

The Outpost

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

VOLUME 74 NO. 22 DECEMBER 08, 2025



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Holidays
YPG
Workforce**



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U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground command team thankful for Veterans



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus (right) visit with residents of the Arizona State Veterans Home-Yuma during a Thanksgiving luncheon on Nov. 20, 2025. "I think it's really important as a still-serving active-duty officer to show my appreciation for veterans that came before me, especially during the holidays," said Nelson. "Once a service member, always a service member."



Members of the Yuma Test Center command team, two of them veterans themselves, visited with the residents of the Arizona State Veterans home on Nov. 20, 2025 along with Yuma Proving Ground's Command Team. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



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International visitors learn about Yuma Proving Ground capabilities



A delegation from Mexico attending Yuma's Binational Aerospace Summit visited Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Nov. 19, to learn about the proving ground's premier capabilities. YPG leaders presented a comprehensive brief and engaged in technically focused discussions. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



The following day, Yuma Test Center leaders attended Yuma's Binational Aerospace Summit which focused on Yuma's capabilities in the defense industry and collaboration with local education partners to further enhance workforce development to drive future defense industry in Yuma. (Photo by Mandie Gillmor)

YPG bids farewell to Japanese soldiers



For the last several months, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground hosted a test of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) Type-19 155 mm wheeled self-propelled howitzer that will replace the FH 70 towed 155 mm howitzer the country has used since the late 1970s. On Nov. 24, Yuma Proving Ground Command Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus met with Lt. Col. Akihito Baba, of the 6th Test Division Equipment Test and Evaluation Unit to wish him and his soldiers farewell along with Test Officer Jonathan Bauza who has facilitated the Howitzer test since the start. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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Yuma Proving Ground looks back at 2025

By Ana Henderson

It's hard to believe 2025 is coming to an end. This year has shown us that change is inevitable and adapting to changes and challenges is what keeps us moving forward.

— New leadership —

Yuma Proving Ground Command welcomes Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus



On July 11, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) held a change of responsibility ceremony and welcomed Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus as he assumed the position from outgoing Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Military Free Fall School's Bravo Company welcomes Sgt. Maj. Zachary Achziger



On Sept. 11, the Military Free Fall School's Bravo Company held a Sergeant Major Change of Responsibility ceremony to welcome Zachary Achziger who assumed responsibility from outgoing Sgt. Maj. Matthew Krueger. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

— VIP visitors and events —

Secretary of the Army visits YPG's Arctic Test Center



Arctic Regions Test Center in Alaska welcomed the Secretary of the Army, Honorable Daniel Driscoll on April 24. During his visit, Driscoll experienced -57 °F weather and saw the effects cold has on various essential war fighting materials. (Photo by Sebastian Saarloos)

YPG hosts Bring Your Child to Work Day



On April 23, YPG hosted its first Bring Your Child to Work Day in almost a decade. Parents and grandparents showed the children around their work areas. The Metrology and Simulation Division hosted a tour of several of its shops and had fun activities for families. All the families gathered on Cox Field for some food and fun. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Yuma and YPG celebrate Army's 250th Birthday with free public event



On June 14, Yuma's Colorado River State Historic Park, which was an Army Quartermaster Depot from 1869 to 1884, hosted a free public event for the Army's 250th birthday, and YPG was there providing static displays and presentations. Key moments of the morning included YPG Commander Col. John Nelson and Sgt. Briana Corona cutting the birthday cake and Nelson swearing in Army recruits. (Photo Elisa Reitman)

— Honoring the past and building for the future —

YPG renames building in honor of its late technical director



YPG renamed its Range Operations Center (ROC) to the Bracamonte Range Operations Center (BROC) after late Technical Director Larry Bracamonte in a ceremony on March 24. A building sign and plaque at the entrance of the BROC were unveiled as widow Matilda Lugo and multiple other family members joined well over 100 members of the workforce, local dignitaries, and former commanders. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Iconic 'Big Guns' temporarily moved for road expansion



In a move that shocked passersby, the iconic 'Big Guns' were moved from their prominent location on the corners of Highway 95 and Laguna Dam Road. April 7, crews moved of the 'Big Guns' to the Wahner Brooks Historical Exhibit, which is accessible to the public outside of YPG's Visitor Control Center. The following week crews moved the second M1 240mm howitzer inside the gates of the Walker Cantonment. The reason for the move is to prepare the roadway for widening in 2026. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

Groundbreaking ceremony for freefall school Ready Building at YPG



On March 26, crews broke ground for the construction of a Ready Building for Military Freefall School students. The new building will house student team rooms, a multi-purpose room, latrines, locker rooms and showers, and is expected to enhance the nation's Special Forces capabilities. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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2025 retrospective: YPG remains at the forefront of Army transformation efforts

By Mark Schauer

This year's test mission at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) is having real-world impact today--and will influence transformation and Army doctrine for years to come.

The U.S. Army wants to reduce sensor to shooter timelines, react to threats faster, and combine all of the systems and effects available at their disposal to be ready to defend against near-peer symmetric warfare.

Artificial Intelligence in test

In addition to its rigorous testing of the Army's most cutting-edge systems, the proving ground has made enormous gains in test methodologies for the future. Data has always been YPG's chief product for the Army, and in conjunction with the Army Test and Evaluation Command the post has been developing the local architecture and data governance procedures in advance of more practical case uses for artificial intelligence (AI) in support of the test mission.

"Yuma's been in a position where we have a pretty broad mission area because we are testing in extreme natural environments," said Ross Gwynn, YPG Technical Director. "All the processes that take an extensive amount of time on the front end to get a test set up or to get data cleaned after collection are being optimized. By doing so, we are

thinking about the system under test and analyzing the data a little more as opposed to repetitive tasks taking the majority of an analyst's time."

From vision-based AI learning to automating Kineto Tracking Mount-calibration processes, the proving ground is already reaping dividends from the most recent technology. More benefits are expected as the impact of the efficiency gains continues.

"It is a morale builder," said Gwynn. "People get excited when you are doing something different and making a difference."

Unmanned aircraft

Though it has been testing drones since the 1950s, YPG has become critically important to testing defeat technologies as unmanned aircraft have gained prominence. The U.S. military has used unmanned aircraft for decades to perform dangerous reconnaissance and attack missions that save lives, and the importance of small, unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) grows with each passing year.

"Counter-UAS efforts are so important now due to the proliferation of drones in the battle space," said Col. John Nelson, YPG Commander. "The Army is the lead agency for counter-UAS development and in the Army test community YPG is the center of excellence for testing UAS. We're turning over



As the Army's premier long-range artillery tester, extensive developmental testing for all branches of the military have taken place at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. Recently, YPG has been testing improvements to the Modular Artillery Charge System that serves as the propelling charges for 155 mm artillery rounds. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

solutions for the warfighter every day."

YPG's clear, stable air and extremely dry climate, along with vast institutional UAS testing knowledge, makes it an attractive location for testers, as does the ability to control a large swath of the radio frequency spectrum.

In addition to continuing to host semi-annual counter-UAS competitions with wide impact, individual tests have brought significant new capabilities to the warfighter. For example, the venerable MQ-9, often referred to as the Reaper when equipped with a munition, now has a potent new arrow in its quiver thanks to YPG testing: The Switchblade 600 Block, a state-of-the-art anti-armor loitering munition featuring the potent warhead employed by the renowned Javelin anti-tank missile, demonstrated its groundbreaking capabilities through a historic UAS fire test at YPG.

"While the Switchblade 600 was initially designed for air launch, it had never been deployed from an aerial platform until now,"

said Sidney Mattila, test officer.

"This joint test highlighted the full capabilities of the system and expands mission capabilities for our warfighters."

The proving ground's expertise has been widely recognized within the Army test community. Personnel from YPG supported a Launched Effects Short-Range Special User Demonstration at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in August. The event marked the first time an active-duty unit employed the technology, which is distinct from both UAS and loitering munitions, working in tandem as expendable 'wolfpacks' that can collaborate semi-autonomously to penetrate enemy defenses and adapt to changing battle conditions in real time. YPG conducted intense developmental testing of the technologies during the Experimental Demonstration Gateway Event in recent years, particularly with semi-autonomy and autonomy at long ranges, and supplied specialized targets and expertise to the event.

"We shipped the targets commercially to Joint Base Lewis-



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) recently evaluated the integration of the Switchblade 600 Block 1 into the MQ-9 Reaper. The Switchblade 600 Block 1 (SB 600) is a state-of-the-art anti-armor loitering munition featuring the potent warhead employed by the renowned Javelin anti-tank missile. (U.S. Army photo)

OUTPOST
McCord, offloaded them, and emplaced them in the target locations provided by the customer,” said Carlos Molina, YPG test officer. “All of these targets were driven by requirements for these large events. They not only support local testing, but other U.S. Army requirements.”

Artillery
YPG has been testing improvements to the Modular Artillery Charge System (MACS) for the current generation of artillery, along with a common ignitor for both systems to minimize maintenance of the weapon. MACS consists of two types of propelling charges: The M231 is the low-zone component fired either singly or in pairs for shorter ranges, and the M232 is the high-zone component fired in multiples of three-to-five for extended ranges.

YPG’s ammunition plant has been instrumental in building multiple experimental formulations, shapes, and configurations for new propelling charges. “There is no other facility that is a one-stop shop, from the ammunition plant that hand-assembles these items to having ready access to all of the different cannons,” said Steve Flores, YPG Long Range Precision Fires Cross Functional Team Integrator. “We have experienced weapons operators, sophisticated test

instrumentation and infrastructure, a large range, and specialized gun tube inspection capabilities.”

Wide notice within the Army enterprise

The rugged personnel of YPG’s Arctic Regions Test Center (ARTC), the Army’s extreme cold weather test center, are recognized as world class experts of developmental test of military equipment in the natural world’s most challenging conditions. Secretary of the Army Daniel Driscoll visited the test center in April, and earlier in the year the test center’s personnel supported Operation Nanook-Nunalivut, a multi-week, multi-national science, technology, and experimentation-oriented expedition conducted by the International Cooperative Engagement Program for Polar Research and the United States Army Corps of Engineers in the furthest northern areas of Canada’s Northwest Territories. The expedition included Soldiers from the United States, Canada, and Finland, including the U.S. Army’s 11th Airborne Division. All told, the expedition covered nearly 500 miles across wintry arctic tundra and frozen sea ice, conducting operations in and between remote patrol bases.

“ARTC’s membership and involvement in ICE-PPR and the associated international security



The rugged personnel of Yuma Proving Ground’s Arctic Regions Test Center, the Army’s extreme cold weather test center, are recognized as world class experts of developmental test of military equipment in the natural world’s most challenging conditions. Secretary of the Army Daniel Driscoll visited the test center in April. (Photo by Sebastian Saarloos)

cooperation events such as this expedition ensure that the organization continues to be tied into and included in the ranks of the extremely small cadre of Arctic and Polar subject matter experts

from throughout the world,” said Lt. Col. Brian Karhoff, ARTC Commander. “The Arctic experience and expertise of the ARTC personnel was an indispensable resource for the expedition.”



The vast size of U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) includes nearly 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace, with clear, stable air and an extremely dry climate where inclement weather is a rarity. YPG’s unsurpassed capabilities allow for extensive developmental testing without having to compete for runway and airspace with manned fighter jets as at other installations. (U.S. Army photo)

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YTC uses 3D printers to streamline design projects and keep the mission going

By Ana Henderson

Three-Dimensional (3D) printers have opened the opportunity for individuals and organizations to go from concept creation to tangible items in a matter of hours.

Yuma Test Center (YTC) sees value in this capability and over the years has acquired polymer (plastic) and metal printers to support its mission.

Recently, YTC's Metrology and Simulation Division bought two 3D printers that provide a larger printing capacity and eight different materials, including carbon fiber.

"Carbon fiber is a stronger material that will help improve the longevity of a part that a mission might require while testing," explained Metrology Branch Chief Savanna Silva.

These printers provide an expedited solution to keep the mission going when a part is needed quickly.

"We can use it to make tooling and other parts that don't have a complex geometry," explained Silva. Yet she stressed that the printed 3D parts are not used for anything that's safety related.

"Anytime a part is 3D printed regardless of material, whether it be polymer or metal, there will always be inherent gaps within its printed structure. So, when we are identifying parts to print, we focus on items that aren't mission-critical, safety related,

particularly those that can be easily replaced without affecting the overall mission and the personnel involved."

Another way 3D printers are making an impact is in prototyping for developmental engineering at YTC.

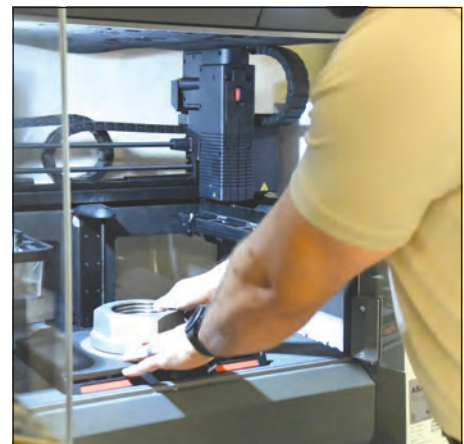
"We have a machine shop, and in collaboration with the engineers in the Metrology and Simulation Division, we work together to take a project from understanding the customer requirements to creating a prototype and ultimately delivering a full-scale final solution. This could result in either a 3D printed or machined part, one that would be produced by our machine shop," said Silva.

During this developmental process the printers can quickly produce a part to test its fit before having it manufactured by the machine shop.

Silva said, "One of the great things about working with test customers is that they come to us with an idea. Our developmental engineers take that concept and turn it into a computer-aided design using SolidWorks. Then, they 3D print a prototype and conduct a fit test on the intended system to ensure it is going to work. If it doesn't, we make adjustments and reprint it. We've found that 3D printing is much more cost-effective compared to traditional machining, where hours of precision work would



Dillion Mann shows how Yuma Test Center's Metrology and Simulation Division utilize 3-Dimensional (3D) printers to support the test mission by being able to print parts on demand. Metrology Branch Chief Savanna Silva stressed that the 3D components are not used for items that aren't mission-critical, safety related. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



be needed to produce a part out of bar stock."

Silva shared another example of YTC successfully using a rapid-printed prototype.

"We've also used 3D printing to better understand firing mechanisms in the mortar systems. A printed part may only last for maybe one or two rounds before it's no longer serviceable, but it gives us a good sense of the fit. From there, we can machine a permanent solution from bar stock."

Dillion Mann, an engineer with Metrology and Simulation Division, does design and analysis work for small to large components. He described some of the novel items he's been able to create to enhance the

mission using 3D printers.

"We have created GPS helmet units that go on to the Soldiers so they can track the Soldiers during jumps," said Mann.

For the Ground Combat Directorate, Mann said they designed and printed mounting plates for apparatus and gears for various items. They also print replacement parts for legacy systems such as some of YTC's radars, where replacement parts are no longer manufactured.

Overall, Silva said, YTC is using 3D printing as another tool towards modernizing Yuma Proving Ground's capabilities and enhancing the lethality of the U.S. Army.

"It helps us to maintain the agility we need in today's world."



Yuma Test Center's Metrology and Simulation Division recently purchased two 3-Dimensional printers that provide a larger printing capacity and eight different materials, including carbon fiber. AJ Martin and Brendan Denney are pictured operating the largest of two printers, a Stratysys F770. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



Metrology Branch Chief Savanna Silva said, "We can use it to make tooling and other parts that don't have a complex geometry."

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National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month

By William Lloyd

December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. Impaired driving is an issue that affects all of us and is preventable.

The National Highway Safety Administration finds about 37 people in the United States die in drunk-driving crashes. The Arizona Department of Public Safety reports the average American has a 30% chance of being killed or injured by an impaired driver during their lifetime, and impaired driving is a leading cause of death for people under the age of 30.

The penalties for driving under the influence are steep. Under Arizona law, in addition to alcohol a person can also be charged with a DUI while under the influence of any drug or its metabolite in

their system. This includes prescription drugs like opioids or benzodiazepines, or recreational drugs like marijuana. Even though marijuana is legal in the state of Arizona, it's use is prohibited for Department of the Army Civilians as well as Soldiers. Refusal to take the chemical test may result in a one-year suspension of your driver license for first time offenders. For second or third offenses, drivers can lose their license for two years. If convicted of a DUI, fines can start at \$1,250 and a minimum of 10 consecutive days in jail.

All government personnel are subject to drug testing, and the penalties for use are severe.

Impairment can sneak up on us – even after just two drinks, we become impaired. As our

blood alcohol concentration (BAC) rises, our judgement, motor skills and decision-making ability slowdown. For example, a 180-pound male that consumes one Long Island Iced Tea in one hour would have a BAC of between 0.7% and 0.8%, clearly impaired, but not aware of exactly how impaired they actually are.

During the holiday season, the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Army Substance Abuse Program hopes you have positive experiences with your friends and family. Be safe, and don't take unnecessary risk by driving under the influence.

For more information, contact the YPG Employee Assistance Program Coordinator, William Lloyd at (928)328-2249 or william.d.lloyd12.civ@army.mil.

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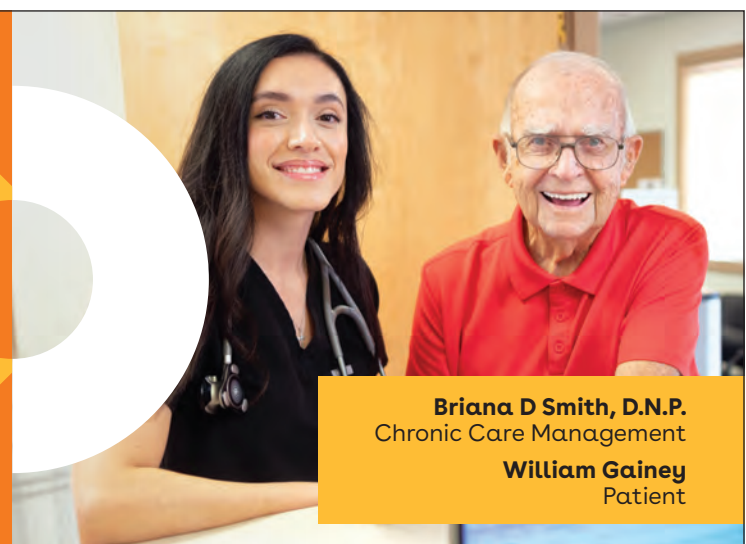
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MWR hosts YPG vs. Japanese soldier kickball tournament



The Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Fitness Center kicked off the holidays with a kickball tournament on Nov. 21. Soldiers from YPG and visiting soldiers from Japan battled it out on the hardwood. The game was a great way to continue the comradery the soldiers have established with the YPG community during their time conducting testing at Yuma Test Center. A large crowd attended to cheer on the teams. (Photos courtesy of the YPG Fitness Center)

Here's to healing hands from hospital to home. Here's to life.



Briana D Smith, D.N.P.
Chronic Care Management
William Gainey
Patient

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