

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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Gaining Skills & Experience Through FLEX Involvement

Network with other young professionals, have fun, make friends, volunteer in the community—all benefits of getting involved with FLEX. Did you know you also have the opportunity to gain leadership and professional skills by becoming more engaged with the group?

By participating in a committee, you can help plan our events and speaker series, promote the group, attract and retain members, assist in coordinating volunteer efforts, and much more. Not only do you help FLEX grow and have something new to add to your resume, but you also gain skills and experience that will allow you to grow as a professional.

“Since becoming involved in FLEX, I’ve had opportunities to lead a meeting, plan and organize events,

and learn to network effectively,” said Kat Thompson, current FLEX Vice President/Secretary and incoming President. “I can now use these skills at my workplace, benefiting both myself and my employer.”

At our Annual Meeting on October 25, we elected next year’s officers, as well as chairs for our three committees (see below). All attendees at the Annual Meeting got involved in brainstorming future activities for FLEX. Each person wrote ideas for events, volunteer activities, and speaker series topics on a note card, and the note cards were then passed around for other attendees to rate.

We’re looking forward to looking through all the note cards at our upcoming committee meetings and



carrying out some of these ideas in 2020. Whether you’re interested in serving on a committee, sharing an idea, or learning more about how you can get involved, we want to connect with you! Email flex@venangochamber.org or contact any of the new officers below to get in touch.

See more photos from the Annual Meeting on the back page of this newsletter.



Welcome 2020 FLEX Officers!

President – Kat Thompson (klt425@gmail.com)

VP/Secretary – Saxon Daugherty (sdaugherty@cdcenters.org)

Events Committee Co-Chair – Ashley Smith (ashley.smith1346@yahoo.com)

Events Committee Co-Chair – Rachel Stiller (r.l.stiller15@gmail.com)

Membership Committee Chair – Laura Ordaz (ljoyordaz@gmail.com)

Marketing Committee Chair – Tessa Byham (tbyham@venangochamber.org)

“The Future of Venango Area Business!”



Ivy Kuberry has returned to our area and we're looking forward to getting to know her and having her involved!

Originally from Pleasantville, Ivy left for college and worked in state parks throughout the state. "My goal was to eventually come back to Venango County and work at Oil Creek State Park," she told us. So when a

position opened up at the park recently, she jumped at the opportunity and got the job!

Ivy is now an Environmental Education Specialist through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and works in Oil Creek, a beautiful state park right in our backyard.

She earned her bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Edinboro University and has a number of other certifications. She is certified as an Interpretive Guide from the National Association for Interpretation Leave, No Trace Trainer, Kayaking Instructor from the American Canoe Association Red Cross, lifeguard, and more. These allow her to offer fun and safe outdoor recreation programming.

Some of Ivy's achievements she's most proud of are completing a conservation-focused study abroad trip in South Africa and Botswana, presenting a college research project at the Society of Toxicology annual meeting, and creating new and exciting environmental and recreational programming at Oil Creek State Park. One of her main goals is to get more people out to enjoy all the park has to offer.

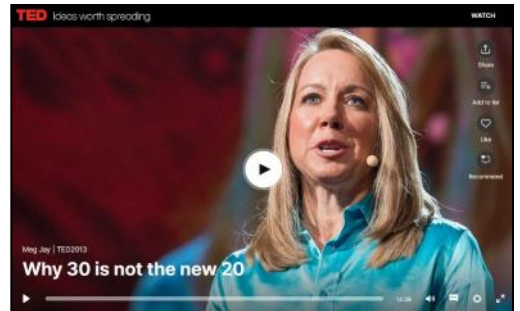
It's no surprise that some of Ivy's favorite activities to do in her free time include hiking, camping, swimming, and biking. She also likes reading and spending time with family and friends, and can often be found at local businesses and events, including Trails to Ales, Karma Coffee, Applefest, Movies at Cranberry, and Oil Heritage Festival. Ivy is getting married to her fiancé Eric next fall and looks forward to starting a family soon.

"Venango County is breathtakingly beautiful and has a great amount of history. There is always more to see, do, and learn," she told us. "The people of Venango County have always had a special place in my heart. People truly care about each other here, and it creates a feeling unlike what I have experienced anywhere else. Getting to work here is truly a blessing."

We're so glad you're here, Ivy!

Why 30 is Not the New 20

This month's recommended TED Talk is by Meg Jay, a clinical psychologist. When she first began her career as a psychotherapist, she encountered a 20-something client who consistently made self-sabotaging decisions and used the excuse that things would get serious when she was 30, and her 20's were for experimentation.



Jay then realized that, though many people settle down a little later than people used to, it doesn't mean your 20's are all fun and games. Jay says "claiming your 20s is one of the simplest, yet most transformative, things you can do for work, for love, for your happiness, maybe even for the world."

One of Jay's tips for success in your 20's is to forget about having an identity crisis and instead, get some identity capital. She says "do something that adds value to who you are."

Find the rest of Jay's advice in the full talk, here: bit.ly/Jay3020



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Emily Lewis is Executive Director of the Venango County Economic Development Authority, the lead economic development organization in the county created in early 2018. The Authority's goal is to remove barriers to growth for businesses and create an inviting place where people want to live.

Professionally, one of Emily's achievements includes heading the Cornplanter Square Building project in Oil City, which she describes as a "great building with good bones that means a lot to the community," and she's excited to play a part in bringing it back to life. She is also proud of the launch of eAcademy, a new program providing education and training on entrepreneurship to high school seniors, and being awarded a grant she wrote to create a sidewalk to connect Franklin and Sugarcreek.

Helping our area succeed is a passion of Emily's, especially since she is a Venango County native who grew up in Jackson Township (just outside Cooperstown) and attended Rocky Grove High School.

A personal achievement of Emily's includes climbing Mt Washburn during a recent visit to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Emily and her husband Josh live in Franklin with their dog Bo, and enjoy hiking, especially at Two Mile Run County Park and spending time with family. Emily is also a huge fan of house plants and enjoys decorating, such as repurposing old furniture.

After high school, Emily studied at Slippery Rock University where she earned a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies with minors in Business Administration and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

There are many reasons Emily is glad to live and work in Venango County. "The people are probably my favorite part," she said. "I love the feeling of walking down the street and seeing everyone smiling at each other, and I feel like people are willing to try new things and take risks."

During college, Emily worked as a GIS intern and then a Planning intern at the County of Venango, which led to a full-time job with the Planning Commission upon graduation. Emily has always worked in Venango County, but lived in Cranberry Township near Pittsburgh for a brief time.

Emily looks forward to continuing to grow the organization and seeing how she can be useful to the community. Thanks for all your hard work, Emily!

FLEX Member Highlight: Ashley Sheffer

Congratulations to FLEX member Ashley Sheffer, owner of Core Goods in Oil City. Core Goods was awarded a \$5,000 grant through the Get on the Trail Business Plan Contest, sponsored by the Oil Region Alliance.

Core Goods is a store that sells bulk foods, produce, grab and go items and more.

Ashley wrote a concept paper and business plan, and presented her ideas to a panel of judges before being awarded the grand prize in the contest. Ashley's plans include expanding the number of bulk bins in the store, as well as installing a filtered water station and adding a supply of reusable containers, all to offer more for trail users.



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What a great time on October 25 at our 2019 **Annual Meeting!** We had about 50 young professionals out for a fun evening to celebrate the past year and look forward to next year. *Photos by Sydney Herdle.*



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:

- **Events & Fundraising Meeting:** Wednesday, November 13, 5:30 p.m., Location TBD
- **Bowling Social:** Friday, November 15, 6 - 8 p.m., Seneca Lanes, \$8 per person
- **Speaker Series - Career Development:** Tuesday, November 19, 5:30 p.m., FICDA
- **FLEX Monthly Meeting:** Wednesday, November 20, 5:30 p.m., Venango Chamber

Find more event details at facebook.com/VenangoFLEX
or members.venangochamber.org/events

Connect with us:



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Adam Brozeski
Ivy Kuberry
Caeman Lee
Ryan O'Neill
Valerie Perry
Matthew Slagle

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