

# Greater Yuma EDC Investors Making News



**September 01, 2016 Issue**

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# American Heart Association Recognizes YRMC As A Fit-Friendly Worksite

By Rachel Twoguns , @RTwoguns Updated Aug 28, 2016

With Salsa dance classes and ambassadors for healthy living about, Yuma Regional Medical Center has recently been recognized as a Platinum-Level Fit-Friendly Worksite by the American Heart Association for their efforts to help employees eat better and move more.

The YRMC news release says the organization implemented Fit for Life in 2013 as a workplace wellness program for employees and families, with the goal of improving their health and quality of life.

"We started it because we realized that our employees work in a very stressful environment a lot of times," said said director of Corporate Health for YRMC, Jenn Lotz. "They are so wonderful about putting our patients first, but it's really important for them to also focus on their health a lot of times so they can take better care of their patients."

This year marks the second time YRMC's Fit for Life program has been recognized as an American Heart Association Fit-Friendly Worksite.

The release states that Platinum-level employers:

- Offer employees physical activity options in the workplace
- Increase healthy eating options at the worksite
- Promote a wellness culture in the workplace
- Implement at least nine criteria outlined by the American Heart Association in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and culture
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes related to workplace wellness



YUMA REGIONAL  
MEDICAL CENTER

The hospital's release also states that many Americans spend most of their waking hours at sedentary jobs and their lack of physical activity raises their risk for a host of medical problems such as obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes. According to the organization, employers face \$12.7 billion in annual medical expenses due to obesity alone.

To encourage a healthy lifestyle at the hospital, Lotz says they have designated about 80 employees as health ambassadors to encourage their peers to join fitness challenges. The challenges have garnered high participation rates, Lotz said, with one of the most popular challenge being the step-by-step challenge in which employees take 10,000 steps a day.

Employees form groups for the step-by-step challenge and the winning team as well as the individual with the most steps wins prizes. Hundreds of employees join in on the competitions, Lotz says. The participation of employees also extends to their various skills outside of the workplace, Lotz noted, as one health ambassador and YRMC's pharmacy clinical coordinator, Jacob Schwarz, offers Salsa dance classes for his coworkers.

"We have meetings through our wellness program where all the ambassadors will sit and talk about upcoming competitions or programs that are going on," Schwarz said. "I take it back to my department and actually try to recruit as many as possible. This last step-by-step challenge, my pharmacy department actually put three teams together and it was really cutthroat fun. When you have things like that, if you are having fun with something you are not thinking about exercising and working about it."

"Another reason why I think people enjoy the Salsa classes and I enjoy dancing is it is exercising but people don't think of dancing as exercising," Schwarz added. "They are thinking about having fun and going out and doing something. The added benefit is that they don't realize they are being active and doing something physical. It's a great win-win situation."

Lotz noted that the ambassadors have been a large asset to YRMC's fitness program.

"Without our ambassadors we wouldn't have such a great program," Lotz said. "They are the ones that really get their teams excited. They spread the word and get people involved so we are really lucky to have a robust program here."



Photo By Rachel Twoguns/Yuma Sun

Yuma Regional Medical Center has recently been recognized as a Platinum-Level Fit-Friendly Worksite by the American Heart Association. Here, Jacob Schwarz, pharmacy clinical coordinator and instructor of Salsa dance classes offered to YRMC employees, strikes a dance pose with director of Corporate Health for YRMC, Jenn Lotz.

Additionally, YRMC officials say the success of YRMC's Fit for Life program is the basis for Healthy Workforce, which aids Yuma businesses to improve the health of their own employees.

With the Healthy Workforce program, Lotz says YRMC can help community businesses with implementing and maintaining their own employee wellness programs through biometric health screenings, monthly wellness education and programming, newsletters, healthy recipes and challenges.

Lotz explained that there are various ways businesses can encourage a healthy lifestyle at the worksite.

"Start small, incorporate healthy activities at staff meetings where you might get your employees moving," Lotz said. "It's so important to have an emphasis on workplace wellness."

More information about the Fit-Friendly Worksites program can be found by visiting [heart.org/worksitewellness](http://heart.org/worksitewellness).

For more information on YRMC's Wellness program or the Healthy Workforce program, visit [yumaregional.org/wellness](http://yumaregional.org/wellness) or call 928-336-7958 or email [yrmcwellness@yumaregional.org](mailto:yrmcwellness@yumaregional.org).

# Tunes & Tacos Festival Wins At Arizona Parks And Recreation Association Annual Awards



City Of Yuma News Aug 18, 2016

Photo by Randy Hoeft/Yuma Sun

The City of Yuma's annual Tunes & Tacos Festival ranked first in its category for Outstanding Program/Community Special Event for populations of 25,000 to 100,000 at the 2016 Arizona Parks and Recreation Association (APRA) awards.

Each year, the APRA Awards Committee reviews dozens of nominations from throughout the state for awards recognizing the organizations, institutions, or agencies for the development, implementation or coordination of outstanding programs. Programs must have been conducted between June 2015 and May 2016. This year, there were five other nominations were in the same category as the City of Yuma's annual Tunes & Tacos Festival.

The Tunes and Tacos festival was first established in 2010, when it was simply known as the Taco Festival. It was initiated at the Ray Kroc Complex as a way to boost the Yuma Civic Center's brand awareness amongst the local community and to supplement revenue into the center. A live concert portion brought a new twist to the event in 2014, for the City's Centennial celebration. The increase in attendance that year led to it retaining the name Tunes and Tacos and continuing to include a concert each year since.

"Over the last six years, this event has grown, and it has gotten bigger and better," noted Parks and Recreation Director Debbie Wendt, who presented the award to the City Council at its Aug. 17 meeting. "It wouldn't have been possible without the great support we get from Mayor and Council, City Administration, and of course so many of the businesses and organizations that step forward to help us sponsor and put on this event."

In 2016, City staff estimated that there were a total of more than 15,000 attendees throughout the day.

# Gila Ridge Ag Program Named Best Of Its Kind In State

By Amy Crawford, Yuma Sun staff writer Updated Aug 20, 2016

The agriculture program at Gila Ridge High School can put another notch in its achievement belt, as it was named the 2016 Arizona Agricultural Program of Year for the Arizona Agricultural Teachers Association (AATA) for single-teacher programs, the YUHSD said in a news release.

The program, under the direction of teacher Danielle Duran, had several big accomplishments this past school year.

The school had two alumni students, Larissa Lopez Martinez and Brett Taylor, earn their FFA American Degrees, Duran said, which will be awarded at the National FFA Convention in October. The American Degree is one of the organization's highest honors.

"Only 1 percent of all FFA members reach this level. We only have three this year from Yuma," she said. "These students serve as role models for the younger members and serve as an example of the greatest award an FFA member can achieve."

"My freshman year of high school I was immediately interested in one day getting the American Degree, now seeing my name on the list as a Gila Ridge American Degree recipient gives me chills," Lopez Martinez said. "I hope to serve as an inspiration to other students at Gila Ridge to get more involved with agriculture and the FFA program."



Loaned Photo/Gila Ridge High School

Alizae Diaz works a cutting saw in the agriculture department rooms at Gila Ridge High School. The school's ag program was named the top single-teacher program for 2016 by the Arizona Agricultural Teachers Association (AATA)

Spring 2016 graduate McKenna Mellon is also the current state FFA president, Duran said, "which is another big accomplishment." Another student, Madeleine Hayes, was one of 85 named to the 2016 National FFA Chorus that will perform for the national convention.

The agriculture program and Duran were recognized for her abilities in the classroom, student assessment scores, and the outstanding Career Development Event teams she advises. Duran has taken an active role in AATA committees, advocating for education and agriculture, YUHSD said in its release. The program was formally recognized for its accomplishment in July.



Loaned Photo/Gila Ridge High School

Students in the agriculture program at Gila Ridge High School pose for a photo in downtown Yuma. The school's ag program was named the top single-teacher program for 2016 by the Arizona Agricultural Teachers Association (ATA).

“There is an old saying in our profession that the teacher makes the program, and this is another example of an outstanding teacher making a program great,” said Dennis Bushong, 2015-2016 AATA president. “The Gila Ridge Agriculture Program deserves this award for all the hard and positive work they have done.”

Gila Ridge also has the largest active chapter in the state of Arizona, with 184 students taking agriculture courses through the Career and Technical Education program, Duran said.

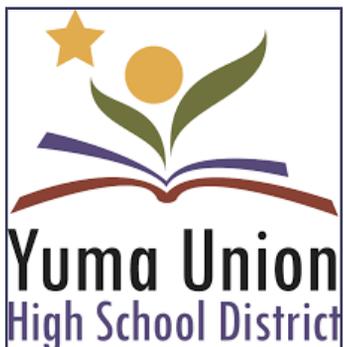
“Danielle, the students, and the support of the community have taken this program to the next level, and as a school we are extremely proud of all their accomplishments. I know with all the support that this program receives they will continue to grow and go even further. This is a program that has a direct impact on Yuma and its agricultural community,” said Shawn Wehrer, Principal of Gila Ridge High School.

Duran said while she's not a typical farm girl from a farming family, she grew up in Yuma and has been around agriculture all her life.

“I was in FFA all four years at Cibola High School,” she said. “I knew I always wanted to go into the field of agriculture, and this ended up being the best decision I made for myself.”

Duran said all the accomplishments of the chapter and its members will further inspire future students at Gila Ridge.

“I think it will show them that with the hard work and dedication that they, too, can reach (these achievements).”





When it comes to testing large scale weapon systems such as 155mm artillery pieces, as well as unmanned aircraft, parachute systems, helicopter weapons, technologies to defeat the threat of roadside bombs, and much more, U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground boasts a long and storied history.

# YUMA PROVING GROUND WORK YEAR HAS MANY FACES

CHUCK WULLENJOHN, YUMA PROVING GROUND  
AUGUST 7, 2016

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Proving ground testing offer many benefits to customers, such as specialized data gathering equipment, some of the longest overland ranges in the western world, a remote location, and deep expertise that began in the early 1950's. YPG customers mostly hail from America's military services but also from friendly nations around the world and private firms.

YPG's test workload, which directly benefits national defense efforts, has come down from its 2011 peak, but continues to remain large.

Following are some numbers crunched from the YPG workload that occurred during the first nine months of the government fiscal year, October 2015 through June 2016:

- Individual test programs performed: 410
- Direct test labor hours: 1,153,572
- Total rounds fired: 610,000
- Artillery rounds fired: 18,001
- Parachute drops completed: cargo: 861; personnel: 39,154
- Test miles driven (both tracked and wheeled vehicles): 53,030

But there is another side to YPG. As an organization consisting of nearly 2,500 individuals, the proving ground is committed to providing a safe workplace where no form of discrimination, sexual harassment or workplace violence is tolerated.

Earlier this year, Yuma Proving Ground, along with the Army as a whole, highlighted the issue of sexual harassment and assault. Sexual assault, it was pointed out, is different from nearly every other type of crime, for only one of every three such incidents are reported to law enforcement. There has long been a stigma associated with sexual assault that has prevented victims from speaking out.

"The sexual assault stigma has somewhat gone away," said Diane Umphress, executive director of family advocacy center at Amberly's Place, who spoke to a large group gathered at the proving ground. "There is much more compassion for sexual assault victims than just a few years ago."

According to Umphress, when sexual assault cases were reported in the past, much of the responsibility was placed on the victim. Intrusive questions were frequently asked: Did you say no? Did they hear you say no? What were you wearing? Did you do something to lure the person? Did you kiss the person? Tell me how you're not responsible?





“Law enforcement personnel are well trained today in dealing with these situations and their response is much different,” she said. “When they start believing the words told by the victim, and he or she feels that, the walls start tumbling down. The victim provides more information simply because he or she feels believed.”

Last year, Amberly’s Place experienced a 78 percent increase in calls from sexual assault victims in Yuma County.

Amberly’s Place personnel respond to YPG whenever called for sexual assault or domestic violence cases. About 600 people reside in housing at the proving ground. Victims are transported to Amberly’s Place in downtown Yuma where medical examinations are conducted as well as any interviews. Overnight accommodations are provided at Yuma’s Safe House or in local motels.

Umphress points out that the problem of sexual assault affects all age groups, noting that the oldest victim to ever use Amberly’s Place services was 85 years old. She had been sexually assaulted by a man hired to retrieve Christmas decorations from a storage shed.

Dina Mabry, YPG’s sexual assault response coordinator, says a variety of activities take place at the proving ground to raise awareness of the sexual assault problem. “Seeing and hearing it from individuals who have experienced the pain of sexual assault brings it to life,” she said.

“Take the message seriously, take it to heart,” said Col. Randy Murray, commander, before the YPG group dispersed.

Programs such as this highlight the values and moral judgments Americans hold dear and YPG senior leaders seek to share with members of the workforce.

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Yuma Community

# Career & Education Expo

Expó de Educación y Empleo

September 7, 2016  
9 am - 1 pm

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Yuma Community Career Expo Contact Numbers