

The Outpost

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365

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Yuma Proving Ground at the forefront of autonomous vehicles testing

By Ana Henderson

Self-driving and driver-aided vehicles, whether on the road, the crop fields, or battlefields, are the future.

At Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), the Automotive Instrumentation Section within the Instrumentation Division is equipped to test self-driven and driver-aided vehicles.

YPG recently acquired driverless robot systems which will be used to test Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems (ADAS) that assist drivers by detecting nearby obstacles or driver errors by responding accordingly, and Automated Driving Systems (ADS) that perform the driving.

“That driverless robot can be placed into an expendable vehicle.

SEE **TESTING** page 7



At Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), the Automotive Instrumentation Section within the Instrumentation Division is equipped to test self-driven and driver-aided vehicles. The Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle pictured, is driving at high speeds and teetering side to side as the robot controls the wheel to test for rollovers. (YPG photo)

Vietnam era pilot reunited with 'The Snake' at Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

They called it The Snake.

When Army Capt. Jim Mitschke last piloted the AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter that is today on display at YPG, it was February 1971, and he was about to depart Vietnam. All told, the Harrold, Texas native flew the craft for more than 750 flight hours, which included several daring rescues of personnel pinned down under enemy fire.

SEE **REUNITED** page 6

**YPG Airborne
Test Soldier
earns promotion**
/Page 2



**New ACS victim
advocate serving
YPG community**
/Page 5



**Familiarizing
the YPG
workforce**
/Page 8



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YPG Airborne Test Force Soldier promoted



Airborne Test Force (ATF) Soldier Justin DeVaul celebrated his promotion to Sgt. 1st Class on the afternoon of April 14. His wife Sgt. 1st Class Jerica DeVaul did the honors of replacing his insignia patch.

The Outpost

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Also in attendance were Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson, ATF Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Minnis, Master Sgt. Loreto Rivera, and fellow Soldiers. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



By Ana Henderson
Airborne Test Force (ATF) Soldier Justin DeVaul celebrated his promotion to Sgt. 1st Class on the afternoon of April 14. DeVaul was surrounded by Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Alicia Johnson, ATF Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Minnis, fellow

Soldiers and his wife Sgt. 1st Class Jerica DeVaul who did the honors of replacing his insignia patch. “I want to thank my wife; she’s been in a little over a year longer than me. We have a daughter, and this promotion is really to better her life,” remarked DeVaul. “It’s very humbling. Thank you to all the leaders and mentors that I have had so far and thanks to everybody here that have helped push me to do the right thing and good things.” DeVaul has been stationed at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground for the last year and a half. His duties at ATF include working as a Test Jumper/Inspector Tester and Air Delivery Non-Commissioned Officer.



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Car seat and heat safety reminder for caretakers

By Ana Henderson

Spring may have just sprung but in Yuma the season brings triple digit heat. Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Police Department and Youth and Child Services (CYS) are teaming up to remind caretakers of some basic safety precautions.

Buckle up

CYS and YPG PD urge parents to always bucket up themselves and children no matter how short their travel distance.

“A lot of people think ‘my house is just a block away from the CDC’ or ‘it’s just right around the corner why do I need to buckle up my kids?’ but anything can happen in that one second,” warns Assistant Child Development Director (CDC) Jessica Bailey. “Maybe you hit a speed bump wrong, or you can have to stop short because a dog, cat or coyote runs in the road. Anything can happen so please make sure that your child is buckled up safely.”

The CDC recently hosted the YPG PD at their facility for a car seat safety check. Officers educated parents on proper car seat usage and checked to ensure the car seat was installed correctly.

Don't leave kids in cars

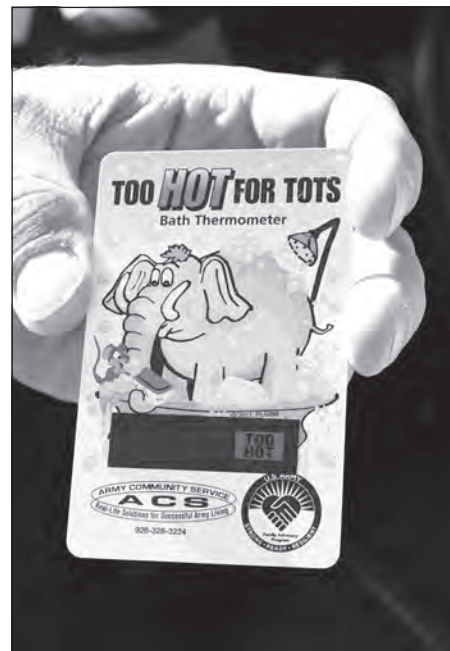
Never leave children unattended in the car even if they are just making a quick stop to drop off a sibling at school or running inside the Exchange. YPG policy prohibits leaving a child unattended in a car. Plus, it's not safe.

As a test YPG Police Officer Sgt. David Thompson put a water thermometer in a car and in less than five minutes the thermometer was indicating the car was too hot. Even if your car is left running, accidents can happen.

“Even if it's just running into school. People ask you questions, so you might get delayed going back out to your car and if your car does turn off you won't know it. There are very few cars that alert you that your car turned off. It's best to just avoid that



Guard Captain Cheryl Avery inspects a car seat during the car seat class hosted at the Child Development Center by the Yuma Proving Ground Police Department. (Loaned photo)



Yuma Proving Ground policy prohibits leaving a child unattended in a car. As a test Sgt. David Thompson put a water thermometer in a car and in less than five minutes the thermometer was indicating the car was too hot. Even if your car is left running, accidents can happen. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

situation,” explained Thompson.

Stay cool and hydrated

With the raising temperatures it's imperative to make sure no one gets over exposed to the elements.

“Kids may seem like they are not getting overheated because kids will play until they collapse so you need to be aware. Make sure you are giving them regular water breaks, make sure they are in the shade and that they are wearing sunblock.”

As a precaution, when the temps rise the CDC staff do not take the children outside to play.

CYS staff and YPG PD are available if parents need more information on car seat safety. CDC Director Shauna Nunn recently became certified as a Child Passenger Safety Technician and is authorized through Safe Kids to perform car seat installation sessions. She can be contacted by email at Shauna.m.nunn.naf@army.mil.

Kids take part in Electric Rodeo at YPG



Kids and teens were encouraged to bring out their electric scooters, ATVs, and even hover boards to take part in an Electric Rodeo safety course Saturday, March 26 at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). With assistance from the YPG Police Department kids learned the basics of traffic laws and what it means to be safe on the roadway. (Loaned photos)



Antiterrorism Awareness Corner

Preventing the escalation of violence in the workforce

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Preventing insider threats or terrorist attacks involves much more than physical security measures. Recognizing indicators of high-risk behavior (such as criminal activity or associating with violent groups) that may lead to an escalation of violence, and addressing those issues, may reduce the potential for violent acts committed against our Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) mission community.

Your location within the installation does not completely illuminate workplace violence. Normally violence in the workplace is a reaction from an employee we see every day. Acts of violence normally happen when employees feel extreme levels of frustration or intrepid something as a slight directed at

them. This could be a promotion or denial of level for something they felt was important.

Leaders and employees must always remain vigilant to drastic changes in behaviors from the people we work with. Those changes could be the beginnings of workplace violence with our ATEC community. Studies show that employees recognized the signs but did not act on them until too late.

Never confront someone directly if you think they are showing extreme levels of frustration. Inform your chain of command or use the many other notification tools available to report these issues. Never assume it can't happen and prevent or de-escalation is our best chance at having a safe environment to work in.

Contact your Yuma Proving Ground ATEC Antiterrorism Officer, Alfonzo D. Brown, for more information on insider threats. He can be contacted at, Alfonzo.d.brown@army.mil or 928-328-6498.

NOTICE: Full scale exercise at YPG

On Tuesday May 10, 2022, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground will conduct a Full Scale Exercise. The exercise will result in testing various force protection condition levels and measures and impact all access control points (ACP) at various times throughout the duty day (6 a.m. -5 p.m.). First Responders will be moving to and from exercise location(s) and may close roads, access points, and access to some buildings.

Notification of activities will appear variously on mass warning notification systems such as ALERT and Giant Voice and may be sent via email or appear on social media. All exercise related traffic will be preceded with "Exercise-Exercise-Exercise." All personnel are asked to cooperate and cautioned to use care when approaching exercise scenes and ACP. Traffic delays will occur in some areas and all personnel should plan accordingly.

Veterans learn about YPG's mission



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Public Affairs Officer Mark Schauer served as guest speaker during the recent Country Roads Veteran's Club meeting. Veterans from all branches of service listened as Schauer presented to them about YPG's mission testing equipment for the Warfighter. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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New ACS victim advocate serving YPG community

By Ana Henderson

The Army Community Services (ACS) program provides a plethora of services to the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) community. Now, the team has one more member to help provide those services.

Gisela Robles works as a victim advocate for ACS on post. She earned her bachelor's degree in social work and previously worked at a behavior health clinic in Yuma. She served as a healthcare coordinator working with patients who suffer with substance abuse and mental health.

While she grew up in Yuma County, Robles moved briefly to northern California where she graduated from Fresno Pacific University and concurrently interned as a victim advocate.

One could say Robles has a serving heart. Fresh out of high school Robles, who is bilingual, went on a missionary trip to Honduras with her church to educate and provide resources to communities there. Locally her volunteer work includes community service with her church and at Yuma Regional Medical Center. While living in Northern California she volunteered during the state's devastating wildfires and has



Gisela Robles is the new Victim Advocate at Yuma Proving Ground's Army Community Services. She hopes to make a difference in the lives of military families. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

spent hours at a living center with patients who didn't receive visitors. "I would paint their nails and spend time with them and work on project with them," recalled Robles.

She intends to bring that level of servitude to YPG.

"I want to make a difference. To help whoever I can and especially make a difference in military family's lives."

The installation's ACS staff can be reached by calling 928-328-3222 or visiting Bldg. 309 on the Howard cantonment.

Commander signs proclamations



On April 13, Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall, Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Gill, and YPG Garrison Manager Ron James were joined by students and teachers from YPG's Child Development Center as they signed proclamations recognizing Month of the Military Child, Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. Everyone stayed for cake and refreshments following the ceremony. "Children in military families go through a lot," McFall said. "The stability they know is that they are going to move frequently, and that can be difficult for a child. They need to know that there are safe places for them, that people care, and that people understand the hardships and dedication they show on behalf of our country; hardships they didn't sign up for." (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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REUNITED

FROM PAGE 1

"I look at the Cobra and get warm fuzzies," Mitschke said when reunited with the Cobra bearing the tail number 0-17028 in early April. "I remember the first time I got in the back seat and picked it up to a hover: I just felt like, 'shoot, this thing will fly!' I look back and of all of the things I've ever done, that was the most exciting."

Drafted in September 1966, he began his Army service as an infantryman, then entered Officer Candidate School. From there he

went to flight school. Four years into his Army tenure, he transferred to Charlie Battery, 4/77th Aerial Rocket Artillery of the 101st Airborne Division in February 1970, with the mission of supporting ground forces under fire from the North Vietnamese Army (NVA).

"We weren't launched unless we were going out to shoot for somebody in a firefight. We knew we were going to get shot at, and we were very seldom disappointed. I was convinced from my first mission that I would die in Vietnam."

Mitschke flew the same Cobra for virtually all of his missions during his time with Charlie Battery.



When Army Capt. Jim Mitschke last piloted the AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter that is today on display at YPG, it was February 1971, and he was about to depart Vietnam. (Loaned photo)



Retired Army Capt. Jim Mitschke flew the Cobra for more than 750 flight hours, which included several daring rescues of personnel pinned down under enemy fire. "I look at the Cobra and get warm fuzzies," said Mitschke said when reunited with the aircraft at YPG in early April. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

"The most experienced pilots in each platoon would each be assigned a particular aircraft that he would fly if that aircraft was up and on status. That allowed the pilot to become very familiar with his aircraft and allow him to monitor its performance each flight and take any necessary steps to alert maintenance of any potential problems with any of the systems."

The Cobra seated a pilot and co-pilot and presented a small profile to ground-based antiaircraft batteries, let alone small arms fire.

"Most battle damage was limited to holes in the main rotor blade and tail boom. Every so often some NVA gunner would score a more accurate hit in your canopy and that very loud explosive noise shattering the Plexiglas, sometimes hitting the instrument panel creating an electrical fire with smoke and debris flying around the cockpit, certainly got your attention."

He credits the capabilities of the Cobra with helping him survive the war.

"We had a distinct advantage with the Cobra. Each aircraft carried 76 2.75-inch rockets in four pods. In the turret we had a six barrel 7.62 minigun and a 40 mm grenade launcher. We carried 300 rounds of 40mm and about 4,000 rounds of minigun."

Mitschke is particularly proud of three tense rescues of personnel on the ground. He has heard stories of individual two-seat Cobras being involved in one or two rescues, but believes his aircraft was the only one involved in three.

"For the most part, we always flew in a section of two aircraft, launched to shoot for friendly troops who were in close and heavy contact with the enemy. If there were problems with one of the aircraft going down, it was left to the other aircraft to make the rescue attempt of the pilots. Most other Cobra aircraft were assigned to units which had other aircraft within the unit more suitable for rescue operations."

After six years in uniform, Mitschke didn't re-enlist. Back in the civilian world, he found success in the petroleum industry in his native Texas, married, and had two children. Decades later the noted Vietnam War chronicler Joseph Galloway interviewed him about his time in country. Some of the men he served with who stayed in the Army went on to become general officers, and he remains close to those he served with.

"We have all remained friends. We have that sort of bond that people establish in combat that a lot of people could never, ever envision."

We have that vehicle drive out in the path of the autonomous vehicle and determine whether that vehicle is going to recognize the obstacle and it can tell us if that vehicle is going to make an emergency stop or avoid that vehicle and continue the path,” explained Robert Fillinger, performance team lead for YPG’s Combat Automotive Systems.

“The test gets conducted without a human inside the vehicle in case there is an interaction between the vehicles,” added Sean Haney, Automotive Instrumentation section chief.

While this technology is considered a robot, it doesn’t come with an expressionless face —or a body like R2D2 or any of the Star Wars characters. It’s made up of various pieces that attach to the steering wheel, accelerator, and brake pedals.

The purpose of the robot is to provide repeatable, precise movements based on time and position, explains Haney.

“The precise timing between the driverless robot systems can allow for any collision scenario combination to be played out.”

Those obstacles include a soft pedestrian and bicyclist targets that attach to a cable driven platform that can be moved along side or into the path of the vehicle with the same precise timing to test pedestrian avoidance.



Automotive Instrumentation has used another robot for several years now. It requires a human to be inside the vehicle under test, but the robot takes over when commanded and it’s for more extreme maneuvers to test Electronic Stability Control. (Photo by Ana Henderson)



YPG recently acquired driverless robot systems which will be used to test Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems that assist drivers by detecting nearby obstacles or driver errors by responding accordingly, and Automated Driving Systems that perform the driving. The robot is made up of various pieces that attach to the steering wheel, accelerator, and brake pedals. (YPG photo)

Fillinger explained, “We are going to utilize this system for Army modernization in support of any Cross Functional Team efforts or anything under the Next Generation Combat Vehicle umbrella.”

The driverless robots add to the arsenal of tools used by Automotive Instrumentation. The robots used for several years now require humans to be inside the vehicle under test and is for more extreme maneuvers to test Electronic Stability Control (ESC). YPG has a video showing testing where a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle is driving at high speeds and teetering dramatically side to side as the robot controls the wheel to test for rollovers.

Haney describes the robot as, “An aggressive performance type, checking the vehicles stability, at the limits of human inputs. The robot is needed to perform and repeat the required steering and braking maneuvers.”

“We keep a human in the vehicles, but the robot takes over when you tell it,” explained Francisco Chavira, Automotive Instrumentation supervisor.

Robots equal repeatability

There are multiple advantages to using robots in developmental testing. One of those is safety, another is consistency.

“Repeatability gives you validity,” points out Chavira, “When a customer brings us this vehicle; we will measure, record, and monitor all required instrumentation by precisely placing sensors in locations without affecting the integrity of the test item and without influencing the data produced with the sensor installation. The data captured precisely tells them exactly how their vehicle reacts and performs to all these changes.”

After the customer receives collected data using scientific and plotting techniques they can then go back and scientifically study the data collected by the robot and Data Acquisition Systems, then make changes based on the data/modeling.

“After receiving vehicle back from customer, we will use the robot and Data Acquisition System, impute our

existing parameters used previously to duplicate every movement, motion, frequency, temperature, flow, strain, voltage or pressure including all robot parameters to test this again. We can give them the same sensor output, same data acquisition and the same robot motions that is going to duplicate previous efforts/requirements give them repeatable data sets,” added Chavira.

That’s something a human cannot replicate.

“Procedure is everything: If you don’t follow procedure, you won’t get consistence results,” added Fillinger.

Staying up with technology

Whether its sensors or self-driving robots, YPG’s test teams strive to keep up with the technology needed to test the weapons of the future.

The Engineering Support Branch (ESB) within the Instrumentation Division provides the capability, oversight and assists in the acquisition of instrumentation needed for testing.

Quality Assurance Evaluator for Automotive Instrumentation Gavin Mackenzie explained, “We are driving for modernization of test items. We ensure they can accomplish their mission with their current set of tools while looking forward to the future of testing demands. ESB accomplishes the research and coordination necessary for supporting new Army capabilities in lockstep with Automotive Instrumentation.”

Automotive Instrumentation employees are undergoing training on all aspects of the driverless robots and the pedestrian targets to be ready when it’s testing time.

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Familiarizing the YPG workforce

By Brandon Mejia

Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) mission to test and evaluate all aspects of America's wartime arsenal wouldn't be possible without the labor of more than 2,000 personnel, and it is always adding new members.

In doing so, getting them acclimated to the workforce is crucial and that's why the newest bunch of YPG employees spent a day getting to see how vast YPG really is.

"Most people think YPG is just: you go out there and you shoot guns, but really seeing what everybody's role does, there is a lot that goes into it," said Teresa Elizalde who has been working as an administrative assistant for the YPG command staff for the past three months.

After hearing from YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall, the more than dozen new hires got to see how those working at the Laguna Airfield, Ammo Plant, gun positions, and several other sites share a similar mission.



More than a dozen of Yuma Proving Ground's newest employees toured facilities on base highlighting the vast workforce. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



The new members of the YPG family visited a gun position that showed how crews conduct mortar tests on base.

"Being here now and being able to go to the gun positions, I have a very big understanding of YPG," said Estefania Meza, a testing analyst who is responsible for the reporting and analysis of test data.

She joined the team a couple of weeks ago and was born in San Luis, Ariz. She remembers touring YPG in high school and would go on to receive her Bachelor's and Master's in biomedical engineering from Arizona State University.

"I got the opportunity to come back home, be with family and stick with an area of engineering," Meza shared. "Just being able to communicate with customers, all the way to shooting the round, and generating the conclusions for the

test, I think is just really cool."

When asked what stood out the most from the tour of YPG, Elizalde said the number of people it takes to support the mission. "I think you really get to see how everything works together."

IMCOM Director visits YPG Garrison



Installation Management Command Readiness Director Brenda Lee McCullough visited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) April 12 as part of her annual installation review process. McCullough met with YPG senior leaders and visited operations within the installation. Those areas included the housing division, Child Development Services, Child and Youth Services, and several other areas of the installation. (Photos by Brandon Mejia)



While at the proving ground she also awarded (left to right) Benjamin Rix, Michael Morris, and Sgt. Justin Neubert, with service coins for their hard work and determination during Project Convergence 21.

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Chaplain's Corner

Life scripts

Chaplain's Corner
Chaplain Maj.
Jeffrey Crispin



Hello, Yuma Proving Ground family. If they made a movie of your life, what kind of movie would it be?

Some of you know that I spent some time living in southern California or that I was in Los Angeles last week. Down the street from my friend's house was the home of someone starring in a show currently on TV and when I lived in SoCal, there were always discussions about scripts and movie options.

That got me thinking about our lives. If your life was a movie, would yours be a drama or a comedy? Likely there would be a bit of several genres, but would there be any recurring themes? Any production will have a script, with certain characters and lines that are supposed to be said in a set pattern, so the actors know how to engage with one another. Some people do a great job going off-script and sometimes the results are hilarious. But sometimes we get off-script, whether by our choices or by someone else's and it is anything but funny.

But what if I were to tell you that in life, we can edit our scripts. Who you are, where you are from, how you were raised, hurts in your past, etc. are all factors that influence how each one of us view ourselves and what we think. Maybe there was a pattern of being around bullies that was in the early part of your story. As you go through life, you are likely going to be on guard for the next bully to come along, and often you

will try to cast anyone in the villain role whether they are or not, even years later.

One of the ways that you can edit your life script is to set some boundaries. Decide that certain choices are rated R and you're changing your script to stay PG. You choose that those options aren't available to you anymore. It isn't easy, but it can be done. But sometimes it is rated R people in your PG script. We can't edit out everyone in our lives like Hollywood can but by setting boundaries of when or where or how often those people can be around you, it helps you to be able to make some changes that will change the script.

Another way that you can edit the script of your life is to do some reflection about why you want your life to be a comedy, but no matter where you go or who you meet, the same dramatic episodes keep coming up. If you are the character that stuff keeps happening to, maybe you need to thing that there's a need for some personal changes. Talking to trusted and honest friends or family members, journaling, talking to a counselor or pastor or priest, reading some good books about the recurring issue and making some intentional changes based on what you learn from these examples I just mentioned are options to help change up the future pages of the script, so it doesn't look like the ones in the past.

Be encouraged. In life, we aren't stuck with the exact same script every day for the rest of our lives. You and I can grow and change, altering the storyline for the better. I want to encourage you to take an active role in how you write the script of your life from now on.

Your ad could be here!

Contact us to find out how!



Easter bunny hops to story time



The Yuma Proving Ground Library had a special guest hop into story time—the Easter Bunny. While library staff read and prepared the crafts for the event, the Easter Bunny passed out treats along with plenty of hugs and high fives to more than 40 excited children and their parents. The stories read included “The Easter Bunny that Overslept” and “Betty Bunny Loves Easter.” After story time, the children decorated paper Easter eggs and dyed hard-boiled eggs. (Loaned photos)



Talking STEM outreach at Chamber Chatter



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Workforce Development and STEM Outreach Manager Paula Rickleff visited with Kim Kahl and Russ Clark on KBLU 560 AM's “Chamber Chatter.” If you missed it, the episode can be heard by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera. Rickleff discussed YPG's free Gains in the Education of Math and Science summer program hosted by YPG for youth in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.



Educating the workforce



A business writing course was offered as part of the Employee Modernization Effort for Relevant Growth and Enrichment (EMERGE) class at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) in early April. Approximately 15 YPG employees attended the course. The course is just one of the many classes scheduled for staff as part of the EMERGE professional development modernization effort at YPG. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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