

# The Outpost

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

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## YPG vehicle testing capability gets major upgrade

By Mark Schauer

As military vehicles and equipment have evolved into complex machines with advanced powertrains and electronics, enhanced performance test procedures have been developed to put them through their paces.

An important apparatus for this is the mobile field dynamometer, a massive vehicle capable of putting up to a 60,000-pound load on the Army's heaviest vehicles, such as the M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank.

Adding additional mobile or trailer dynamometers can increase the load even more, sometimes exceeding 100,000 pounds.

"All vehicles that go through testing at YPG—tracked and wheeled—need to be stressed," said Jose Rodriguez, electronics team lead in YPG's Engineering Support Branch. "You want to stress the internals like the transmission and



The modern digital controls recently upgraded on the dynamometer improve the precise control of the vehicle's speed and loads applied to vehicles during evaluations, which means more accurate test data for customers. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

the engine to their breaking limit, and the way to do so is to put them under a load."

The parameters are dictated by a given test plan, but the most punishing of the tests can add years' worth of strain to a vehicle in a matter of hours.

"One of the most excruciating tests is a full-load coolant test," said Rodriguez. "You are measuring the temperatures of the engine coolant, transmission fluid, hydraulic fluid. Even under stress they need to stay within certain thresholds."

"It's hard to wrap your head around the amount of loads we are putting on these vehicles," said Francisco Chavira, automotive instrumentation supervisor. "We're talking about a huge military vehicle with the gas pedal pressed all the

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# Ashley Locketto: Yuma Test Center Employee of the Year

By Ana Henderson

Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is home to Yuma Test Center (YTC) which tests military equipment from combat boots to combat vehicles.

Hundreds of employees work for months — even years on tests to ensure the test item is safe for fielding to the Warfighters. Test Officer Ashley Locketto oversees a portion of artillery testing for the Munitions and Weapons Division and was recently named YTC Employee of The Year for 2021.

“I was a little beside myself,” said Locketto’s after hearing the news. “I get to work with so many good people, and I don’t do the work by myself. It’s all teamwork.”

Locketto comes from a family with a medical background and knew she was going to college but said she wanted to help save lives in another way.

“I will maybe help save people from bombs and IED’s and stuff like that. So, I was all about learning about explosives from a real young

age.”

As a test officer, Locketto says, “I’ve gotten to shoot everything from the Excalibur lot acceptance test, which is just the same as shooting your handgun and wanting to make sure the ammo works. We do the same thing on a larger scale. We want the Soldiers to know their ammunition works and it guides to the location we set it to go to and works appropriately in velocities and pressures.”



Munitions and Weapons Division Test Officer Ashley Locketto was recently named Yuma Test Center Employee of The Year for 2021. (U.S. Army photo)

Locketto is a mechanical engineer specializing in explosives engineering and is currently working on her Master’s in Systems and Program Management online at the Naval Post Graduate School based in Monterey, Calif.

Upon graduating from New Mexico Tech, Locketto landed her first job

with Lego Technologies based on her engineering background and

her previous work with kids for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) outreach.

“I got to teach engineering concepts with Legos both the Duplos for the younger kids and regular Legos for middle school and high school ages in schools.”

The position was part-time, so Locketto set her eyes on YPG and said, “It was a natural fit.”

Now, at YPG she uses her experience from Lego to help with the STEM outreach and also helps during the summer Gains in the Education of Math and Science free summer camps for middle school aged kids.

Between, school, work, and her STEM outreach, Locketto stays busy but loves every minute of it.

“I get to work with the best people, truly. It’s a family out here. It’s teamwork and I couldn’t do it without them. So, this isn’t my award it’s the YPG team award.”

## The Outpost

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## Staff delegates learn about YPG



U.S. Congressional staff delegates from senators and representatives of Arizona received an update from the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) command staff and senior leadership May 2. Many visiting from Washington D.C. and some local offices got to see the air and ground combat displays from the YPG instrumentation division. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



Those in attendance also spent the morning with Maj. Nicholas Garver and the Military Free Fall (MFF) instructors at the MFF Wind Tunnel. Those brave enough to try it were briefed and suited up for take-off. (Photo by Brandon Mejia)

## Live on air: Commander visits "Today in Yuma"



Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Patrick McFall visited with Jennifer Blackwell and Theresa Straub on Z93's "Today in Yuma" on the morning of April 12 chatting about YPG's position at the forefront of Army modernization efforts and the Yuma community's support of the proving ground's mission. (Photo by Mark Schauer)



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# Antiterrorism Awareness Corner

## Supporting the Full-Scale Exercise

**Antiterrorism Awareness Corner**  
Alfonzo Brown



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Garrison recently conducted a Full-Scale Exercise (FSE). The FSE is a test of how all the Garrison directorate systems work in the event of a real incident on the installation. There is also an expectation that all tenant units participate and support the FSE.

One of the ways we can all support the Installation Emergency Manager (EM), and Installation Antiterrorism Officer (ATO) is by

adherence to posted messages in the ALERTS system. The Installation EM and ATO use ALERTS to send messages and important updates to the work force during an exercise or real event. The Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC) ATO is responsible for ensuring YPG ATEC employees understand and follow guidance given by the Installation ATO or EM.

The ATEC ATO is also responsible for advising the Installation ATO and EM on how different decisions may affect YPG ATEC's ability to support and maintain the Force Protection Condition (FPCON) level desired or ability to respond to FPCON changes.

The FSE is also a time when the ATEC ATO may increase site specific random antiterrorism measures to support the Installation ATO in securing the safety of all Soldiers, employees, contractors, and families on the installation.

It is vital that those working within YPG ATEC understand their roles in supporting the Installation and how that support may affect ATEC antiterrorism measures implemented by your ATEC ATO.

Contact your YPG ATEC ATO for more information on

insider threats: Alfonzo D. Brown, [Alfonzo.d.brown@army.mil](mailto:Alfonzo.d.brown@army.mil) or 928-328-6498.

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Lt. Col. (P) Alicia J. Johnson  
relinquishes command of  
Yuma Test Center to  
Lt. Col. Shane D. Dering

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground  
Change of Command



May 26, 2022  
9 AM (MST)





# This is only a drill: YPG Full-Scale Exercise



TOP LEFT: On May 10 Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) first responders participated in a full-scale exercise that simulated a downed aircraft. In the scenario, YPG Firefighters had to extinguish the propane-powered flames from a mock helicopter hull, then tend to role players portraying injured survivors of the crash. BOTTOM LEFT: The Yuma Proving Ground Public Affairs Office lead a mock press conference to have senior leadership take questions and provide updates on the full-scale exercise. YPG Fire Chief Gerald Ball is shown at the podium making a statement as (left) Garrison Manager Ron James, YPG Commander Col. Patrick McFall and Police Chief Donnie Lucas look on. ABOVE & RIGHT: The role players wore moulage, or make up used to simulate wounds, and portrayed different degrees of injury. Meanwhile, the YPG Police Department secured nearby roads and YPG senior leaders participated in an activation of the post's Emergency Operations Center. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

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# UPGRADE

FROM PAGE 1

way to the floor, the vehicle giving us every bit of horsepower and torque it can possibly give us and traveling at two miles per hour.”

YPG has three massive mobile dynamometers: the newest was built in 1989. Like its two older counterparts that date from the 1960s, it was manufactured with analog controls. In fact, replacement parts are no longer available on the commercial market: they must be specially fabricated, a costly and time-consuming process.

“The systems are obsolete: they are end of life cycle because there is no support for them,” said Gavin Mackenzie, an engineer in YPG’s Engineering Support Branch. “The companies that used to support those systems are no longer in business. If there is an issue, we must troubleshoot it and fabricate our own repair or parts.”

Recently, YPG completed a multi-year \$605,000 project to fully digitize the newest of the three dynamometers. The modern digital controls improve the precise control of the vehicle’s speed and loads applied to vehicles during evaluations, which means more accurate test data for customers.



YPG has three massive mobile dynamometers all which were manufactured with analog controls. Recently, YPG fully digitized the newest of the three dynamometers. The modern digital controls improve the precise control of the vehicle’s speed and loads applied to vehicles during evaluations, which means more accurate test data for customers. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

“The previous analog method was really labor intensive,” said Mackenzie. “Now it is really simple for one operator to input on a computer screen, when previously it was dials and knobs monitoring all of the different functions and having to keep it within a certain threshold of parameters.”

“In the past it wasn’t possible to maintain a speed,” added Rodriguez.

“As a test vehicle slowed down, the adjustments would have to be dialed in by a person in the seat of the dynamometer. Now with the logics and digital circuits behind it, it is capturing that distance and making adjustments on the fly.”

The digitized controls also allow for repeatability of test conditions across many days and multiple different human operators.

“In some cases, when we perform these tests, we have different technicians on different days with different manners of loading these vehicles, which gives a different data set at the end of the day,” said Chavira. “With our modernization and the computer doing all of the controls, there could be multiple technicians entering the same numbers with the computer acting in the exact same fashion every time, all the time.”

Additionally, replacement parts for the upgraded dynamometer are readily available on the commercial market.

“It eliminates components that would require specific knowledge to repair or replace if it goes bad,” said Mackenzie. “Now it is all modern parts and technology that we can easily replace if there is an issue.”

Though future dynamometers will likely be the trailer variety that come with less maintenance needs, the digital upgrades give the manned dynamometer a new lease on life. A new dynamometer comparable to the upgraded one would cost north of \$2 million.



“All vehicles that go through testing at YPG—tracked and wheeled—need to be stressed,” said Jose Rodriguez, electronics team lead in YPG’s Engineering Support Branch. “You want to stress the internals like the transmission and the engine to their breaking limit, and the way to do so is to put them under a load.” (U.S. Army photo)



# Off-duty YPG gate guard helps local deputies apprehend suspect



Yuma Proving Ground Officer George Wright, a jujitsu enthusiast who formerly worked as a guard at the Arizona State Prison Complex in San Luis, Ariz., pinned the suspect down. He held firm despite the suspect's struggle and pleas, and moments later several Yuma County Sheriff's Office Deputies arrived on the scene to make the arrest. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

By Mark Schauer

A fleeing felony suspect with multiple prior convictions was arrested by Yuma County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) Deputies on April 14 with an assist from an off-duty Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) gate guard.

Officer George Wright, who has worked as a gate guard at YPG for one year, lent a hand when he unexpectedly happened upon the suspect attempting to evade the deputies.

An Arkansas native and Marine infantry veteran, Wright was driving home from work when he saw a lone YCSO Deputy struggling with a suspect as another man fled on foot. Unknown to Wright was that the two

men driving a 2005 Cadillac had just evaded an attempted traffic stop by YCSO, striking numerous other vehicles as they sped through heavy traffic backed up at stoplights on the Fortuna Road Interstate overpass. The multiple collisions eventually disabled their vehicle, at which point Wright happened upon the scene.

Wright and another bystander joined the pursuit and followed as the fleeing suspect ran into a residential neighborhood. They briefly lost the suspect until a resident told the men she saw someone running along the side of her house toward her backyard. Wright and the other bystander combed the woman's backyard,

seeing nothing out of the ordinary, yet multiple dogs barked incessantly from nearby yards. As they walked back toward the front of the house, Wright heard noise coming from the household garbage can. The other man with him quickly lifted and closed the lid, seeing the man inside.

"I was just going to watch and wait for the YCSO deputies," said Wright. "But the guy started trying to tip the garbage can to escape."

Wright and the other man struggled to hold the garbage can in place.

"He pushed with his legs, and I felt myself losing my balance," said Wright.

When the suspect finally tipped

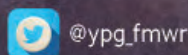
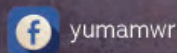
the can over and emerged, Wright, a jujitsu enthusiast who formerly worked as a guard at the Arizona State Prison Complex in San Luis, Ariz. for three years, pinned the suspect down. He held firm despite the suspect's struggle and pleas, and moments later several YCSO Deputies arrived on the scene to make the arrest.

The suspect Wright helped detain is charged with theft of a means of transportation, criminal damage, possession of a weapon by a prohibited person, and burglary. The second suspect who fled in a different direction was later apprehended by YCSO deputies.

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# Return of intramural soccer at YPG



For the first time in more than 25 years Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) hosted its first outdoor four-on-four intramural soccer program amongst YPG personnel. Five teams competed against each other over the month-long season for bragging rights and the right to the championship trophy. (Loaned photos)



Team Aviation Soccer Squad was the team to beat, as they took home the first championship trophy during the intramural soccer league that ran from March 30 to May 2.



The Yuma Proving Ground Air Delivery team showed up in full force for bragging rights and won in league play but fell short in taking home the championship trophy.

## Keeping the community strong



The 2022 Strong B.A.N.D.S. program which stands for Balance, Activity, Nutrition, Determination, and Strength at Yuma Proving Ground provided a variety of classes to keep the community fit. Classes included weekly HITT class for adults and kid fit classes, read and do projects at the library and nutrition education. (Loaned photos)

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## Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain Maj.  
Jeffrey Crispin



YPG Family, congratulations! You've made it through another school year. A special congratulations to those who have achieved big things this year with promotions and graduations. As we head into the Yuma summer, I wanted to ask what's your plan?

Another Yuma summer is approaching and as a family that moved here from Alaska observed, "It's like Alaska where you don't go out in the cold any more than you absolutely have to, but in reverse." With kids out of school or just a desire to avoid the heat, what are you planning to do with the time you won't be out and about? TV, video games, social media, books, etc. are ways we can fill the time trying to escape the heat.

But will you re-emerge from

## Chaplain's Corner

### What's your plan?

your hot weather hunker down to feel like you made good use of the time? Did you learn something you've been wanting to check out? Does that junk closet that is currently out of control become part of your plan to be better organized for the next permanent change of station? Did you keep your exercise program on life support with the first light or after dusk walks? There are videos online that can demonstrate lots of possible hobbies that you've been hesitant to tackle all alone.

Let me be honest and add another layer to this. Last summer, COVID derailed lots of people's plans. Is this summer when you catch up on some things that you had intended to do but put on hold for your safety or that of others. Summer can be a pretty lonely time if you get out once every couple weeks for groceries and an hour on Sunday for church. I know I picked up some bad habits of just keeping to myself and immediate family. Even as an introvert, it was too much "just

us" time.

Life at YPG has some challenges, but some of them are ones that you and I can do something about. Take a fitness class at the gym, or a college class at the education center. Volunteer to help with something that motivates you. Do something to get out and get some more interaction with others than you had last summer. The YPG Swap Page is a private group on Facebook, but it is useful for buying and selling as well as community announcements. I put reminders from the chapel up there on a regular basis. But if going out to interact isn't your speed, invite a couple of people you feel safe with over for a meal and get to know someone else better.

So let me encourage you to make your plan for how you want your summer to go. And don't do the same old things that you did the last two COVID summers. It's time to re-connect and find some ways to do that you are comfortable with doing. You can do it!

## Skate Night



Friday, May 27th  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
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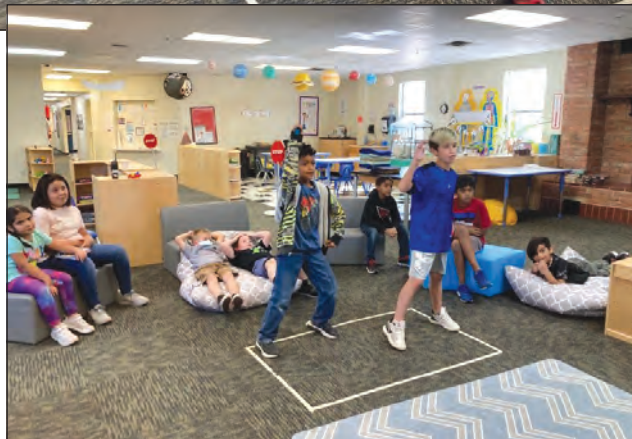
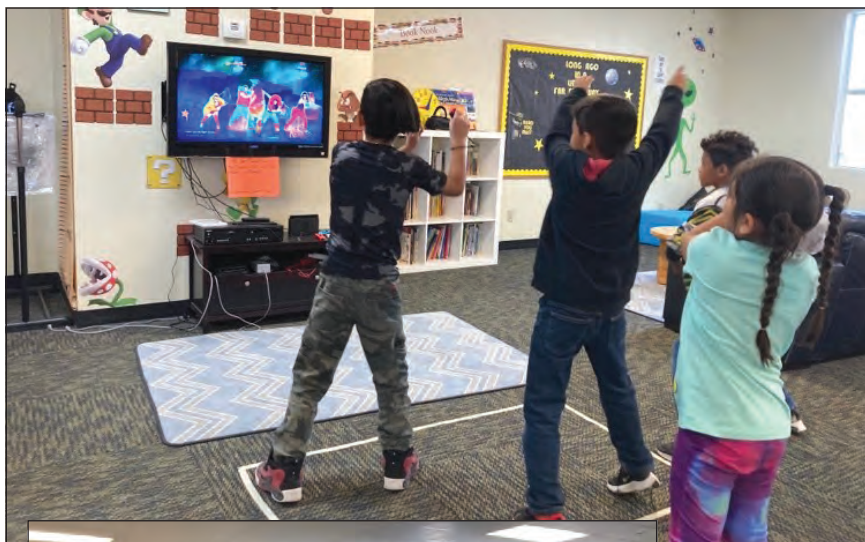
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## National Sleepover Day fun



Everyone knows there's no sleeping at a sleepover. That was the case on National Sleepover Day at the Child and Youth Services Center. Children enrolled in the after-school program at Yuma Proving Ground spent their afternoon enjoying group activities and watching a movie. They all did go home at the end of the day to sleep. (Loaned photos)

## Mother's Day story time



The Yuma Proving Ground Library hosted a Muffins with Mom event May 7 in honor of Mother's Day. The special story time included a story, crafts, muffins, and refreshments. (Loaned photos)



## Modernizing the workforce with education



A communication series is being offered as part of the Employee Modernization Effort for Relevant Growth and Enrichment (EMERGE) program at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). Approximately 10 YPG employees attended the recent course. The series 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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