

The Outpost

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

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U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground personnel test T-11 interoperability at home and abroad

By Mark Schauer

Useful for seizing isolated airfields deep behind enemy lines which can then be used to receive and deploy more troops and armaments, the tactic of mass parachute jumps has a long history with American forces.

The T-11 personnel parachute is the mainstay of U.S. personnel parachutes.

The T-11 offers jumpers a slow and stable descent, especially in high winds, and can support more weight than previous parachutes, a crucial advantage for warfighters who carry robust, heavy gear.

During developmental testing at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) in the early 2000s, the T-11 proved to be a remarkably robust system, able to compensate for



Following test jumps of the T-11 personnel parachute from the A400M at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground using torso mannequins, active-duty members of YPG's elite Airborne Test Force became the first personnel in history to jump the T-11 from the A400M during two weeks of testing in Spain. (U.S. Army photo)

multiple kinds of malfunctions that testers intentionally rigged into it: Even when testers put different reefing lines throughout the canopy and tried to restrict airflow inside, it still inflated. Now long-fielded, the T-11 has returned to YPG for further refinements and improvements since undergoing its initial developmental testing here. YPG is home to all manner of parachute testing, with spacious and instrumented ranges large enough to accommodate even the world's largest cargo parachutes.

Today, YPG is leading a project to test interoperability between the U.S. T-11 main parachute and the European A400M transport plane.

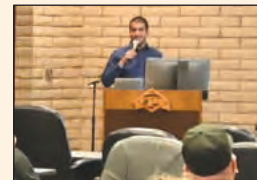
Earlier this year the T-11 main

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YPG Command Team visits Arctic Regions Test Center to meet the rugged professionals



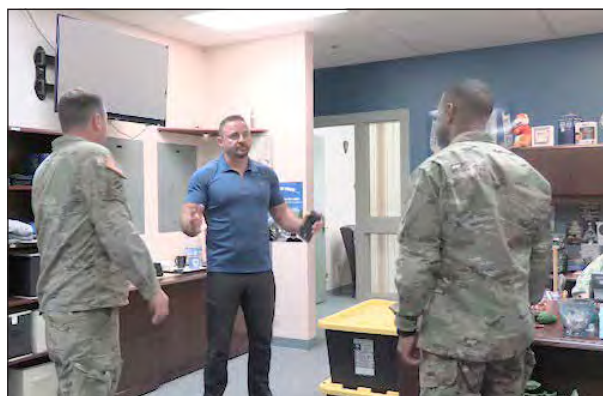
U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) Commander Col. Charles Seaberry took command in June and in July made the over 2,000-mile trip to meet the team who work at Arctic Regions Test Center (ARTC). Seaberry oversees three extreme weather test centers; Yuma Test Center for extreme hot weather, Tropic Regions for tropical jungle testing and ARTC in Alaska for arctic weather testing. (Photo by Eugene Garcia)



The Command team visited ARTC headquarters, and toured the fabrication and instrumentation shop, maintenance facility and cold chamber among other stops. After nearly a week on site Seaberry said, "The strength of ARTC isn't just the environment, it's the people. LTC Karhoff has built an organization defined by technical excellence and they most certainly understand the stakes. Their work ensures our equipment can survive, communicate, move, and fight in the extreme conditions our Soldiers could face from Alaska to NATO's northern flank." (Photos by Jeff Lipscomb and Eugene Garcia)



While at ARTC, the YPG Command Group saw firsthand the hard work the rugged professionals of ARTC do to meet the mission's needs even in the toughest environment. "Your mission is directly tied to deterrence. Every limitation you uncover and every capability you validate helps ensure our Soldiers enter a contested cold-weather environment with equipment they can trust," said Seaberry. (Photos by Eugene Garcia)



Seaberry pictured with ARTC's Technical Director Jeff Lipscomb, conveyed that the visit was helpful in identifying opportunities for ARTC to support the Army's Arctic Strategy. "ARTC must become a central part of how ATEC and the acquisition enterprise prepare the Army for northern operations. By testing earlier, with Soldiers and allies, ARTC can expose risk before production, strengthen readiness, and help deliver combat-credible capability before our adversaries can gain an advantage." (Photo by Eugene Garcia)

The Outpost

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ARTC bids farewell to Command Sergeant Major



On July 30, Arctic Regions Test Center (ARTC) hosted a retirement ceremony in honor of Command Sgt. Maj. Graham Rooney. ARTC Commander Lt. Col. Brian Karhoff thanked Rooney for his service to ARTC. The Yuma Proving Ground Command Team attended the ceremony along with Rooney's family and members of the workforce. (Photo by Eugene Garcia)

ASU and GYEDC identify collaborative opportunities with YPG



Kyle Squires, Dean and Professor of the School of Engineering at Arizona State University (ASU), Matt Salmon, Special Advisor in the Office of University Affairs at ASU and Greg Lavann, President/CEO Greater Yuma Economic Development Center visited Yuma Proving Ground on Aug. 6 to learn about the test center's world-class testing capabilities and identify collaborative opportunities. After the tour Squires remarked that "the capabilities are immense" and "the skill level is quite high" among the workforce at YPG. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

State commerce officials impressed by U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's capabilities



Members of the Arizona Commerce Authority's Office of Defense Innovation visited U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) on Aug. 4, 2026, getting a comprehensive brief from U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Charles Seaberry (second from left) and other YPG senior leaders and getting a firsthand look at some of the post's test capabilities that can be leveraged by private industry customers. "The dedication of the people here is absolutely amazing," said Vic Narusis, Executive Vice President of Industry Development. "Their passion for their work and for the warfighter puts on a really great spot." (Photos by Mark Schauer)

Grateful for Yuma community's support



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. Charles Seaberry was guest speaker at the weekly meeting of the Yuma Foothills Rotary Club on Aug. 5, 2026, talking about recent test activities that put the post at the forefront of Army modernization efforts and thanking the Yuma community for their staunch support. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

August 25th
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Welcome to Antiterrorism Awareness Month

By Reginald Boler

As we kick off this critical month, we want to remind our entire Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) workforce, service members, and families that safety and security are shared responsibilities. In our desert mission environment, maintaining operational readiness means staying alert both on the installation and at home. To keep our community secure, please focus on these items.

“See Something, Say Something”:

You are our most valuable eyes and ears. If you notice suspicious activity, unattended packages, or individuals taking photos of access points, report it immediately to security personnel, Antiterrorism Officer (ATO), S2. Try to remember as much detail as you can, individual in question, clothing, type of vehicle, plate number and color.

Anti-Drone Vigilance:

Unmanned Aircraft Systems pose unique security challenges for YPG. Report any unauthorized drone activity or low flying surveillance aircraft over YPG’s airspace or near residential housing immediately. Any detail size, color, rotor or fixed wing, direction of flight, lights, payload, cameras.



Emma Almendarez happily picks up a promotional item from the Antiterrorism informational booth on Aug. 3 at Yuma Proving Ground’s headquarters. The Antiterrorism Office is reminding the workforce, “See something, say something.” (Photo by Reginald Boler)

OPSEC:

Operations Security is vital to our mission. Protect critical information by monitoring what you post online. Avoid sharing sensitive details about testing schedules, visitors of foreign nations, and troop movements, deployments to YPG, or personal routines on social media.

CAC ID:

Keep your CAC secure and hidden out of sight when doing photos or off base activities. I know it is difficult for some government employees who were former contractors to not wear your CAC around your neck, on a lanyard but just to be safe tuck it in your shirt out of sight.

Stay Vigilant:

Threat mitigation requires a proactive mindset. Secure your homes, lock your vehicles. Don’t leave handbags, backpacks, laptops or documents in your vehicle, in plain sight when you go shopping or inside to pay for gas. And always remain highly aware of your surroundings.

Thank you for your dedication, resilience, and daily commitment to keeping YPG secure. Together, we ensure the safety of our force and our families.

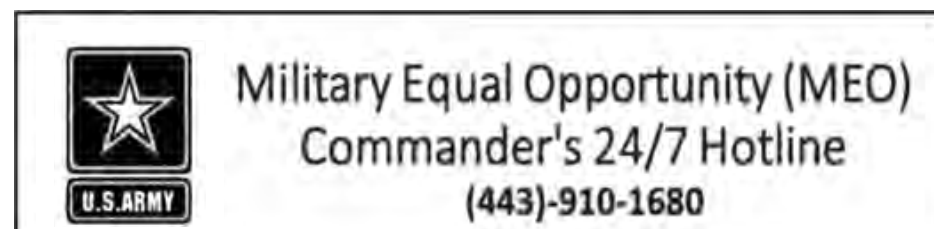
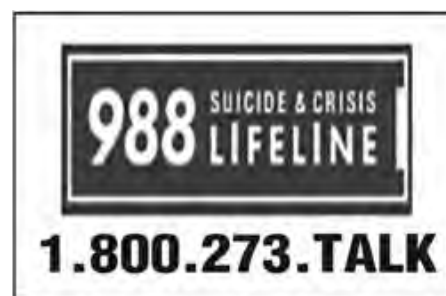
Aug. 3, there will be an informational booth set up in the BROC Atrium.

Be Alert, Be Aware, and Stay Safe!

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Yuma Proving Ground Soldiers give a glimpse of Army life to local recruits

By Mark Schauer

New Army recruits are the future warfighters U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) developmental test mission will serve.

Most newly enlisted recruits' knowledge of Army service is secondhand. If they're part of the lucky few, perhaps a parent or other close relative served. Others know of it entirely from television and movies.

A group of about 25 young people made up of both Army recruits under contract and high school students considering enlisting in the Army paid a visit to YPG on July 29 to get up close and personal with things like a UH-60 Blackhawk and ask questions about Army life with Soldiers assigned to YPG's elite Airborne Test Force (ATF).

"We bring the recruits so they can see what the Army looks like firsthand," said Staff Sgt. Rigoberto Montoya, recruiter. "Yuma Proving Ground gives everybody a good perspective of what the Army is—



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Melvin Bullard (right) and Master Sgt. Donald Bullock (second from right) of U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's elite Airborne Test Force (ATF) speak with local Army recruits on July 29, 2026. "I like it when the recruits come by," said Bullock, Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the ATF. "I think it's fun to show them what could be in their future and introduce them a bit more to the Army." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

they see aircraft, they interact with Soldiers, and that keeps them motivated."

Over the years, YPG has support-

ed such visits to the workplaces of virtually every active-duty military occupational specialty (MOS) assigned here.

"I think it is good for recruits to get a chance to talk with green suiters before they actually enter the organization," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Melvin Bullard, ATF Chief. "They get a better understanding of what the Army is like."

Attendee Christian Escobedo was among the new recruits. Enlisted as a field artillery recruit, he will head to basic training after graduating from high school next year.

"I think YPG is an amazing place," Escobedo said after the visit. "It literally advances the U.S. military."

The Soldiers who interacted with the recruits enjoyed the visit.

"I like it when the recruits come by," said Master Sgt. Donald Bullock, Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the ATF. "I think it's fun to show them what could be in their future and introduce them a bit more to the Army. A lot of times, the recruiter is the first interaction they've ever had with the Army, and this gives them more perspective."

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TEST

FROM PAGE 1

parachute underwent test jumps from the A400M at YPG using torso mannequins with stubs for arms to simulate jumpers instead of live jumpers. The mannequins were ballasted with weight, then loaded onto an aluminum deployment rack specially designed and constructed by YPG engineers that allows the air crew to move and deploy the mannequins by means of a large crank, ensuring a safe and uniform drop from the aircraft. Since there is no physical instrumentation on the parachutes themselves during these tests, evaluators depend on Go Pro cameras in the aircraft and ground-based tracking instruments for video and data of each parachute's deployment, particularly the critically important first seconds of flight.

"That was pretty successful," said Ervin Rosales, YPG test officer. "We gathered some good data that gave us good insight and data to proceed to live jumps."

Following this testing, more than two dozen YPG personnel supported two weeks of test jumps of the T-11 and MC-6 personnel parachutes in Spain at Zaragoza and Torrejón Air Bases. Test items like cameras and



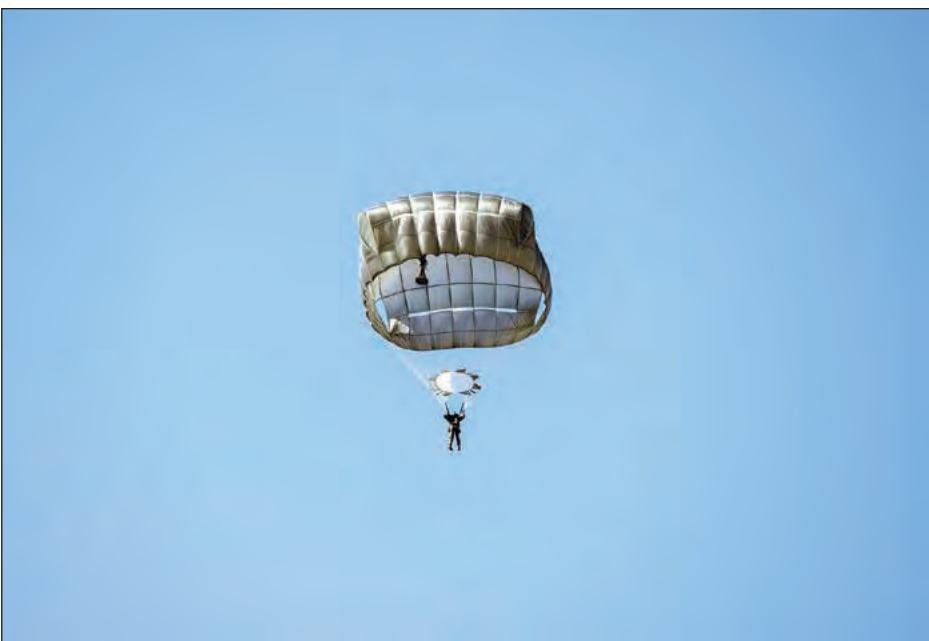
The T-11 offers jumpers a slow and stable descent, especially in high winds, and can support more weight than previous parachutes, a crucial advantage for warfighters who carry robust, heavy gear.

instrumentation like portable tracking mounts had to be shipped from YPG in advance. Rosales found the host nation easy to work with.

"They were very welcoming and

helpful with the requests we had and everything we needed," said Rosales. "It was well coordinated and pretty dynamic and flexible with their schedule."

During the series of jumps, active-duty members of YPG's elite Airborne Test Force became the first personnel in history to jump the T-11 from the A400M.



Earlier this summer, more than two dozen U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground personnel supported two weeks of test jumps of the T-11 and MC-6 personnel parachutes in Spain at Zaragoza and Torrejón Air Bases. (U.S. Army Photos)

Army Fellows program paves the way for students' path to government career

By Ana Henderson

Upon graduating from the University of Virginia with a master's degree in statistics, Neal Pillai was looking for a specific type of opportunity.

"I was really looking for a role where I could broaden and complement my skillset."

Soon after graduation, Pillai applied, interviewed and was offered a position with U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground in 2024 as part of the Army Fellowship Program which took him from the East coast to the Desert Southwest.

The Army Fellows program offers recent graduates a two-year developmental role followed by a two-year service commitment as a civilian for the U.S. Army.

"You really spend two years as a full-time employee and it's a really good way to learn and develop soft skills and of course technical skills as part of the role," said Pillai of the experience now two years into his fellowship.

Pillai was hired on as a Data Scientist working alongside YPG's Chief Data and Analytics Officer Richard Hernandez. YPG's mission of conducting testing and collecting data to provide for the customer has been eye opening for Pillai.



Neal Pillai has been participating in the Army Fellowship Program at Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) since 2024. The program offers recent graduates a two-year developmental role followed by a two-year service commitment as a civilian to the U.S. Army. Pillai is pictured presenting what he's learned during his first two years in the program to YPG leadership. (Photos by Laci Butz)

He describes the difference between learning in school and real-world learning.

"As someone who studies statistics. A lot of what they teach is more tailored around how do you fit models, how do you use machine learning models and analyzing data sets that are usually curated for you beforehand, and you could make predictions and decisions with those findings."

The data is provided differently at YPG.

"What was really appealing for me at YPG was that there's such a vast array of different data, the data is produced and collected and analyzed in the same place which is pretty rare for a large organization like YPG. Just being able to get that opportunity

to deal with not only data sets as in a tabular format, but working with videos, audio data and other types of data that we collect here at YPG downrange."

Now, after two years into the program, he's thankful for the growth he's made and says the experience has made him "a better data scientist" because it's allowed him to see the entire data lifecycle. He touts the opportunity to work with various analysts, test officers, and support element personnel across YPG has also led him to better understanding of how YPG's data collection, management, and governance processes work.

Pillai learned the importance of "forging his own path." He credits the Fellows training provided in leadership, communication and project management and his mentors, Hernandez and Patty Conley and many others for their guidance.

"I learned how the business works and what it takes to be successful," remarked Pillai.

YPG thanks interns for providing value to organization



The summer is over and students are heading back to school, including those who spent their summer interning at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. On July 30, YPG's intern coordinator Patricia Conley hosted an intern pizza party to thank the six interns and three Army Fellows participants. The students worked in range planning, data and analytics office, maintenance and data processing. Conley told the group, "You all have made tremendous effort in working with your teams and working with one another." As for the interns, they also took value from the experience. Intern Ernesto Arellano who is studying chemical engineering interned in Range Planning and said he was surprised with how welcoming the workforce was and learned about various support groups. "I was able to see a lot of different division and how they contribute to the test." (Photo by Ana Henderson)



Neal Pillai has completed a two-year developmental assignment at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's Fellowship program. He is working as a Data Scientist working alongside YPG's Chief Data and Analytics Officer Richard Hernandez. Pillai is pictured presenting during the Data Literacy 101 course in 2025. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

YPG employee & her dogs bring dog lovers together for Pack Walks

By Ana Henderson

Darcy Broom is the Executive Assistant to Yuma Test Center's Commander by day, and the rest of the time she's Mom to two doodles who have become social media celebrities.

In 2000, Broom picked up her first doodle Oakley, on a whim from a local family when she tagged along with a co-worker who was also picking up a pup.

"I didn't know anything about the breed," she recalled. "I walked out with a puppy in my hand just happy as a clam."

Two and a half years later Broom decided to get Oakley a sister whom she named Annie, an energetic Sheepadoodle. Together, the duo has captured the hearts of thousands of followers on Instagram and TikTok. It's safe to say, Oakley is the most recognizable doodle in town.

Oakley is known for his chill demeanor. "People always tell me, 'How did you get such a calm doodle?'" Broom said. "He's obsessed with me and a tennis ball, and that's all that matters in his world." Annie, on the other hand, is a "tornado."



Darcy Broom is the Executive Assistant to Yuma Test Center's Commander by day, and the rest of the time she's Mom to two doodles who have become social media celebrities, the most well-known of the two is Oakley picture here with Broom. (Photos courtesy of Darcy Broom)

Despite their differences, the two are inseparable.

Their road to social media stardom started with a simple slow-motion video of Oakley chasing a rabbit toy in the backyard that exploded into viral fame. From ASMR videos of the dogs crunching on treats to a popular reel set to a Journey song, their so-

cial media presence skyrocketed.

"The obsession online is insane," Broom noted. "Now I have people all over that follow me, comment, and send us stuff. It's like they're friends and family, but you have no idea who they are."

Oakley's star power has even led into local modeling gigs. In 2022, he was the Humane Society's "Fur Ball Pet Star," appearing on posters and invitations for the black-tie gala. He was also featured in the Yuma Visitors Bureau magazine and a spread in the charity book *Tales of the World*, which benefits rescues.

But for Broom, the dogs' fame isn't just about accumulating views—it's about building a community. Realizing that Yuma lacked a social group for dog lovers, she teamed up with Nicole Millis from Kiwi's Distinguished Pet Goods and Alex Lau owner of another popular local dog, Midas. Together, they launched a monthly Pack Walk.

"You get your dog out; you walk with other people. It's a socialization aspect," Broom explained, saying that pets don't have to be perfect to participate. "You need to socialize

your dog with more than just its companion."

The walks have been popular and are now sponsored so attendees and their pets walked away with swag, ranging from treats to GPS trackers and pet pillows, simply for showing up and walking their dogs.

Last Christmas, the group organized a donation drive to help homeless pet owners care for their pets and distributed them on the streets. They collected and distributed food, blankets, booties, leashes, and collars. Then partnered with the Crossroads Mission to ensure the supplies reached those in need who use the mission's services. Local businesses stepped up, too; Cal Ranch donated bags full of perfectly good, off-the-shelf items.

Between the viral videos, the charity work, and the monthly gatherings, Darcy has become a local pet advocate. She often fields questions about local vets and pet care, though she admits her dogs are the real celebrities.

"I always tell people, people know my dogs more than they know me," she laughed.

For those interested in joining the community, the Yuma Pack Walks take place on the second Sunday of every month at Lowe's during the summer and Main Street near Kiwi's in the winter.



The social media buzz started with a simple slow-motion video of Oakley (left) chasing a rabbit toy in the backyard. Now, the videos range from ASMR of the two crunching on treats, to a popular reel set to a Journey song. Oakley's star power has led to local modeling gigs. In 2022, he was the Humane Society's "Fur Ball Pet Star," he was featured in the Visit Yuma's magazine and a spread in the charity book *Tales of the World*, which benefits rescues.

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Game of hoops brings out friendly competition between YPG Commander and workforce



The Yuma Proving Ground Fitness Center basketball court was the scene of a highly competitive, yet friendly game of hoops. Environmental Protection Specialist Reed Rider heard that YPG Commander Col. Charles Seaberry played basketball and he invited him to play. That turned into a lunchtime match on Aug. 3. Command Sgt. Maj. Joshua Holthus brought his secret weapon, his son Conner. The score went back and forth several times. The final score will not be revealed but it's safe to say there will be a rematch. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Salsa competition gets spicy



Lunchtime was extra tasty on Aug. 6, thanks to a salsa competition hosted by Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) Plans Division. The 12 salsa entries ranged from green to red, chunky to juicy, spicy to salty, mild to hot and members of the YPG workforce tasted them all. When the votes were cast, though, the winners were; Reinhard Brenneis with Smoked Salsa in first place, Chris Cape with Fire Dept. Pico with Avocado in second, and Grace Connor with Guacamole in third. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



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