

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

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

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## Get Connected! FLEX to Partner with United Way

As the young professionals group of Venango County, we aim to strengthen the community by supporting local businesses, helping young professionals grow professionally and personally, and volunteering for organizations and causes.

United Way of Venango County has created a way to easily connect with volunteer activities and we look forward to partnering with them! The United Way's new volunteer website called "Get Connected" hosts a list of non-profit agencies, organizations, or groups who have volunteer opportunities. Individuals and groups can then register and choose to fill these spots.

FLEX will be utilizing this program as a way to easily get our young professionals out into the community.



A clean-up day at a local park is in the works, and we invite you to share your ideas for causes and organizations you'd like to volunteer with.

Young professionals will set up a profile through the Get Connected site. Instructions and more details will be shared soon! Want to be sure you receive future updates? Contact us at [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org).



### TICKETS ON SALE!

Get a package of local craft beer, swag & more! Pickup is Thursday, August 27. Learn more & purchase tickets at: [ohfbikenbrew.org](http://ohfbikenbrew.org).

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# Professional Development Tip: Feeling More Connected to the Community

By Ashley Smith

As humans, we want to feel connected. We want to feel proud of who we are, who we surround ourselves with, and where we live. These steps have helped me make the shift from Franklin being where I grew up to where I have proudly chosen to call home as an adult—a place I want to see thrive and be part of making that success happen. I've found these steps helpful to push myself to get out and immediately feel more rooted in our community.



work. Giving thanks energizes everyone. Event volunteers, workers, organizers, artists, public leaders—there are many layers of people involved in making our community a better place. It is ok if we don't have the time or passion for some things in our community, but we can thank the people who are doing that work.

## Be a Friendly Face

When walking down the street or waiting in line, it is easy to pull out our phones. We need to try to look a person in the eye, smile (even under your mask), and say "Hello." Ask how their day is and practice genuinely caring about their answer. Once we start talking to neighbors and people in our community, we begin to grow relationships, make friends, and root for each other's success.

We can also go out of our way to thank people doing the

## Be Woke

Get educated and stay informed. Talk to people and ask questions. When does my favorite local event happen? Who sponsors it? Where does this local store get merchandise? How can I support them? It is shocking how many businesses and organizations exist here! The staff at the Venango Chamber are great resources to help connect us with local information.

## Be Active

Once we get informed about opportunities, we can choose something that interests us to dive into. Volunteer for a local event, go to public meetings, become a member of a board, coach a school sport, join a church group, etc. Attend events that you may have never heard of. Be brave and try new experiences that will drive you to meeting new people that are looking to see our area thrive.

## Be an Advocate

Spread the word! The Be Here Ambassador program is a great place to surround yourself with positive thinkers who want to celebrate great opportunities and tackle challenges that we have here. The Be Here Venango website is a great resource for information about living, working, and playing in our communities.

On social media, like and follow local places, events, and groups. If we like those local pages, we can share posts on news about local businesses, non-profits, schools, and events that might speak to us directly or to a friend. We can write our own posts about our own experiences in the community. Somewhere along the way, someone is going to see, read, or hear your positive advocating and it might be just what they need to feel connected.

## Be Better

Most importantly, we need to aim to be better. No matter what, if we go into each day thinking about how we want our community to be better, positivity aides success.

*Thanks for the tips, Ashley!*



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**Makenzie Cavalline** is one of our newest FLEX members. She is a native to Oil City and is currently looking for work in the graphic design/marketing field.

She graduated from Oil City High School in 2015 and studied Digital Media Production at Slippery Rock University. She loves to travel, spending time last year in London and then studying abroad in Ireland, where she attended the University of Limerick for a semester in 2019.

Makenzie enjoys the little shops and stores in Venango County, her favorite being Karma Coffee Company. She also loves the abundance of outdoor recreation and

spending time on the Allegheny River or French Creek in a kayak. Her other hobbies include spending time with friends and family, watercolor painting, and yoga.

As far as her future goals, Makenzie hopes to gain some experience in the graphic design or marketing field and get more involved in the community. She enjoys creating logos and marketing materials as well as working on website design and taking photos.

Makenzie said her favorite things about living in the Venango area are the relaxed lifestyle and strong sense of community. She is excited to be a part of FLEX and get to know more young professionals here.

Welcome to FLEX, Makenzie!

## YP Highlight: Brandy Brady-Snavely, Hannah Gamble & Jessica Hoffman

Congratulations to Brandy, Hannah, and Jessica on all finishing their Yoga Teacher Training in July!

Brandy works for West Park Rehab and is already using her training when treating patients there. At West Park, they are renovating and adding two new patient rooms, including a yoga space. Brandy will also be teaching an Ashtanga yoga class at Trailasana Yoga Studio in Oil City (owned by YP Bobbie Jones) on Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Hannah just joined the team at Core Goods in Oil City (owned by YP Ashley Sheffer), where she helps the store with their mission to provide local, nourishing foods to the community. She will be teaching a Slow Flow yoga class at Trailasana on Wednesdays and Fridays at 5 p.m.

Jessica owns her own massage studio out of the Oil City YWCA and teaches yoga classes at the Y. She will also be teaching at Trailasana—Beginner Yoga on Wednesdays at 12 p.m. and Ashtanga Short Primary at 8 a.m. on Fridays.

We're excited to see these three use their skills and knowledge at so many local businesses and organizations. Congratulations Brandy, Hannah, and Jessica!



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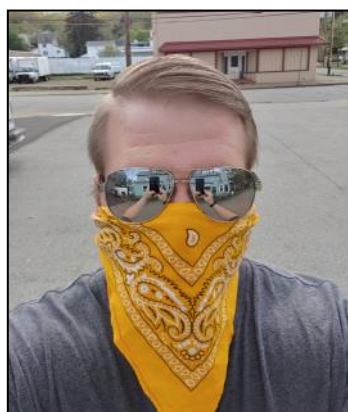
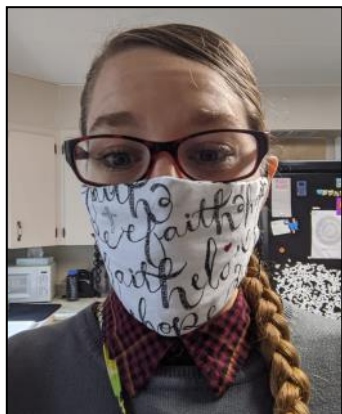



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This pandemic sure has been hard, but we hope you have been able to find some positivity through all of this. One thing that has been fun is seeing all the interesting, creative **masks**. Thanks Elizabeth, Deanna, Laura, Jamie & Ashley, Ash, Ryan, Kat, and Tessa for sharing your fun masks!



Have a mask photo to share?  
Comment on our Facebook post at [facebook.com/VenangoFLEX](https://www.facebook.com/VenangoFLEX).

### 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:

In-person events and meetings have been postponed. We'll share updates about future virtual meet-ups in our weekly email and social media. We also plan to share a poll on Facebook, soon, for ideas for future meet-ups!

**Are you on our email list?** Click the button that says "Join the FLEX Email List" at the bottom of the page at [venangoflex.org](https://www.venangoflex.org) to be added.

CONNECT WITH US:



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Makenzie Cavalline  
Hannah Gamble

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