

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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

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What is Leadership?

The term “leadership” is often thrown around in the professional world. A stereotypical leader may be described as someone in a company who is higher up, manages big groups of people, and exemplifies traits such as confidence, assertiveness, and influence.

While it’s important to have great leaders in these positions—leadership is all around us in many different ways. You may not consider yourself a leader, but think about your everyday interactions with people.

Leadership does not have to be from a boss to an employee. You could be a leader in your friend group, helping plan get-togethers and supporting others. You could be a leader in your office, assisting coworkers and providing encouragement. You could be a leader in your family, whether you are raising children or helping elderly parents/grandparents.

Leaders are also found in volunteer groups, committees, boards of



directors, classrooms, and so many other places in the community. A good leader is able to bring out the best in people and motivate them to achieve a goal.

So, how are you a leader, and how can you continue to grow? One opportunity through FLEX is by becoming a committee member or officer. As we approach the end of the year, we will be seeking people to take leadership positions within the group. FLEX provides a low-stakes environment to practice leadership skills and learn new things, like how to lead a meeting, plan an event, or put together a newsletter. Interested in exploring leadership in FLEX? Reach out to us at flex@venangochamber.org.

Another way to grow in your leadership journey is Leadership Venango, run by the Venango Chamber. This program is held one day a month for nine months and each month is focused on a different topic to help educate and motivate individuals (of any age) to be more effective leaders.

Topics range from agriculture and tourism, to communications and education, and the class meets at various locations throughout Venango County, like the courthouse, hospital, a school, a manufacturing plant, and a farm.

The next class of Leadership Venango begins meeting this month, but it’s not too late to sign up! Learn more at leadershipvenango.org and contact the Chamber at (814) 676-8521 with any questions.

Everyone is a leader, and we hope to help you as you continue in your leadership journey.

Pictured: Leadership Venango Class of 2022 at Komatsu Mining Corp.



FLEX Feature: PennDOT with Saxon Daugherty

Last month, we learned about a construction company, and this month we're excited to hear about the work done behind the scenes for transportation in PA.

Tell us about PennDOT.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) oversees programs and policies affecting highways, urban and rural public transportation, airports, railroads, ports, and waterways. The agency is responsible for nearly 40,000 miles of highway and 25,000 bridges, a system first established in 1911. PennDOT employs more than 11,000 workers and has 11 engineering districts spanning across all 67 counties in PA. Many employees work in design, construction, maintenance, materials testing, environmental review, safety, and traffic engineering. PennDOT also operates 14 Welcome Centers along the interstate highways near the state's borders.

What is your role at the agency?

I am the District 1 Safety Press Officer responsible for the northwest region, which includes Crawford, Erie, Forest, Mercer, Warren, and Venango counties. I serve as the spokesperson for highway safety through various media outlets and public outreach initiatives. Some common topics I address include distracted

driving, aggressive driving, impairment, bicycle and pedestrian safety, school bus safety, and more.

What is your favorite part about working for PennDOT?

Like many of my jobs before joining PennDOT in April 2021, I love being able to interact with the community and provide them with information that can keep them safe. Acting as the Safety Press Officer has opened my eyes to new data and trends. I challenge myself daily to come up with unique ways to share a message of safety with the general public and it's that challenge that motivates me.

What is something surprising about your employer?

Many people don't realize that PennDOT is utilizing drone technology to accomplish a variety of objectives. The drone program at PennDOT is still relatively new, but provides pilots the opportunity to fly missions at active construction projects to document progress and/or conduct inspections of structures such as bridges to find problem areas. Earlier this year, I became a certified drone pilot through the Federal Aviation Administration and have joined the drone team at PennDOT. It is something I didn't anticipate becoming such a critical part of my job, but it has been a pleasant surprise and has quickly developed into one of my favorite duties.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

PennDOT is organized into five deputates, including Administration, Driver and Vehicle Services, Highway Administration, Multimodal Transportation, and Planning. Additionally, PennDOT has offices with responsibilities for legal, policy, legislative and communication issues.

Learn more about PennDOT at [penndot.pa.gov](https://www.penndot.pa.gov).

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Member Profile: Kyle Peasley



Kyle Peasley is the Chief Deputy District Attorney in the Venango County District Attorney's Office. He earned his Juris Doctor (J.D.) from Penn State Law and a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Arizona.

He was born in Tucson, Arizona, and moved to Venango County immediately after Law School. Kyle and his wife, Dana, fell in love with Venango and decided to put down roots. "It was one of the best decisions of our life," he told us.

He went to law school to become a criminal prosecutor, so being hired as the Assistant District Attorney so soon after graduating from Penn State has been a highlight of Kyle's life. He was also just recently

hired (as a second job in the evenings) as an Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice for Northern Pennsylvania Regional College.

Kyle has hopes to work in Venango County for his entire legal career. His current position has been very fulfilling, and he genuinely enjoys seeking justice for victims of crimes in Venango.

In his free time, Kyle likes hiking, hunting, and kayaking. He also played basketball for four years in high school and still enjoys playing if he gets the chance. In addition, he and Dana like to walk on different bike trails with their dog, Kino, go out to local restaurants and breweries, and attend FLEX events.

"We've really enjoyed getting to know the other FLEX members and appreciate the kindness they have shown to both of us," Kyle told us.

Volunteer: Cranberry Festival



FLEX is volunteering at Cranberry Festival this year! We invite you to join us on Saturday, September 17, at the Cranberry Mall. We'll be helping with children's activities, selling tickets for raffles, and more.

Volunteer shifts are 9:30AM to 1PM and 1PM to 4:30PM. Sign up by filling out our form online at bit.ly/FLEXCranberryFestival2022 or by emailing flex@venangochamber.org.

Fall Events: Game Night & Speaker Series

In addition to volunteering at Cranberry Festival, FLEX has some other events planned as we head into fall!

Hang out with other young professionals at a **Game Night** on Friday, September 30, at the Venango Museum, and learn about Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at a **Speaker Series** on Monday, October 3, at the Venango Campus.

Find more details on our Facebook page or in our Weekly Update email. Not on our email list? Click the button at the bottom of the page at venangoflex.org.

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Event Photos: Coffee Chat, Mixers & Steak Fry



September Events & Meetings:

Cranberry Festival: Saturday, Sept. 17 • Cranberry Mall • Volunteer shifts - 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1 to 4:30 p.m. • Sign up at bit.ly/FLEXCranberryFestival2022

Events & Fundraising Committee: Tuesday, Sept. 20 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

Marketing Committee: Thursday, Sept. 22 • 4:15 p.m. • Zoom

FLEX Monthly Meeting: Monday, Sept. 26 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

Game Night: Friday, Sept. 30 • 6 - 8 p.m. • Venango Museum

Speaker Series - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Monday, Oct. 3 • 5:30 - 7 p.m.
• Venango Campus (Frame Hall, Room 208)

Contact us for meeting zoom links at flex@venangochamber.org, or find links in our Weekly Update email.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Natalie Cubbon

Interested in joining?

Email the FLEX Membership Committee Chair Joslyn Dechant at joslyn.dechant@gmail.com or join online: VenangoFLEX.org.

FLEX 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.

CONNECT WITH US: VenangoFLEX.org • flex@venangochamber.org

