



**Minutes**  
**April 14, 2026**  
**11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Yuma Union High School District Office**  
**3150 S Avenue A, Yuma AZ 85364**

**Attendees:**

First and Last Name	Agency/Organization	Sector
Joanne Fiser	YCADC	Substance Use Organization
Nallely Amador	ACHIEVE Human Services	Healthcare Professional
Edgar Figueroa	Achieve Human Services	Business
William Lloyd	YPG	State, Local or Tribal Governmental Agency
Jaime Burnett	CDC Foundation	Substance Use Organization
Berenice Ortiz	TLCR	Substance Use Organization
Raul Castillo	SMILE Center for Independent Living	Youth Serving Organization
Courtney Starkey	Community Partners	Healthcare Professional
Ruben Ornelas	Crossroads Mission	Substance Use Organization
Tim Keller	YUHSD #70	School
Miguel Burciaga	Crossroads Mission	Substance Use Organization
Alma Herrera	Regional Center For Border Health	Substance Use Organization
Leif Erickson	Community Medical Services	Substance Use Organization
Oswaldo Rodriguez	Yuma County Juvenile Justice Court	State, Local or Tribal Governmental Agency
Jeffrey Ross	Yuma/ MHU	Law Enforcement
David Reynoso	Vista High School	School
Christian Hernandez	Onvida Health	Healthcare Professional
Jessica Hubbard	Yuma Elementary School District  Castle Dome	School
Avanikkha Elayappen	Onvida Health Pediatrics	Healthcare Professional
Anthony Legros	Yuma Police Department	Law Enforcement
Jennifer Hulbert	Yuma County Public Health	State, Local or Tribal Governmental Agency
Nathalia Flores	AWC	School
Jose Arguelles	Yuma Police department	Law Enforcement
Shelley Mellon	RL Jones Insurance	Business
Steve Legros	COY Fire Dept. Retired	Civic/Volunteer Organization
Karen Watts	City of Yuma Coalition	Civic/Volunteer Organization
Jonathan Duarte	Yuma County Adult Probation	Law Enforcement
Virginia Legros	Yuma County Mental Health Coalition	Substance Use Organization
Matthew Wills	Yuma Sector Border Patrol	Law Enforcement
Odom	Journey Church	Religious or Fraternal Organization

Bruce Gwynn	Retired	Civic/Volunteer Organization
Sergio Bobadilla	Yuma Sector Border Patrol	Law Enforcement
Shelley Mellon	RL Jones Insurance	Business
Marissela Hodges	NCHP	Healthcare Professional
Lilian Campa	YUHSD 70	School
Vanessa Pérez	Onvida Behavioral Health	Healthcare Professional
Keith Francis Jr.	AzCH	Healthcare Professional
Beto Garcia	Charlie Health	Healthcare Professional
George M Owens	Arizona Complete Health	Healthcare Professional
Jordin Aguilar	Onvida Behavioral Health Center	Healthcare Professional
Oscar Pena	Rural Arizona Engagement	Civic/Volunteer Organization
Jorge Flores	Rural Arizona Engagement	Youth Serving Organization
Arisel Torres	Transitional Living Center Recovery	Substance Use Organization
Jose Sainez	YPD	Law Enforcement
Candice Brown	MCAS Yuma	Youth Serving Organization
Isabela Martinez Breto	CPIH	Youth Serving Organization
Luis Vazquez	Community partners integrated healthcare	Healthcare Professional

## Approval of Minutes -

Pledge/March 2026 Meeting Minutes – Bernice Ortiz motions. Jamie Burnett seconds. Approved.

## Welcome Champion Introductions & Community Updates

### Jennifer Hulbert | Yuma County Public Health Services District

“Increase in Poison Center Reports Linked to Kratom-Containing Kava Products — National Poison Data System, United States, 2000–2025”

This article highlights trends in poison center reports involving kava, including when it’s used with kratom. It shows an increase in both use and more serious health effects in recent years, raising growing concerns, especially since these products are not well regulated. It’s a helpful resource for understanding why awareness, monitoring, and education are important.

Increase in Poison Center Reports Linked to Kratom-Containing Kava Products — National Poison Data System, United States, 2000–2025 | MMWR

### Achieve Human Services (Edgar Figueroa)

Free thrift store available to support the community

A valuable resource for individuals and families in need

### Beto Garcia | Charlie Health

Providing personalized and accessible intensive therapy services for children and adults

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1giABHVkGQR66T-I9ZRG7AXz5L5zTaQJk>

### SMILE Center for Independent Living (Raul Castillo)

Youth Transitioning Classes available

Supporting youth with life skills and independence

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1wgNpqTePCOXN...>

**City of Yuma (Karen Watts)**

Yuma County Nurses Gala

May 2nd

Q (Quechan Casino/Resort)

Celebrating and supporting healthcare professionals in our community

**Arizona Complete Health – AzCH (Keith Francis Jr.)**

Ongoing trainings on how to access services and resources

Supporting community education and navigation of care

**Jordin Aguilar | Onvida Behavioral Health Center**

Has been awarded a grant to expand behavioral health services for Veterans, especially American Indian/Native American Veterans

JAguiar5@onvidahealth.org

**Oscar Pena | Rural Arizona Engagement**

Annual Mental Health Forum

Saturday, April 18

9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

AWC Yuma Main Campus

Attendees: <https://ruralarizona.us/YumaYouth>

Resource Fair (Tabling): <https://ruralarizona.us/ResourceFair>

[oscar@raze.org](mailto:oscar@raze.org) | [jorge@raze.org](mailto:jorge@raze.org)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1JkqNACvYUq2PZMS8yzVD7Yfw9ssH500b>

**Jorge Flores | Rural Arizona Engagement**

Building Healthy Futures Forum

April 18

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1KYQ3QMQLgZeVCv8Nz82iNy8h6IG8dYKP>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1AWZOoeWc5h1zDDDCBtozEpRCzNezwhC4>

**Transitional Living Center Recovery – TLCR (Berenice Ortiz & Arisel Torres)**

Monthly Activities:

1st Saturday: Carnival | 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

2nd Tuesday: Pizza Party | 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

3rd Friday: Ice Cream Social | 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

4th Saturday: Karaoke Night | 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Recovery Palooza

May 2

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Carver Park

Resources & Flyers:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-TVrBJUpY5Yj...>

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1eBb3YEmR\\_3QX0S7HV3npyilCpvdAQ2Kv](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1eBb3YEmR_3QX0S7HV3npyilCpvdAQ2Kv)

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1SzdS1a\\_fsZa9ddE1aH\\_-MH8-3hKp-\\_ta](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1SzdS1a_fsZa9ddE1aH_-MH8-3hKp-_ta)

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WS8vt\\_fCe3HoQKt2uCRQlihF3EJx-F2T](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1WS8vt_fCe3HoQKt2uCRQlihF3EJx-F2T)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1UShUZMdsfpMM4xGssrWovQBeACZWweMu>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1G4TUOlolZGVnojbAvrDUFUIHirbae6sl>

**Candice Brown | MCAS Yuma**

Month of the Military Child – April Recognition

Wear Purple on Friday, April 24, 2026

<https://www.war.gov/Spotlights/Month-of-the-Military-Child/>

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ruHWj\\_5eiD0PLcysAGgAxuNrr2QFGqho](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ruHWj_5eiD0PLcysAGgAxuNrr2QFGqho)

## YCADC UPDATE:

- Jaime Burnett with AZ HIDTA delivered a *Meth 2.0* presentation at Transitional Living Recovery Center, providing valuable education to both staff and members and increasing awareness of current substance use trends.
- Arizona Complete Health generously supported Grad Night 2026 and ongoing coalition efforts with a \$6,000 sponsorship, helping expand safe, substance-free opportunities for local youth.
- Jennifer Blackwell welcomed us on the *Today in Yuma Show*, highlighting Grad Night 2026 event details and promoting a safe and memorable celebration for graduating seniors
  
- **Today's Presenters**  
We appreciate you sharing your time, expertise, and heart with our coalition.
  - Karen Watts, Nurse Practitioner and City Council Member
  - Jaime Burnett, Public Health Analyst, Overdose Response Strategy AZ HIDTA

## Champion Thank You's

- Allo Fiber – Monthly Lunch Sponsor  
Thank you to Allo Fiber for generously sponsoring our monthly lunches. Your support helps fuel our Champions and strengthens the prevention work happening throughout our community.
- Henry Gonzalez, Vince Harman and Courtney Starkey – CONNECTION Podcast Guests  
Thank you to Henry Gonzalez, Vince Harman and Courtney Starkey for joining us as guests on the CONNECTION Podcast and sharing insights that inspire collaboration and strengthen prevention efforts across our community. Stay tuned for the launch of these podcasts.

## Presentation

- Karen Watts, Nurse Practitioner and City Council Member

## Presentation

- Jaime Burnett, Public Health Analyst, Overdose Response Strategy AZ HIDTA

## Good of the Order: Ginny Legros, Special Project Manager

We kindly ask that within 48 hrs prior to this meeting, please click ACCEPT or DECLINE to the calendar invite. (Please leave your badges at your seat.)

## Adjourned:

Meeting is Adjourned 1:00 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 12, 2026**

**Yuma CARES** unites community partners, prevention leaders, and mental health professionals to promote wellness, resilience, and recovery across Yuma County. By addressing substance use prevention and mental health awareness together, we take a whole-person, whole-community approach—because healthy minds and healthy choices go hand in hand.



#### **C - Compassion:**

Compassion is the foundation of everything we do. We believe in meeting individuals and families where they are, without judgment or stigma. Whether someone is navigating mental health challenges, substance use concerns, or both, compassion creates safety, trust, and hope. By leading with empathy, we foster a community where asking for help is seen as a strength, not weakness. Use Disorder (AUD) with understanding and empathy. By showing compassion, we create an environment where people feel safe to seek help and support.

#### **A - Advocacy:**

Advocacy drives awareness and change. Yuma CARES amplifies conversations around substance misuse, mental health, and prevention through outreach, education, and community engagement. We advocate for early intervention, accessible services, and policies that support prevention, treatment, and mental wellness—ensuring every voice matters, and every story counts.

#### **R - Resources:**

Access matters. We work to connect individuals, families, and professionals with trusted prevention tools, mental health services, treatment options, and community supports. By strengthening partnerships and building a robust referral network, Yuma CARES ensures no one has to navigate challenges alone—and help is always within reach.

#### **E - Education:**

Education empowers prevention. We provide evidence-based education to youth, families, educators, and the broader community on substance use prevention, mental health awareness, coping skills, and resilience. By increasing understanding and reducing stigma, we equip our community to recognize warning signs early, make informed choices, and support one another proactively.

#### **S - Support:**

Support sustains recovery and wellness. From prevention to intervention to long-term well-being, Yuma CARES champions ongoing support for individuals and families. Through collaborative partnerships, peer connections, and community programs, we reinforce that recovery, healing, and mental wellness are possible—and no one has to walk the journey alone.