

## VMU-1 Welcome Aboard Letter



Dear incoming Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and families of the “Watchdogs,”

Welcome to Yuma, Arizona and to Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1. It is a privilege to serve alongside you in this unique squadron. We are the first Group-5 Unmanned Aircraft Squadron in the Marine Corps and one of the oldest Squadrons in the United States Armed Forces formed for the expressed purpose of unmanned aviation. Akin to the capability of vertical envelopment brought by the advent of helicopters in Korea, Unmanned Aerial Systems have revolutionized intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance as well as targeting and observation for artillery and Naval Gunfire. You and your loved ones can take pride knowing that what you accomplish each day is real-world.

The specialized capabilities of the unmanned aviation give our squadron distinct responsibilities within the operating environment of the Fleet Marine Force. From the moment you check in, you will be contributing to a unit conducting real world operations in support of combatant command areas of responsibility. While the squadron works seven days a week to support operational and combat commitments, extended family separations due to deployments are rare and the unit ensures predictable work-life balance. I am committed to ensuring your time with the Watchdogs is professionally fulfilling.

The city of Yuma, Arizona presents a unique opportunity for you and your families to explore the southwestern deserts of the United States. If this is your first time here, I feel the charms of the region will grow on you. Yuma is situated within very easy reach of two major urban locations in San Diego and Phoenix, both with world class zoos, museums, professional sports, and other attractions to suit a wide variety of interests. In between are numerous areas to provide ample opportunity for outdoor recreating such as hiking, camping, boating, off-roading, hunting, fishing, and more. The summers are very hot, but the winters are so popular that seasonal visitors double our population.

Our unique challenges are supported by Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, which offers services and resources to help us all grow personally, professionally, and as families. Marine Corps Family Team Building offers regular classes that teach families, spouses, and service members the skills and perspectives needed to thrive within the financial, work, and family stresses of military life. A great place to start is to attend a L.I.N.K.S. class to meet other new spouses in the area. FOCUS, Military OneSource, the Chaplain, and Navy Marine Corps Relief Society are worth discussing and using as a family as they offer many resources for school, finances, work, and skilled relationships. My family and I use these services and grow with and through them.

Our Unit Readiness Coordinator and Deployment Readiness Coordinator have contacted you to introduce themselves, or will do so soon. They stand ready to assist you with any needs you may encounter and will provide resources to help you stay informed and updated with squadron events. My family and I look forward to meeting and getting to know each of you as we have the opportunity to work together over the coming months and years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Luger".

LtCol Christopher D. Luger  
Commanding Officer

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1