

E-LETTER

Forbes Magazine List Yuma as One of the Top 10 Up-and-Coming Tech Cities in the U.S.

Several small cities are rapidly earning respect as veritable tech hubs for the innovative technologies being developed within their boundaries. To find the future centers of technology, Forbes surveyed regional innovation trends across the U.S. and compiled a list of up-and-coming tech centers. Yuma, Arizona ranked tenth on the list due to the substantial presence of the U.S. Army Proving Ground in the region and the critical role their testing and evaluation plays in the global war on terrorism.

In order to assess the cities technological capacity, a methodology was devised to look for important relationships among patents within each general technical area. The most important patents are generally referenced by other inventors in the field when they file for their own patents; lesser patents garner fewer citations. The greater the increase in the number of important patents in a given city, the higher it ranked on the list.

As the single largest high-tech employer in Yuma County, Yuma Proving Ground is considered one of the most advanced testing facilities in the U.S, amassing 1,300 square miles, or 20% of the county. YPG is home to 3,000 contract engineers who work on the foremost site for desert warfare research in the Western Hemisphere. Companies that have testing operations on the proving ground include, but are not limited to, Boeing, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon. Many of the technologies being tested in Yuma, artillery and weapons, mine and demolition and unmanned aerial systems which are state-of-the-art inventions that can not be found anywhere else in the world. YPG also plays host to approximately 25,000 annual visitors from friendly foreign nations around the world, that utilize the facilities for research and development, as well as testing.

Another device of innovation being fostered at the Yuma Proving Ground is the partnership with General Motors to build a \$120 Million hot-weather test track. The track will test all the vehicles in the General Motors line and will allow YPG to test military vehicles in a controlled setting. The project when completed will be a capital investment of approximately \$200 Million and will employ 250-300 high-skilled technicians and engineers with averages wages of \$60,000.

As the largest employer in Yuma County, the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground has a substantial impact on the economic prosperity of the region. In 2007, YPG maintained an annual payroll of \$200 Million and held approximately \$190 Million in military contracts. The total economic impact of the test facility amounted to \$424 Million, most of which stayed in Yuma County. In conjunction with YPG, MCAS plays a major role in the global war on terrorism and helps sustain a healthy economy in Yuma. In 2007, MCAS economic impact on Yuma County was approximately \$335 Million.

YPG Facts

- GPS was first tested at YPG
- YPG manages testing in three weather extremes
- YPG is the single largest employer in Yuma County
- YPG has the capability to test every weapon system in ground combat arsenal
- YPG has the longest artillery range in the nation
- YPG was recently recognized as one of the most valuable military installations in the nation

MCAS Facts

- MCAS total base population - 12,541
- MCAS is the busiest air station in the Marine Corps and in the Naval Department
- MCAS supports 80% of Marine Corps Air-to-Ground training
- MCAS has the largest tactical aviation training range in Marine Corps
- MCAS has 10,000 square miles of special-use airspace for training
- MCAS has 2,000 square miles for aerial bombing and gunnery ranges
- MCAS annual payroll - \$158 Million
- MCAS total economic impact - \$335 Million

An Economic Development
Publication of the Greater
Yuma Economic Development
Corporation

April 2008

CBP Opens Andrade Port Earlier for Yuma Harvest Season

Customs and Border Patrol will open the Andrade port of entry three hours earlier, Monday through Saturday, starting March 17 through June 7, to accommodate the seasonal influx of agricultural workers from Mexico. In an effort to alleviate congestion at the San Luis port of entry and reduce wait times, the port will open to process workers.

The pilot program was first proposed a number of months ago when a consortium of entities consisting of customs brokerage firms, agri-business, public officials, private businesses and the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation tried to pinpoint the root cause behind a dramatic downturn in the San Luis economy that until 2006, had experienced exponential growth across all sectors of industry. Other concerns centered around the inability of farm-workers to cross each day, which in return left hundreds of millions of dollars in crops left in the field unharvested.

The group took proactive steps to remedy the problem by assembling a speaking body that met with Customs and Border Protection officials at the local level. Throughout these ensuing meetings, members brought various ideas and initiatives to the table that would improve efficiency at the San Luis border. Most recently, the group engaged Customs and Border Protection officials at the local and state level in a series of discussions on best practices and recommendations that may improve the efficiency of processing vehicles and pedestrians alike.

Through a collective effort, CBP worked diligently to develop an alternative test pilot program at The Andrade Port of Entry which will allow field workers to bypass the congested lines at the San Luis Port of Entry. The ultimate effects of the program will not likely be completely realized until next harvest season but the immediate impact will better serve Yuma communities and help mitigate losses in the fields due to worker shortage.

Monthly Stat Report

February 2008	Yuma	San Luis	Somerton	Wellton
Residential Permits	24 - \$4,000,300	12 - \$1,223,321	5 - \$357,020	3 - \$465,740
Total Value of Permits	156 - \$31,894,147	35 - \$1,616,973	21 - \$414,895	10 - \$508,490
Total City Tax Collections (1/08)	\$3,656,833	\$432,715	\$127,163	\$53,875

East Wetlands Protection Named State Project of the Year

The City of Yuma's Utilities Department's role in bringing additional fresh water to the Yuma East Wetlands has earned an award for the Public Works Project of the Year by the Arizona Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA). The East Wetlands project won in the category for developments \$2 million or less.

The revegetation and restoration project affects 25 acres of the 1,400-acre overall restoration project in the Yuma East Wetlands. The City is augmenting water flows in this area using drinking water, about 500,000 gallons a day, that has been used to backwash sand filters at the City's treatment plant. Water used to clean the filters is collected, settled and later pumped into back channels at the wetlands. By returning this water to the Colorado River, the City gets return flow credits, meaning it costs the City little to reuse the water for the restoration.

An additional 20 acres along a levee has been recently cleared and is next to receive flows from the city's water. In all, City water will flow to about 60-70 acres that would otherwise not have received it. The overall East Wetlands restoration project, coordinated by the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, consists of 1,400 acres of land between the Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge and the confluence of the Colorado and Gila rivers.

Source: City of Yuma - Dave Nash

Allstate Begins Hiring

The Allstate Insurance Claims Center has begun hiring for 220 new claims processing specialist. The new office is part of Allstate's expansion of its "Express" claims handling model, which is focused on improving customer service and eliminating redundancies in the company's claims organization. The Yuma Express office will be one of nine current or planned Express offices in the U.S.



Front Entrance of New Call Center

Allstate Express office employees will serve as the first point of contact for the vast majority of Allstate customers. The Allstate Express office will occupy approximately 29,000 square feet of a single story building in the Rio Vista Commerce Center office park near the intersection of Giss Parkway and Castle Dome.