

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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Looking Forward to a New Year

When FLEX started in 2007, no one could have predicted the growth we would see. Thirteen years later, we have 128 members, and we continue to add and improve our programs and events.

Rather than look back at 2019, we are excited to look forward to 2020 and begin creating a vision for what the year will look like and make a plan to make those things happen.

“What excites me heading into 2020 is the blend of seasoned leadership and experienced professionals,” said Rachel Stiller, outgoing FLEX President. “Everyone on leadership has had involvement with FLEX and are passionate about the mission of the organization, which will benefit us as we move forward with those

projects we started in 2019.”

Rachel also added: “We are all equipped to maintain our current level of energy as a young professional group and I anticipate we’ll continue to see FLEX make leaps and bounds this year through the hard work and dedication of our incoming leadership.”

Kat Thompson, incoming FLEX president, added: “Serving as VP this past year under Rachel’s presidency has been an amazing learning experience. Seeing up close her passion and knowledge has inspired me in my involvement with FLEX and in my own professional development.”

“As the incoming president, I look

forward to continuing the trajectory of growth and development established by 2019 leadership under her guidance and with the support of the Chamber,” Kat said. “I, along with our seasoned chairs, am excited to welcome two new faces to the leadership team. With continued involvement in our communities, I hope to see FLEX become a household name across Venango County, and be an accessible and valuable resource for young professionals.”

We invite you to get involved with FLEX in a new way this year! Whether it’s coming to an event, joining one of our committees, or volunteering, we hope to see you as we continue to grow.

Meet the 2020 FLEX Officers



KATHRYN (KAT) THOMPSON
President



SAXON DAUGHERTY
VP/Secretary



LAURA ORDAZ
Membership



TESSA BYHAM
Marketing & Community Partnerships



ASHLEY SMITH
Events & Fundraising



RACHEL STILLER
Events & Fundraising

“The Future of Venango Area Business!”



Ryan Boshaw recently joined the team at Northwest Bank in Oil City as Assistant Manager.

He has lived in a variety of places starting in Illinois for about eight years, the west coast of Oregon for 12 years, seven years in Pennsylvania, and one year in South Carolina, then returned to Pennsylvania where he has resided in Franklin for the past two years.

Ryan earned his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Slippery Rock University, and his master's in Business Administration in a year through an accelerated SRU program.

Future professional goals for Ryan include moving to the corporate side for marketing and merger design and implementation.

A variety of hobbies fill Ryan's time. He considers himself a big gamer and spends time on Xbox and PC games when he has the free time.

Ryan also enjoys working on house projects and is a Star Wars and Marvel fan. In Venango County, he likes walking the trails and visiting various restaurants in the area. He particularly appreciates his drive up 62 along the Allegheny River because it reminds him of Oregon.

Welcome back to Pennsylvania, Ryan!

Professional Development Tip of the Month: Networking

By Rachel Stiller

As a young professional, it is inevitable that at some point you will be networking. The difference is—will you do it well or poorly? Here are a few tips to start practicing now so that at you'll feel confident and prepared at your next networking event:

First, take a moment to evaluate your body language and facial expressions. Your body language will be more evident to those around you than any words you say. Remind yourself to smile during conversations; this will help calm your nerves and others will see you

as warm and inviting. By keeping your body language open and friendly, you will be more approachable and it will help you build rapport and trust.

Second, instead of waiting to be approached, take control and simply walk up to a person or a group, and say: "May I join you?" or "What brings you to this event?" Don't forget to listen intently to their replies and remember that the most successful networkers are good at making other people feel special. Look people in the eye, repeat their name, listen to what they have to

say, and suggest topics that are easy to discuss. Your goal is to be a conversationalist, not a talker.

Next, share your passions and be specific about your goals. Win people over with your enthusiasm. Leave a lasting impression by telling a story about why



you were inspired to do what you do. Talking about what you enjoy is often contagious, too. When you get other people to share their passion, it creates a memorable two-way conversation.

Finally, remember to follow up. It's often said that networking is where the conversation begins, not ends. If you've had a great exchange, ask your conversation partner the best way to stay in touch. Some people like email or phone; others prefer social networks like LinkedIn. Get in touch within a day or so of the event to show you're interested and available, and reference something you discussed, so your contact remembers you.



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Matthew Slagle is a new FLEX member and an Inventory Accountant at Borchers Americas, Inc.

Matt grew up in Petrolia and went to Karns City High School, then attended Westminster College where he studied Accounting and International Business.

One reason Matt studied International Business is because of his desire to travel. He hopes to visit all seven continents, including Antarctica, and all 50 states. He also hopes to qualify and run the Boston Marathon. Traveling and running are two hobbies that are connected, as he hopes to travel and run marathons throughout the states and internationally.

Matt takes advantage of the many beautiful places to run in Venango County, one of his favorites being the

trails along the Allegheny River. He also enjoys the delicious eats here, and often refuels at Leonardo's or Trail's to Ales after running.

Matt started at Borchers in this year, and finds fulfillment in his new job because of the people he works with.

"I get to work with a great group of hardworking and supportive individuals who share the same mindset of finding new ways to become efficient and effective as a team and organization," he said. His team and the company at large also work to become more effective in their team goals and organizational outputs.

As Matt continues his career in Venango County, he also enjoys and explores the wonderful places, people, and food the area has to offer.

YP of the Year Nominations - Coming Soon!

The FLEX Events & Fundraising Committee will begin planning the 2020 FLEX Presents very soon!

The goal of this event, held each year in April, is to celebrate the achievements of local young professionals who contribute to our community through civic engagement, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

We will begin accepting nominations shortly. Nominees will be recognized at the event in April, and one will be chosen as our "Young Professional of the Year."

We encourage you to pay careful attention to those "under 40" that you encounter each day and help us celebrate our most valuable assets and the future of our region.



The Leadership Venango Class of 2020 wants to hear from you!

One of the course's group projects has taken on the challenge of trying to improve communication across our communities in Venango County. This is where you come in!

Below is a link to a very short survey that will provide them with valuable feedback that will be later presented to community leaders at a forum:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/WCTBMH7

Please take just a few minutes and fill this out for us. Your opinion really does matter!



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Our third Ugly **Holiday Sweater Party** was a success! Congratulations to contest winners Zack Sheffer, Ashley Smith, Lyndsey King, and Ryan O'Neill, and thanks to everyone who brought donations for our Food Drive.



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:

- **Marketing & Community Partnerships Committee Meeting:** Monday, January 13, 5 p.m., Venango Chamber (24 Seneca St, Oil City)
- **Monthly Meeting:** Thursday, January 23, 5:30 p.m., Venango Chamber
- **Dinner & A Show Social:** Saturday, January 25, Dinner @ 5 p.m., Show @ 7:30 p.m. (Only 20 spots available; Must RSVP at members.venangochamber.org/events)

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Kaitlyn Harbison

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

Connect with us:

