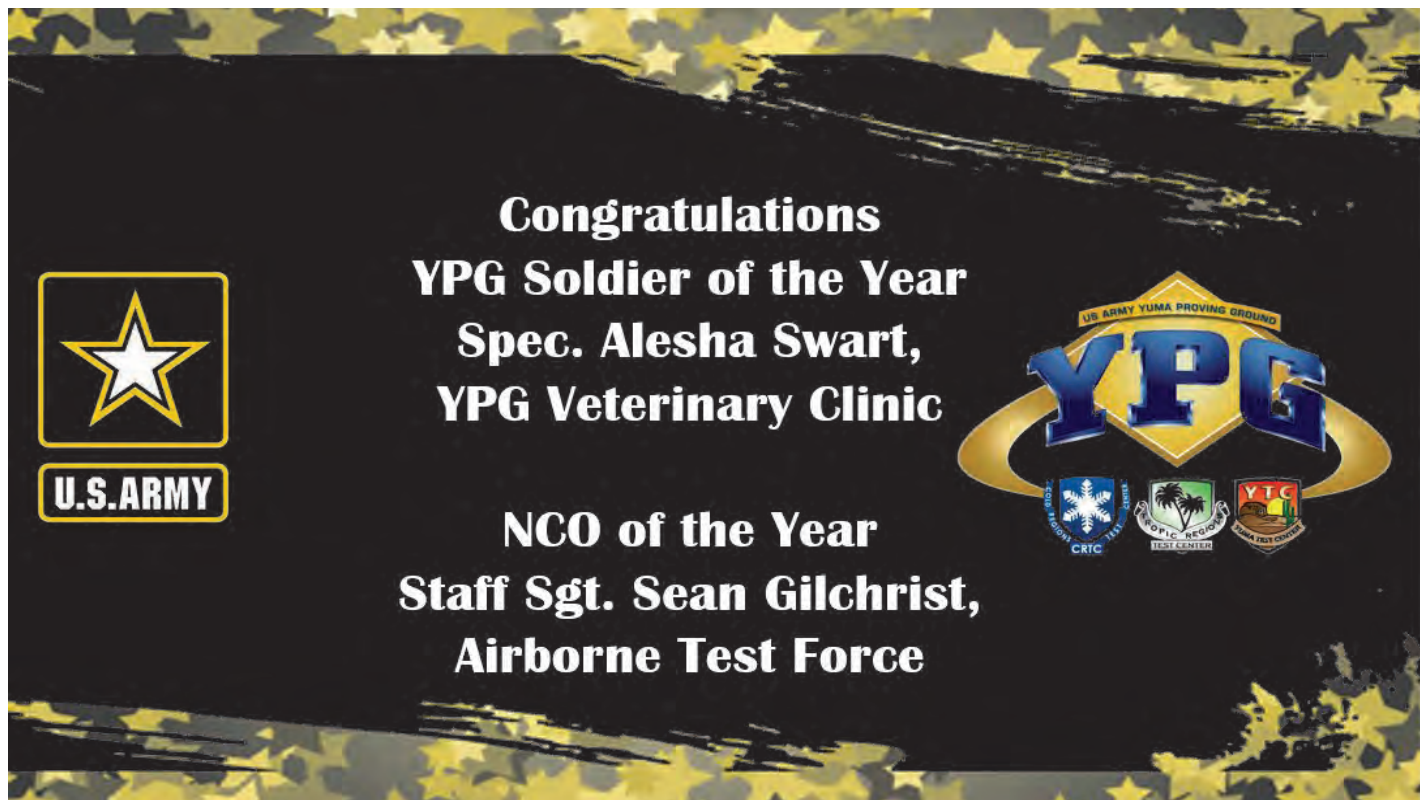
Unauthorized child care is defined as anyone living in government owned, leased, or privatized housing providing child care for more than 10 child care hours per week on a regular basis. Care provided in the home of the parents is not considered unauthorized child care, unless care is being provided to children other than the ones living in the home. A child care hour is defined as one (1) child for 1 hour of care. For example, the 10 hours could include one (1) child in care for 10 hours or two (2) children for five (5) hours, etc. The 10 hour child care limit was established to protect children from being in unregulated, and possibly unsafe child care settings on an on-going basis.

Complaints of unauthorized child care may be received from

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