

# E-LETTER

## Riverfront Partnership Recognized by International Council

The city of Yuma and C.W. Clark, Inc. were recently recognized for their exemplary public/private partnership by the International Economic Development Council that has allowed for a new \$80 million development that will revitalize the downtown Yuma river walk. The partnership award recognizes outstanding and innovative public/private development projects that have enhanced the economic revitalization of distressed communities, states, or regions. Winners represent efforts in which larger private contributions have leveraged vital public commitments.

The "Pivot Point" project will be located on 22 acres of vacant land within the Yuma Crossing National Historic Landmark and adjacent 7 miles of improved public greenway along the Colorado River. At full build-out the project will contain a Hilton Garden Inn with 230 executive business class hotel rooms, 50 boutique hotel rooms, a 25,000 s.f. conference room, 40 town homes, 50 apartments, 105,00 s.f. of retail, 80,000 s.f. of office, 50,000 s.f. Federal Courthouse, and 26,000 s.f. of restaurant/entertainment. Total private investment for the project is estimated to exceed \$100 million.



### Yuma Company One of the Fastest Growing in America

Sun Country Restoration specializes in disaster reconstruction and was recently ranked as one of the 5,000 fastest growing companies in America by Inc. magazine.

The company has posted impressive revenue growth since 2003 of over 80% and has a service market that extends into California.

### Fortune Companies

Yuma is home to some of the largest companies in the world. Some notable employers that have their plant operations here include:

**General Motors (Fortune 5)**  
**Allstate (Fortune 100)**  
**Johnson Controls (Fortune 100)**  
**Weyerhaeuser (Fortune 100)**  
**Dole (Fortune 400)**  
**Shaw Carpet (Fortune 500)**

## Yuma Manufacturing Association

The Yuma Manufacturers' Association (YMA) is a newly formed group made up of area plant human resources and operations managers as well as maintenance technicians with the purpose of encouraging interface between industry leadership in the region.

The Association has identified three levels of skills training for employees that will improve the productivity and efficiency of plant operations. PLC knowledge/application and basic electrical training will be the first modules introduced for the 1st Quarter of 2008 with the assistance of the Yuma Private Industry Council. Employees will be selected by employers to attend the 40 hour training course conducted by skilled, experienced instructors and training cost will be offset by the Arizona Job Training Grant for 50% per employee. The goal of the program is to equip each individual with the skills and training necessary to increase their value to the company and address skill sets that are difficult to find in Yuma.

If you are interested in your company or organization joining, please contact us at (928) 782-7774

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# Innovation Frontier Arizona Launches



On Tuesday November 11, 2007, GYEDC was in attendance in Tucson with Governor Napolitano for the launch of the Innovation Frontier Arizona. The IFA is the governors' initiative to align Southern Arizona education with the needs of industries in the region. The Innovation Frontier Arizona is fueled by a recent \$5 million award of a WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Initiative that will be used to serve the counties of Yuma, Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz.

In cooperation with the three other counties, Yuma will use the resources funded to help improve upon local skill sets and address talent needs to help foster new industry and technology for the region. The effort will also grow entrepreneurship opportunities and leverage our areas aerospace-defense, information technology, and border assets around a broadly-defined homeland security-framework. Our region's community college and university have already begun developing core curriculums centered around key areas of interest such as: engineering and entrepreneurship. This initiative will extend to the local K-12 system and help educators develop new approaches and skill sets for contextual learning in math, science, and business-concept development ensuring a continuous pipeline of essential talent.

Innovation Frontier Arizona's (IFA) WIRED initiative will address regional talent demands through career ladder development and system alignment for engineering technology, information technology and entrepreneurship. The region's partnership will develop core education and training curriculum that meets needs defined by industry. The education strategy includes contextual learning in science, technology, engineering and math (S.T.E.M.), and the application of digital literacy skills to sectors that support the flow of goods across the border. The IFA will support entrepreneurship strategies to spur high-tech and other small business activity.

## Yuma's GDP is Growing

An introductory new measure of MSA's economies was released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis last month. Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is the market value of final goods and services produced is BEA's preferred and most comprehensive measure of economic activity. Out of 363 MSA's economies that were calculated, Yuma, AZ ranked 27th in GDP growth. This ranking is a testament to the progressive approach the region has taken to the growth, balance and diversification of our economy.

# Project Updates

## Allied West Paper Plant

Recently, Allied West Paper Plant passed two of its final requirements. A public forum was held to allow local citizens to voice their opinions on the project and to allow the company to dispel any misconceptions about the hazards of the project and its effect on the surrounding community.

On November 7, the paper company was granted annexation of industrial acreage into the city. The annexation will allow the company to use the city's water and wastewater services. The conditional use permit (CUP) hearings will be held in early December.

The facility will total 90,000 sf and will be situated on 26 acres of heavy industrial zoned land. The plant will initially employ 35 people with an estimated 100 by full build-out. The jobs will be high wage positions between \$18-30 per hour. Ground breaking is scheduled to begin in early '08.

## Agrinext Ethanol

Agrinext Ethanol was recently granted a major land use amendment to the county's 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The change converts 141 acres of Agricultural Rural Preservation (A-RP) to Heavy Industrial (H-1).

The Ethanol Plant currently is awaiting the issuance of their air quality permit from ADEQ which they expect by late November or early December.

The footprint of the project will be located on 29 acres of a total 160 acres of land. Agrinext plans to transport the 50 million + gallons of ethanol they will produce each year to western markets; predominantly California and Arizona. It will employ 60-70 high skilled, high-wage jobs. The companies aggressive plans follow suit with other similar projects in the East County centered around renewable fuel manufacturing.

## ACT Expands Operations

The ACT call center in San Luis has been in operation for less than a year and they are planning to add another 160 new full-time positions to their facility. The additions will bring the call centers employee total to 486.

Since opening its doors in April 2007 with 200 employees, ACT has hired an additional 126 people. Estimated company payroll currently is over \$6 million annually.

Before announcing their latest addition plans, ACT had already exceeded their employment expectations of 300 jobs at full build-out for the center. This is a tremendous milestone for the city of San Luis and their citizens. This amazing progress reflects the quality of worker that the area has to offer and the first-class operation that ACT prides itself on.



Location of Proposed Plant