

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

brought to you by the **future leaders & entrepreneurs exchange**

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How Has FLEX Shaped You?

FLEX is devoted to providing a setting where young people can build relationships and develop themselves professionally. Here are some testimonials from FLEX members who truly believe in the FLEX mission and have seen the effects in their own lives.



Kat: One of my top goals in joining FLEX was to get more involved in my community. Through volunteer, social, and professional development events, I have achieved that goal. Being a part of leadership has also helped me expand my skill set in planning and organizing events and networking. Plus, I've made a lot of new friends and it's really fun!

Laura: FLEX has broadened my knowledge of Venango County and the opportunities in the area. We've hiked Two Mile, attended shows at the Barrow, and participated in a guided informational tour of Franklin. Through personal connections made at socials, I have been able to get involved with organizations and give back to my community through volunteering.

Deb: Joining FLEX has introduced me to new people, different activities and events, and places I may not have explored. The members are extremely inviting and helpful. A recent FLEX event gave me the opportunity to speak with other professionals and led me to my first job interview since moving here! It's a great way to get your name out there and open new doors.

Marissa: FLEX gave me the opportunity to create a social circle and flourish in Venango County, and when I decided I wanted to thrive elsewhere, it helped me, too. My employers at the job I landed were impressed with the marketing and leadership skills I learned through FLEX and asked that I utilize those talents at work.

Ashley: Since my participation in FLEX as a college intern at the Chamber, I have seen the group grow tremendously as I have also grown in my career. The personal connections and leadership experience I've gained have shaped me into the professional I am today.

"The Future of Venango Area Business!"



Deborah Thompson recently moved to the area with her family and is excited to find a career and get more involved here. She is from New Hampshire and loves where she grew up, but has always been drawn to Pennsylvania, as her parents grew up in Hydetown and Oil City.

Deb attended Edinboro University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Sport and Recreation Administration and graduated summa cum laude. She has also completed courses through the Life Office Management Association (LOMA).

For her career, Deb most recently worked as a Claims Associate for Loyal Christian Benefit Association (LCBA), a life insurance company. She is currently looking for a job in our area and would like something

with structure and a predictable work schedule. She is open to many different career paths but hopes to use her strengths in communication, interpersonal skills, and leadership, and she has also been described as friendly, dedicated, and a versatile worker.

With her husband Eric (who was featured in our June FYI), Deb is raising two children—Carter (7) and Peyton (4). She also spends time exercising, participating in sports and lawn games, playing board games, and listening to music. In our area, some of her favorite amenities include the trails along the Allegheny River, Wanango, Clarks Donuts, and Hasson Pool.

“In the next 5 to 10 years, I hope to be in a place that my family and I can vacation yearly, the kids are in sports and whatever activity they desire and I have a stable career which I enjoy,” Deb told us.

We look forward to getting to know Deb more and to help her become connected in our region!

TED Talk Recommendation: Every Student Needs a Champion



As the school year begins, we recommend a TED Talk by Rita Pierson, who suggests the importance in building relations with students. She shares candidly that some students and classes are very difficult, but that with encouragement and support, even the most academically challenged can improve and know success.

Following the example of her mother, she shares that, “Kids don’t learn from people they don’t like” and so she has spent her career finding ways to connect to students. She also passes on advise from Stephen Covey, to throw in a few simple things, like seeking first to understand, as opposed to being understood. Simple things, like apologizing. Rita asks “How powerful would our world be if we had kids who were not afraid to take risks, who were not afraid to think, and who had a champion?” Find the full talk here: bit.ly/TED-Rita



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Annual Meeting Save the Date

Mark your calendars on **October 25** for the FLEX Annual Meeting. We will hold the meeting at Karma Coffee Company in Oil City. We will hold a business meeting, elect officers and then enjoy the evening with networking and great food!




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Although he lives just outside Venango County in Grove City, **Randy Arnold** works here and has become involved in our community.

At Pioneer Energy Products (PEPRO), located on Colbert Avenue in Oil City, Randy is employed as Senior Mechanical Engineer. He earned a bachelor's degree in Mechanical

Engineering from Grove City College and is a Licensed Professional Engineer.

Randy grew up in Bradford County, but stayed in Western Pennsylvania after accepting a job at Joy Mining right out of college. He has had the opportunity to travel the world, in which he spent a semester in France and traveled nationally and internationally since college, including Australia, India, China, England, Zambia, Canada, and all around the continental U.S.

Randy is a graduate of the 2019 graduating class of Leadership Venango, where he spent nine months learning about our region and gaining leadership skills. Looking towards the future, he told us he would like to “see the products built in Western PA thrive by creating value in places all over the United States.” He appreciates the business opportunities in Venango County, which have provided his source of income for over 10 years and he believes our area is “primed very well for business.”

In any free time he has, Randy focuses on family—his wife, Joy, and two children, Hailey and Blake. He enjoys camping and going to local fairs with them, and occasional dates with Joy.

“I have always found great people to work with in Venango County,” he told us. “You can count on people to be down to earth, wholesome, and hard working.”

Thanks for your commitment to our region, Randy!

Interested in Serving on FLEX’s Leadership Team?

We’ll be electing new FLEX Officers at our Annual meeting in October. With three committees to serve on or chair—Events & Fundraising, Membership, and Marketing & Community Partnerships—as well as Vice President and President positions, you have the opportunity to find what best fits your interests and skills, while gaining invaluable experience.

Ask a current member of the Leadership team or email flex@venangochamber.org for more information.

Join Our LinkedIn Group

LinkedIn is basically a social network for professionals. Whether you are looking for a job, a new client, or just to expand your network, LinkedIn can be a great tool.



FLEX now has a LinkedIn group where we can connect with young professionals and share FLEX content. To be a part of the group, just search “FLEX - Future Leaders and Entrepreneurs Exchange” and then request to join.



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What a fun evening at the first ever FLEX Chamber After Hours Mixer on August 22! It included great networking, food, activities, raffle prizes, and a photo booth. We appreciate the opportunity to network with one another and invite community members to get to know some of the many young professionals who live and work in Venango County.



OUR MISSION

FLEX represents the needs and interests of Young Professionals by positioning ourselves as leaders, entrepreneurs and advocates for the sustainability of the Venango Area through civic engagement, leadership development, and networking.

Upcoming Events & Meetings:

- **FLEX Campfire Social:** Saturday, September 14, 6 p.m., 2031 Warren Road, Oil City
- **Monthly Meeting:** Monday, September 16, 5:30 p.m., Venango Chamber
- **Marketing Committee Meeting:** Monday, September 16, 6:30 p.m., Venango Chamber
- **Events Committee Meeting:** TBD
- **Membership Committee Meeting:** TBD
- **FLEX Coffee Chat:** Friday, September 27, 7:30 - 9:00 a.m., Karma Coffee, Oil City

Connect with us:



WELCOME NEW FLEX MEMBERS

Randy Arnold
 Jesse Rieman
 Nicole Shreve
 Elise Switzer

Interested in joining? Email Laura at laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu.