



MARINES

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA

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MCAS Yuma Employees Receive Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. (Feb. 24, 2013) – Three Marine Corps Air Station Yuma employees were honored with the prestigious Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award at the Sonoran Pueblo on MCAS Yuma, Jan. 24, 2013.

Virgil Tapispisan, the drug demand reduction (DDR) coordinator and a native of Yuma, Joannah Hagemann, the drug detection program assistant and also a native of Yuma, and Staff Sgt. Jason Harmony, the Marine Aircraft Group 13 group substance abuse control officer, MCAS Yuma SACO of the quarter, and a native of Lexington, Nb., received the award from Brig. Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, the Marine Corps Installations – West commanding general.

The DDR department received this award for the development of multiple training programs such as "Is Ignorance Really Bliss: High on Spice," "Uppers, Downers and All-Arounders," "Faces of Meth: An Interactive Look at Methamphetamine," the creation of "101 Critical Days of Summer Challenge" and active participation during Red Ribbon Week. This is the second year straight the DDR department has been awarded this honor.

“This award doesn’t belong to DDR but to the SACOs who work with me, because they are the backbone of the program,” said Tapispisan. “Kudos to them, I give this award to the SACOs of MCAS Yuma.”

The goal of the DDR program is to provide Marine Corps plans, policy and resources for units aboard MCAS to prevent problems which detract from the ethos of good conduct and discipline and to promote peak performance and readiness. The program provides for aggressive drug testing programs and substance abuse education and awareness briefs and training.

Last fiscal year, MCAS Yuma collected 12,406 drug testing samples and recorded the lowest drug-related incidents Marine Corps-wide at less than one percent. These milestones are achieved through the evidence-based substance abuse prevention program which collaborates

with Marine Corps Community Service's Semper Fit, Single Marine Program, Health Promotions, and Safety Department programs along with other resources in the community.

"We are always trying not just to be the average Marine Corps base," said David Koopman, the MCAS Yuma MCCA Director. "We want to be the best. This is an example of one of our programs pushing it out there as far as they can to be the best. We are now the benchmark and the standard for the rest of the Corps."

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Virgil Tapisipan, the drug demand reduction coordinator and a native of Yuma, third from the left, Joannah Hagemann, the drug detection program assistant and also a native of Yuma, fourth from the left, and Staff Sgt. Jason Harmony, the Marine Aircraft Group 13 group substance abuse control officer, MCAS Yuma SACO of the quarter, and a native of Lexington, Nb., third from the right, received the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award from Brig. Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, Marine Corps Installations - West commanding general, second from the right, at the Sonoran Pueblo on Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Jan. 24, 2013. This award signifies the excellent performance of all those involved with MCAS Yuma's substance abuse prevention program. This is the second year running that the staff of MCAS Yuma has been honored with this award.

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