

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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Congratulations Erin Hanna, 2021 FLEX Young Professional of the Year

“During my career I’ve worked in many different communities, and it’s always been important to me to give back and to invest in the community that I work in,” said Erin Hanna in her acceptance speech at FLEX Presents. “I never truly felt ties to those communities and I always longed to have a place to call home and start putting in roots, and that’s what we’ve done since we moved back to Venango County.”

Erin was chosen as the 2021 Young Professional of the Year for her contributions to Venango County through civic engagement and leadership. She is the Director of Bayada Pediatrics, a nonprofit home health care provider, where she started in April. Before her current

job, she was the Branch Manager and Vice President at First National Bank of Franklin for five years.

In the community, Erin is a Board Member for the United Way of Venango County, and has served in several other roles for the United Way board and committees. She is also a substitute driver for Meals on Wheels in Grove City and has volunteered for Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania.

“It was through my work at the United Way that made me realize how important it is to feel pride in my work and to know that I am making a difference, which led me to make a major career change just a few months ago,” Erin continued. “After



almost 17 years in banking, I took a role at Bayada Pediatrics where we provide skilled nursing to kids with complex medical needs and where every day I have the opportunity to know I’m making a difference.”

All nominees were celebrated at FLEX Presents on Friday, May 21, including:

Front row (left to right): Stephanie Staub, Tessa Simmons, Erin Hanna, Juliet Hilburn, Ivy Kuberry; Back row: Amariliz Sanchez, Kyle Vickers, Corey Ritchey, Valerie Perry, Kat Thompson, Nick Hess, and Amanda Barker; Missing from photo: Andrew Dobson and Bobbie Jones

A recording of FLEX Presents can be found on our Facebook page at: [Facebook.com/VenangoFLEX](https://www.facebook.com/VenangoFLEX).



“The Future of Venango Area Business!”

Professional Development Tip: Benefits of Getting Outdoors

By Ivy Kuberry, Oil Creek State Park

Ever notice you feel calm after being outdoors? Sleep better or find yourself in a better mood after a walk? We are all aware being outdoors is good for us, but how often do we make it a priority?

Countless studies show spending time outside has positive effects on our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This isn't surprising considering humans are a part of the natural world. Our bodies use sunlight to manufacture vitamin D, which supports healthy bones, muscles, and immune systems. Being outside can also calm symptoms of anxiety and stress, and when we spend time outside we generally tend to get more exercise.

It's easy to forget how important it is to spend time outdoors when you're living a busy life, so I'm here to remind you to get out there!

But I Have to Work

Many of us have jobs with long hours in front of a computer or up on our feet standing in one place. I work at a park and still sometimes find myself sitting at a computer for eight hours! This can cause tension build-up in our bodies, can strain our eyes, and cause tiredness or even frustration.

It isn't natural to be indoors all day. While humans are highly adaptable, we need time outside for physical and mental health. Take time to check in with yourself and notice when you're feeling overwhelmed or tense. Instead of



sitting in the break room to relax, try taking a walk around the block. You don't need to be close to a park to enjoy good old fashioned sunshine, and you don't need to be outside for hours to benefit. You might even want to start your day off with time outdoors by sipping coffee on the porch or walking to work if you can. Set yourself up for a good day.

Bring the Outside Inside

Don't have time to get outside during your day? Does bad weather have you trapped inside? Try bringing the outside inside! Open a window, or set up a suction cup birdfeeder. Spend time mindfully looking outside, or utilize a covered porch or awning for fresh air.

Studies have found that office plants can boost your mood and increase productivity. They can even give you an oxygen boost and help regulate the office humidity. Simply looking at greenery can improve your mood! Look for a potted plant that's easy to care for, and spruce up your desk.

Utilize Your Days Off

Recharge after your week with time outside! It can be tempting to spend weekends on the couch. There's nothing wrong with that every once in a while, but remember there are amazing benefits to getting out, and Venango County is absolutely full of opportunities.

I work at Oil Creek State Park, and a big part of what I do is offer free environmental, historical, and recreational opportunities for visitors. You can check out our Facebook page or visit events.dcnr.pa.gov to stay up-to-date on park events, or you can come out and explore the park on your own. There are over 60 miles of hiking trails, overnight shelters, fishing spots, and picnic areas. You can also pop in the park office during open hours and rent a bicycle to ride on our 10-mile bike trail.

Other great local spots for outdoor activities include Two Mile Run County Park, Drake Well Museum & Park/OC&T Railroad, the Sandy Creek, Allegheny River, and Justus Trails, and the Kennerdell Tract of the Clear Creek State Forest (including Freedom Falls, the iron furnace, and the Kennerdell Scenic Overlook).

Get involved with a volunteer opportunity. Visit a city park. Take a walk through downtown. Just get outside!

Find details on the next page about two upcoming opportunities to get outside with Ivy and FLEX.



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Member Profile: Jarred Heuer



Jarred Heuer works at the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation as an Economic Development Specialist. He is originally from West Nyack, New York, but traveled to Eastern University, outside of Philadelphia, to obtain his BA in Economic Development.

While in Philadelphia, Jarred operated a food pantry that served his impoverished community who were struggling with food insecurity. Throughout their six years in Philadelphia, the pantry grew to become a major resource for their neighbors, distributing over 11,000 pounds of food annually.

In early 2019, Jarred moved to Venango County with his wife, Courtney. One of his favorite things to do in the area

includes exploring small towns along the river and trails. This branches off from his other hobbies of playing golf, staying active, and steadily keeping up with the New York Mets.

“Western PA is very different from where I grew up, so it’s been a cultural experience learning the lifestyle,” he said. Although Jarred works in Clarion County, he is able to work closely with many organizations in Venango County and advocate for the NWPA region.

“Clarion and Venango are cut from the same cloth, so living and working in the two counties has aided me in understanding the way of life in rural Pennsylvania,” he added.

Jarred is excited to put down roots for his growing family while also being able to serve the community personally and professionally.

Join FLEX Outdoors at Oil Creek—June 5 & 13

We invite you to join Ivy and other FLEX members outdoors at Oil Creek State Park for TWO different activities in June:

Oil Creek Service Project:

Saturday, June 5 | 10AM-2PM

We are helping spruce up the gardens near the park office, by pulling weeds, adding soil, laying pathways, and more.



Summer Kick-Off Hike:

Sunday, June 13 | 1-5PM

Ivy is leading a five mile hike for us through Oil Creek, with an option for a shorter/easier route. We’ll stop for a picnic during the hike, too.

For both of these events, there is a limit on number of attendees.

Please register at venangochamber.org/events.

Bike ‘n Brew Tickets

Save the date! Bike ‘n Brew tickets go online June 5th. This year’s event is hybrid, with a curbside pickup like last year, as well as a special tasting for VIP ticket holders. Learn more & purchase tickets at ohfbikenbrew.org.



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Congratulations to Erin Hanna, the 2021 Young Professional of the Year, and all of this year's nominees. Find more photos on our Facebook page 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.

June Events & Meetings:

* = Registration required

Oil Creek Service Project: Saturday, June 5 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

Events & Fundraising Committee: Monday, June 7 • 12-1 p.m.

FLEX Monthly Meeting: Tuesday, June 8 • 12-1 p.m.

Summer Kick-Off - Hiking: Sunday, June 13 • 1 - 5 p.m. • Oil Creek State Park*

Marketing/Community Partnerships Committee: Tues, June 22 • 12-1 p.m.

Contact us for meeting zoom links at flex@venangochamber.org, or find links in our Weekly Update email. Event details can also be found on our Facebook page.

WELCOME NEW FLEX MEMBERS

Jacob Davis

Joslyn Dechant

Chad Pastorius

Interested in joining?

Email the FLEX Membership Committee Chair Laura Ordaz at laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu or join online: [VenangoFLEX.org](https://www.VenangoFLEX.org).

CONNECT WITH US:

