

The Outpost

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

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Artillery testing a core competency at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground

By Mark Schauer

For most of its history, developmental testing of artillery has been the core mission of U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG).

This testing encompasses all facets of the King of Battle, from the gun tubes and chambers on howitzers to the propellant and cartridges of the shells themselves.

The intelligent use of artillery has proved a decisive factor in battle after battle, cannons having the ability to rain devastating, accurate fire on enemy troop concentrations. As artillery technology evolved across previous decades, YPG was on the cutting-edge testing guided and semi-guided munitions capable of hitting within mere meters of a



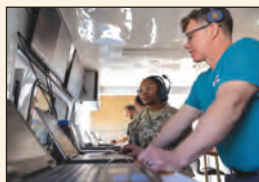
For most of its history, developmental testing of artillery has been the core mission of U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. This testing encompasses all facets of the King of Battle, from the gun tubes and chambers on howitzers to the propellant and cartridges of the shells themselves. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

target kilometers away.

In recent decades, one of the innovations tested here was the Modular Artillery Charge System (MACS) that serves as the propelling charges for 155 mm artillery rounds. 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. MACS was developed in the early 2000s as a compliment to the Crusader self-propelled howitzer. MACS was necessary to accommodate the platform's

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ATEC Commanding General visits YPG



The U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command's Commanding General Major General Patrick Gaydon visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground April 9 from Aberdeen, Maryland. Gaydon received a comprehensive ground and aerial tour of Yuma Test Center making stops at test sites. Subject matter experts briefed the commanding general on various tests and testing capabilities. (Photos by Eugene Garcia and James Stickney)




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1st Armored Division support vital to Concept Focused Warfighting Experiment

By Mark Schauer

The Army's Aviation Future Capability Directorate conducted activities connected with a Cross Domains Fires Concept Focused Warfighting Experiment (CFWE) at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) across two weeks in March.

The experiment focused on integrating command and control, sensing, targeting and effects delivery as part of Multi-Domain Operations.

Heavily involving autonomy, YPG's clear, stable air and extremely dry climate combined with an ability to control a large swath of the radio frequency spectrum makes it a desired location for the type of testing CFWE conducted, as does its long history of testing unmanned aerial systems (UAS).

Also vital to allowing the CFWE to achieve its objectives was the participation of personnel from the 1st Armored Division (AD) at Fort Bliss, Texas. The participating Soldiers provided YPG's data collection teams and participating



Yuma Proving Ground's clear, stable air and extremely dry climate combined with an ability to control a large swath of the radio frequency spectrum makes it a desired location for the type of testing the recent Concept Focused Warfighting Experiment conducted, as does its long history of testing unmanned aerial systems.

private industry vendors a warfighter's insight into the technology under test and the needs of the operational force in addition to serving as exercise controllers.

"The fun part for us was seeing how the Army does experimentation," said Maj. Thomas

Redmond, Operations Officer. "Not a lot of the Soldiers have seen that before and how they interface with vendors and companies that are developing technologies for the Army."

Aside from being vital to the demonstration's success, the

1st AD's participation was also professionally beneficial to their personnel.

"I've never dealt with drones, never flown them," said Pvt. 1st Class Amaya Kirkland, Battle System Management Operator. "But it was pretty simple and I was pretty confident in it. I think it was a very good learning experience."

The contributions of all participants across the two weeks of demonstrations are expected to inform the battlefield use of launched effects, which provide a decisive advantage to ground commanders, giving them the capability to extend the range of sensing and use machines to make first contact with an adversary instead of Soldiers. The Army is rapidly integrating layered UAS and launched effects across formations in a combined arms fight that is synchronized with fires and maneuver across phases to penetrate, exploit, and defeat near-peer adversaries in a complex environment.



Participating Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division provided Yuma Proving Ground's data collection teams and participating private industry vendors a warfighter's insight into the technology under test and the needs of the operational force in addition to serving as exercise controllers.



The contributions of all participants across the two weeks of demonstrations are expected to inform the battlefield use of launched effects, which provide a decisive advantage to ground commanders. (U.S. Army photos)

YPG outreach in south county



A team of employees from U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground attended the San Luis Safety Event 2026 on April 6. Dillon Mann, Andrea Silva Ballesteros and Grace Connor hosted a YPG booth and interacted with about 200 students and residents of San Luis who stopped by the booth. YPG provided information on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics disciplines (STEM) and how school STEM disciplines from K-12 and college could lead to Army and Army Test and Evaluation Command civilian careers. (Photos by Patricia Conley)



National Association of Retired Federal Employees get update on test activities



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Public Affairs Officer Mark Schauer gives an update about the post's developmental test activities on behalf of the nation's warfighters to members of the Yuma chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees on April 6, 2026. (Photo by Michael Crawford)

YPG employees volunteer at the Yuma County Fair



The Yuma County Fair's Superintendent of Welding, Woodworking, and other 4H projects, Andrew Hughes praised the participation of two Yuma Proving Ground employees. Hughes said, "I had the honor of having two outstanding Yuma Proving Ground employees be the judges for these projects. Jason Trepanier (left) was the judge for the welding projects where he questioned their method, materials, object created as well as their presentation. Neal Pillai (right) judged the other 4H projects for the same criteria. They both donated their time and expertise in their respective fields to judge and place these items to be displayed at the Yuma County Fair." (Photos and content courtesy of Andrew Hughes)

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YPG welcomes new DPW director with long history on post

By Ana Henderson

U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground, named Donnett Brown as the new director of the Directorate of Public Works.

Brown is a Marine Corps veteran, highly educated, and comes with a wealth of experience.

While stationed in Okinawa, Japan while on active duty, Brown said her leadership supported and even pushed her to pursue higher education.

“I was with a command that encouraged me to go to school. My company CO would ask, ‘Why aren’t you going to school?’

You didn’t have an excuse when you had everyone around you encouraging you to go to school.”

She had already earned a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering, so while in Okinawa she earned two master’s degrees, one in management and the second in public administration.

Once out of the Marines and back in the states, Brown and her husband, also a Marine, moved to Yuma and she started her career at Yuma Proving Ground as an Environmental Protection Specialist, overseeing contaminated sites clean up back in 2008.

She then moved up to an Environmental Engineering position and continued to oversee site cleanups.

Soon, Brown got a new boss, Pat Driscoll, the former DPW director and her supervisor encouraged her to take leadership courses to meet her career goals.

“He was helpful and gave me



DONNET BROWN
DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC WORKS

U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground, named Donnett Brown as the new director of the Directorate of Public Works. (U.S. Army photo)

pointers.”

Now, Brown is the DPW Director and said, “Being with DPW, it’s a lot to process. But there’s an excitement for me because I love to learn and I love the challenge and I have a great team of people that are helpful and knowledgeable.”

Directorate of Public Works

The Directorate of Public Works (DPW) serves as the installation’s steward of infrastructure and environment, responsible for planning, constructing, maintaining, and sustaining facilities, utilities, cultural and natural resources. DPW ensures that installation infrastructure remains safe, resilient, and capable of supporting the mission, Soldiers, families, and the broader community.

Soldiers proudly support annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arizona



Soldiers stationed at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) proudly supported the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Arizona on the morning of April 16. The Wellton Police Department and Imperial County Sheriff’s Office handed off the torch to the Soldiers along Ave B. The Soldiers and a team representing the Bureau of Land Management jogged a mile and a half proudly taking turns holding the torch. They then handed the torch to the Yuma County Sheriff’s Office. More than 20 agencies took part in the run, organized by the City of Yuma Police Department, which ended at the Colorado River State Historic Park and supports the local Special Olympics. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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Years of Service



Yvonne Warner 25, Minda Federmeyer 20, Bob Morse 15, Todd Canaday 15, Chrissy Randle 15
(Photo by Ashley Thompson)

YTC Commander's Coin recipients



Mayra Angulo, Michael Mendoza, Robert Tackett, Steven Mullins, Scott Myers



Carlos Ibarra



Grace Kim



Andrew Hughes



Jose Urbalejo



James Green



Dillon Mann

(Photos by Ana Henderson)

Metrology and Simulation awards

Years of Service

5 Years

10 Years

35 Years



Gilberto Garcia



James Green, Larry Nelson, Savanna Silva, and Dwain Frazer



David Le

Suicide Prevention Push Up Challenge

Munitions & Weapons



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Ammunition & Armaments Division

Civilian Service
Achievement Medal



Gerald Miller

5 years



Vicente Zendejas

Years of Service
15 years



Adan Valverde

45 years



Anthony Bates

(Photos by Ana Henderson)

Honorable award recipients recognized during YPG Spring Ball

The Desert Committee hosted the YPG Spring Ball on April 10, at the Quechan Resort. U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command Commanding General Major General Patrick Gaydon served as the keynote speaker and

presented several honorary awards saying, "Their contributions have made a tremendous impact on the respective branches throughout the Army."

(Photos by Cindy Hernandez)

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Saint Joan D'Arc



Gina Nelson

The Honorable Order of
Saint Michael



Ross Gwynn

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Dean Shimizu

Signal Regiment
Brevet Colonel



Terry Flores

Marc Blood

The Honorable Order of Saint Barbara



Gerald Miller



Steven Allen



Thomas Brown Jr.



Richard Bloomfield

ammunition autoloader. "Prior to that, the propelling charges in use by the Army were bag-based," said Steve Flores, Long Range Precision Fires Integrator. "They weren't very rigid or conducive to putting into an ammunition handling system. The designers made sure the new charges were still compatible with the legacy weapons systems."

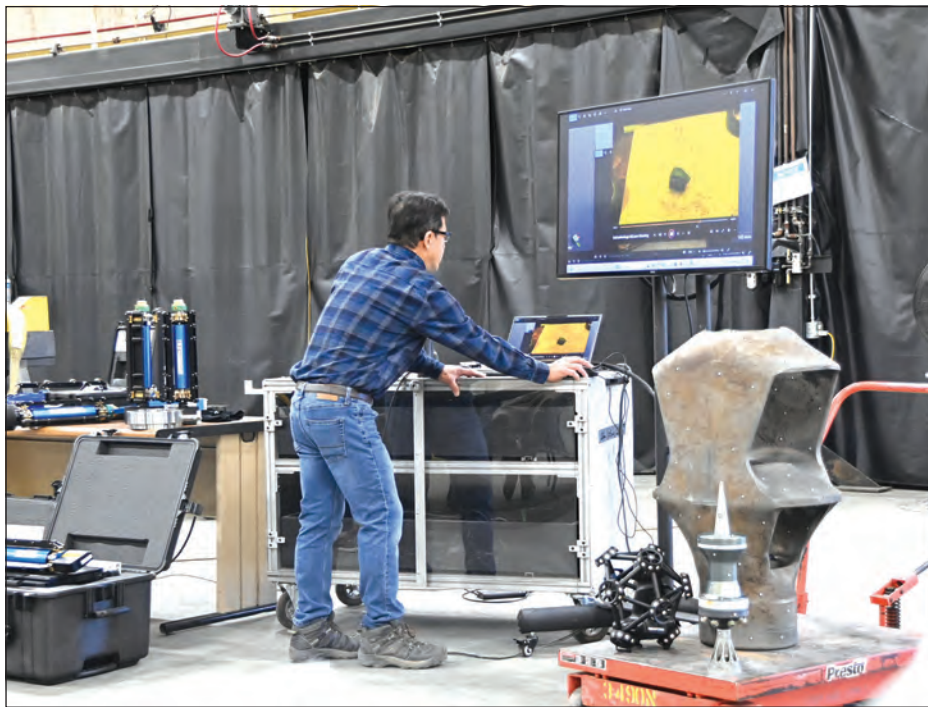
Though Crusader was never fielded, the MACS endured. Since there was a difference in chamber volume and barrel length between the Crusader and legacy systems, compromises were necessary to allow for interoperability across systems. Recently, YPG has been testing improvements to the MACS system for the current generation of artillery. A common ignitor for both the M231 and M232 is also being evaluated to minimize maintenance of the weapon.

"They are reconfiguring and improving upon the charges for use in the current cannon system," said Flores. "They are improving the way it ignites for more uniformity and to mitigate breech oscillations at high zones."

Over time, un-uniform powder ignitions can leave unwanted residues in a gun barrel, and oscillations can eventually create reliability problems for a howitzer's firing mechanism.

"Another key piece of data propelling charge designers require is how the gun tube is wearing after firing the new charge," said Flores. "They need to know if it is wearing faster than with the legacy charge."

YPG's ammunition plant has been instrumental in building



In fielding the best equipment possible, testers are particularly interested in inspecting mortar and artillery equipment for microscopic anomalies. It's not the most dramatic side of testing, but it is critical to the safety and success of American Soldiers. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

multiple experimental formulations, shapes, and configurations for new propelling charges.

"Every time the product manager has an experiment they want to try out, all of the propelling charges and ignitors are hand assembled at the ammo plant," said Flores. "The ammo plant will assemble them to the customer's instructions in any and all combinations of things."

In fielding the best equipment possible, testers are particularly interested in inspecting mortar and artillery equipment for microscopic anomalies. It's not the most dramatic side of testing, but it is critical to the safety and success of American Soldiers, and David Le, mechanical engineer in the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Physical Test Facility, is regarded as one of the most experienced professionals in the field of non-destructive testing.

"A picture is worth a thousand words," said Le. "By the same

token, one measurement is worth a thousand guesses."

Le gets up close and personal with gun tubes using high tech equipment found exclusively at YPG but also uses the same cannon tube bore scope commonly used by artillery units in the field. Over the years, Le constructed a clean room and began adding and developing specialized measurement devices, such as a laser bore mapper, from scratch. The lab's ultrasonic immersion machine was adapted for use for inspecting gun tubes from technology commonly used in the petroleum industry to inspect pipes. It uses water as the medium to impede the signal from a five-channel transducer that electronically measures an object placed inside a massive tank. The outer tank holds 1400 gallons of water and can accommodate the tube or breach component of even the largest towed howitzer in the Army's inventory. A smaller, 300-gallon tank within the larger one can be used for smaller items like a mortar tube.

Non-destructive artillery testing also extends to projectiles. The proving ground has a projectile imbalance measurement machine that can detect the dynamic center

of gravity and inertia of a shell. It operates on the principle of measuring balance in a tire, albeit in an inherently lethal artillery shell and uses a cylindrical device to hold the projectile firmly in place as it undergoes intense revolutions. This manner of testing is important as a projectile's propellant could shift inside, especially in extreme temperatures, thus making the projectile off balance.

YPG's Metrology and Simulation Branch is also pressing forward with utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI) for further test efficiency gains. With decades of data from laser-bore measuring of artillery tubes as they wear, an AI could be trained to help assess possible problems and predict expected life of the tubes.

"Using in-bore pictures, laser scans, and other physical measurements from various inspection technologies, an AI could analyze and correlate past and current failures across all these data sources, compiling them into a comprehensive report for our test customers," said Savanna Silva, YPG Metrology Branch Chief. "We're not stopping there: we aim to take it further by developing AI capable of performing predictive wear analysis on weapon systems. This would integrate data from both fielded and experimental ammunition test at YPG."

The metrology branch is also seeking to train AI that can monitor the life cycle of piezoelectric pressure transducers used in testing artillery here.

"We've never fully characterized how tourmaline crystals in our piezoelectric pressure transducers behave over time or under repeated high-pressure events, as we've always assumed how they would perform," said Silva. "Our high-pressure tests have always been single use only for the transducers. Now, it's time to refine our approach. By leveraging our data and using AI to analyze it, we can gain a much deeper understanding of their performance."

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Fitness Center celebrates new 24/7 hours



The Fitness Center on post at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground is now open 24/7. YPG and Garrison leadership gathered on April 15 for the ribbon cutting ceremony. YPG Commander Col. John Nelson and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Director Chris Reitman both spoke about how this capability will benefit the Soldiers and community members. Fitness Facility Manager Dani Compton performed the first ceremonial swipe with her access card to open the doors for Nelson. Inside, community members had the opportunity to sign up for their access card. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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YPG wears blue to bring attention to child abuse



It was a sea of blue at Yuma Proving Ground on April 7, as the community wore blue to bring attention to Child Abuse Awareness Month. Family Advocacy Program Manager Mariah Boykin said the workforce looked forward to showing their support. During Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, communities come together to show their commitment to keeping children safe. (Photos by Mariah Boykin)

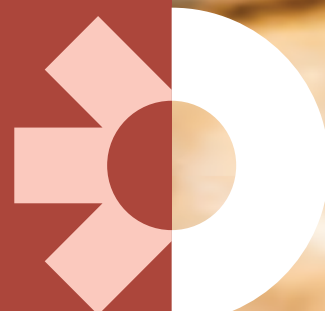
Pinwheels for child abuse prevention



April is Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. On April 16, children from Price Elementary School and the Child Development Center joined by Army Community Services' Family Advocacy Program, YPG's Command Team and members from the YPG Police and Fire Department to plant pinwheels on the lawn of Price School. Pinwheels have become the symbol for the observance as they stand for the innocence and carefree attitude of childhood. (Photos by Micheal Crawford and Maiko Black)

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