

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

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### The Importance of a Professional Headshot

*Free Headshots Available at FLEX Annual Meeting—October 25*

Your headshot is sometimes the only visual someone has of you. Do you have a professional headshot, or is your LinkedIn photo a blurry, off-centered selfie with objects in the background?

The FLEX Annual Meeting on Friday, October 25, will be your chance to get a headshot taken for free. Why do you need a professional headshot?

- As mentioned above, sometimes your headshot is the only thing someone sees before choosing to meet with you. First impressions are important, and a bad headshot can keep you from even getting an interview from an employer. Not looking for a job? Headshots can make an impression on potential clients or colleagues, too.



- Having a professional photo shows you care about your image and take it seriously, and can also help your personality shine.
- A headshot puts a face to a name. This is important if you own your own business, or if you are simply looking to grab coffee with another professional.
- There are times when your photo is needed by others—when you join a board of directors, write a guest post on a blog, or are asked to be featured in a publication.

Photography & Multimedia, will be taking headshots at the Annual Meeting. Don't worry about getting too fancy—we just suggest keeping it simple and wearing a solid color.

The Annual Meeting on Friday, October 25, is at Karma Coffee Company (237 Seneca Street, Oil City). It starts at 5:30 p.m., and includes networking, drinks, food, trivia, a brief program, and an election of new officers for next year.

Find more information about the FLEX Annual Meeting and RSVP by visiting [www.venangochamber.org/events](http://www.venangochamber.org/events).

FLEX Member Sydney Herdle,  
owner of Sydney Herdle



Originally a Venango County native, Elise Switzer moved away after college, but recently moved back and told us: "I am thrilled to be home."

Elise is a Realtor at Shawgo Real Estate, and attended Mercyhurst University where she graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in Art Therapy with a minor in Psychology.

In her career, Elise has earned many achievements. She was named employee of the month just two months after starting at her current job, has received five letters of professional recognition for completed projects, and received promotions within the first year at three different companies she has worked for.

Through her job as a Realtor, Elise has become connected with all that the county has to offer and has

reacquainted herself with this region. She is fortunate to have the opportunity to meet many people and help them call this area home as well.

Elise enjoys the outdoors and art of any kind. She likes to kayak, hike, bike, and garden, and she pursues art with a focus on photography, painting, and ceramics. Elise appreciates the outdoor recreation opportunities, family friend festivals and community activities, arts, theatre, and good food available in Venango County, and the great friends she gets to share it all with. She is especially excited to enjoy her hometown with her husband, two sons, and their family and friends who live here.

A goal of Elise's is to "make roots" here. "I am looking forward to becoming an integral part of the community by establishing myself as a Realtor here and finding avenues to get involved such as becoming a part of FLEX and other community organizations," she told us.

Welcome back, Elise! We're excited to have you in our community.

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## TED Talk Recommendation: Why You Should Talk to Strangers

As children, we are often taught that we should never talk to strangers. Well, there just might be some value in those missed connections. This month's recommended TED Talk is from Kio Stark. Stark is an author and self-proclaimed stranger enthusiast; she says she is "obsessed with talking to strangers" and it has provided her many great experiences.

Stark says, "these quick interactions can lead to a feeling that sociologists call 'fleeting intimacy.' So, it's a brief experience that has emotional resonance and

meaning." These interactions can change the course of someone's day, and they usually leave both parties feeling better. We talk a lot about making connections and helping people feel connected in our community, and talking to strangers is a great way to make those little connections.

Stark says we should try to be less suspicious of each other, and gives some easy-to-implement tips for your own conversations with strangers. View the full talk here: [bit.ly/TEDTalk2Strangers](http://bit.ly/TEDTalk2Strangers)



**Dr. Kate Eckert**  
 drkeckert@gmail.com  
 www.chirodrkate.com

1047 Allegheny Avenue  
 Oil City, PA 16301  
 P: 814.657.1854  
 F: 814.676.6200



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Megan Decker is originally from the North Hills of Pittsburgh and most recently in the Lancaster, PA, area, but has now chosen to call Venango County her home.

Megan works at Gardinier Funeral Home, where she is a Funeral Director. She received her bachelor's degree in Anthropology and Psychology from Edinboro University, as well as her associates degree in

Mortuary Science from the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science (PIMS).

Professionally, she is excited to continue to grow in her career as a funeral director, and personally, she hopes

to become more involved in our community and meet new people.

The outdoors are a passion of Megan's, so Venango County is a great place for her to explore! She enjoys hiking, biking, and adventuring with her corgi, Otis.

Megan has also already started giving her time in our community, in which she volunteers for the Venango Area Riding for the Handicapped Association (VARHA).

"This is a beautiful area and full of life," she said. "There are great places to eat in town and the bike trails are wonderful!" Megan also mentioned she appreciates the people and the atmosphere we have here.

We're so glad you're already starting to feel at home here, Megan!

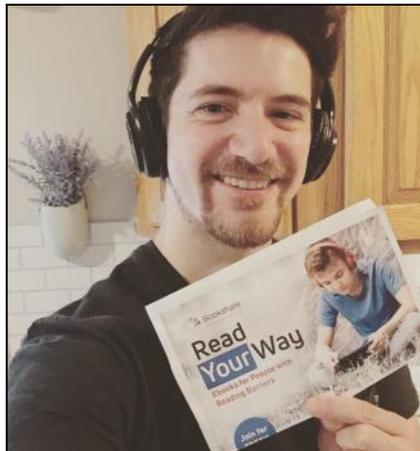
### Member Highlight: Corey McCullough

Local young professional and author Corey McCullough recently announced that all of his books are available through Bookshare, a free-to-join program with over 700,000 ebooks available for people with reading barriers.

Bookshare makes ebooks available in audio, large text, Braille, and more. Readers can read on the device of their choice, and it is free for U.S. schools and qualified students. Members must have a qualifying reading barrier to join Bookshare. Examples include: dyslexia, learning disabilities, visual impairments, and physical disabilities."

Corey's book titles include: *The Fallen Odyssey*, *The Fallen Aeneid*, and *A Knife in the Dark*. "I am so incredibly proud to have my books available through this program," Corey said.

Corey is a writer, copy editor, proofreader, and author, and through his freelance business, has tackled nearly 5,000 writing and editorial projects. He is a Cranberry High School graduate and currently lives in Seneca.



Visit [bookshare.org](http://bookshare.org) for more information, and learn more about Corey's books at [thefallenodyssey.com](http://thefallenodyssey.com).

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FLEX had a fun month of September! We had a Campfire Social with fun games and great food, and met up early at Karma Coffee Company for a Coffee Chat. See below for upcoming events!



## 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:

- **Membership Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, October 2, 6 p.m., Location TBD
- **FLEX Annual Meeting:** Friday, October 24, 5:30 p.m., Karma Coffee Company, Oil City
- **Bowling Social:** Friday, November 15 (More details coming soon)

*There will be no FLEX Monthly Meeting in October because of the Annual Meeting*

Connect with us:  

## WELCOME NEW FLEX MEMBERS

Brinnalyn Bish  
Megan Decker  
Zachary Embry

**Interested in joining?** Email Laura at [laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu](mailto:laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu).