

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

brought to you by the future leaders & entrepreneurs exchange

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## Seeking Input from Summer Interns: Share your Experience

Internships are much more than a stepping stone toward a future career; they hold immense value in shaping lives, fostering growth, and enriching community. At FLEX, we believe that highlighting internships in our community is crucial because of the profound impact these opportunities can have on young professionals.

As the summer comes to a close, we want to hear from you—the Venango County 2024 summer interns. Your experiences, insights, and stories are invaluable to us and can inspire future interns and employers alike. We invite you to share your thoughts on what made your internship meaningful and how it has influenced your professional journey.

### The Value of Internships

Internships offer a unique blend of practical experience, skill development, and networking opportunities. They allow young professionals to apply academic knowledge in real-world settings, gain hands-on experience, and develop essential skills that are critical for career success. Beyond the technical skills, internships also foster personal growth, helping individuals build confidence, resilience, and a better understanding of their career aspirations.

### How Internships Shape Lives

The experiences gained during an internship can be life-changing. Whether it's the mentorship received from seasoned professionals, the satisfaction of contributing to

meaningful projects, or the camaraderie built with fellow interns and colleagues, these moments leave lasting impressions. Internships can also open doors to future job opportunities, providing a clearer path toward career goals.

### Enriching the Community

Internships not only benefit the interns but also enrich the community. Companies and organizations that host interns contribute to workforce development and support the next generation of professionals. Interns bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and a willingness to learn, which can invigorate workplaces and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

### Share Your Story

We want to celebrate and learn from your internship experience. What did you learn? How did it shape your career goals? What were the challenges and triumphs you encountered? Your feedback will help us understand the impact of internships in our community and guide us in creating even better opportunities for future interns.

Please take a few moments to share your experiences with us or share this information with employers with interns to help spread the word.

Submissions of stories, insights, and photos can either be sent to [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org) or by filling out this survey found by scanning here and on the FLEX facebook page.



We look forward to hearing from you and highlighting your journey in our next newsletter!

Thank you for your contributions and for being a part of our vibrant community. Together, we can continue to support and nurture the growth of young professionals through meaningful internships.



# Office Hacks: Practical Advice for Improving Your Office Environment

Creating an efficient and enjoyable office environment is crucial for productivity and overall job satisfaction. Implementing a few practical office hacks can help optimize your workspace, streamline tasks, and improve meetings, leading to a more productive and positive work atmosphere.



First and foremost, desk organization is key. Keeping your desk clutter-free can significantly enhance focus and reduce stress. Limit your desk items to essentials, and use organizers like trays, drawer dividers, and cable management solutions to maintain order.

Additionally, consider digital decluttering by organizing your desktop and files, and utilizing cloud storage for easy access to important documents without the physical clutter. Personalizing your workspace with a small plant, a photo, or a motivational quote can make it more inviting and inspiring, while ensuring your chair, desk, and

monitor are ergonomically set up can prevent strain and promote good posture.

If possible, use dual monitors to increase productivity and ease multitasking. Task management tools like Trello, Asana, or simple to-do lists can also help keep track of tasks and deadlines.

Effective time management is another critical aspect of a productive office environment. The Pomodoro Technique, which involves working in focused intervals (e.g., 25 minutes) followed by short breaks, can improve concentration and prevent burnout. Organizing tasks by urgency and importance using the Eisenhower Matrix can help prioritize what's most important. Grouping similar tasks together reduces cognitive load and switching between different types of work.

To limit distractions, consider using headphones or a "Do Not Disturb" sign during focused work periods, and turn off non-essential notifications on your computer and phone.


Improving meeting strategies can also have a substantial impact on productivity. Always set a clear agenda with specific objectives and share it with participants in advance to ensure everyone is prepared. Allocating specific times for each agenda item and sticking to them can keep meetings concise and productive. Engaging participants by asking questions and encouraging input can make meetings more dynamic and effective. Visual aids like slides, charts, and diagrams can help clarify points and maintain engagement. Summarizing decisions and tasks at the end of meetings, and sending follow-up emails with notes and action items, ensures everyone remains accountable and on the same page.

Finally, leveraging technology and tools can streamline collaboration and productivity. Platforms like Slack, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom facilitate efficient communication and collaboration, while tools like Google Drive or Dropbox allow seamless document sharing and real-time collaboration.

By implementing these office hacks, you can create a more organized, productive, and enjoyable work environment, ultimately boosting your efficiency and contributing to a positive office atmosphere.

Do you have any tips or tricks that help create a healthy work environment for you? We want to know!

Send us an email of what programs, tricks, or tips you've found helpful to [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org)



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## Member Profile: Mitch Littler



**Mitch Littler** works as the Student Services Advisor for Keystone Community Education Council. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a Philosophy degree in 2023.

During his studies, he founded and managed a Philosophy/Stoicism-based social media page, building an online community of over 50,000 followers.

In March 2021, he launched Operation Good Vibes, delivering over 400 performances across 34 NW PA communities, earning features in regional media outlets such as newspapers, radio, Erie News Now, and WQLN's "Our Town" series.

Mitch is deeply committed to the betterment of the community and individuals he serves, aiming to continue contributing in any capacity that arises.

Mitch enjoys reading, writing, performing music, and spending time outdoors. Blues music holds a special place

in his heart, and he has performed in the Mississippi Delta region. His interests in philosophy focus on social and public philosophy, and he hopes to start a local reading and discussion group. He primarily writes nonfiction, working on a project about his experiences in the oilfield, from which he has presented and read excerpts, with the goal of publishing a complete book.

As someone from Oil City, Mitch appreciates the area's natural beauty, having realized its value after living in less scenic places. He enjoys hiking and biking, grateful for the accessible outdoor activities.

Mitch feels honored to work in his hometown, contributing to the community where he feels a personal stake. While the region may be smaller than a place like Pittsburgh, he values the accessible opportunities and the visible impact of his contributions, something that might be harder to experience in a larger area.

Most of all, Mitch loves networking, having conversations, and meeting people.

*Welcome to FLEX, Mitch!*

## July Events: Thank You, Volunteers!



We had two successful events in July—Bike 'n Brew and the Ice Cream Social—both part of the Annual Oil Heritage Festival!

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to these events through volunteerism, sponsorship, donations, and attendance. Your efforts made a

significant difference and ensured the success of our festivities.

We especially want to extend our gratitude to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and energy. Your commitment created an environment where everyone felt welcome and included. The warmth and hospitality you brought to these events exemplify the spirit of our community and demonstrate how impactful volunteerism can be.

Volunteering plays a crucial role in strengthening our community. It fosters connections, builds relationships, and creates a sense of belonging among participants. Your contributions not only helped in organizing and executing these events but also in making our community a better place for everyone.

Together, we can continue to create memorable experiences and build a thriving, connected community. Find more photos on the back page of this FYI newsletter or on our Facebook page.

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## Event Photos: Bike N Brew & Ice Cream Social



## August Events & Meetings:

**Marketing Committee:** Thursday, August 8 • Noon • Zoom

**Coffee Chat:** Friday, August 9 • 7-9a • Iron Furnace, Franklin

**Events & Fundraising Committee:** Monday, August 12 • 5:30p • Zoom

**Marketing Strategy Meeting:** Thursday, August 15 • 5-7p • Chamber

**Membership Committee:** Friday, August 23 • Noon • Zoom

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

**Pottery Event:** Thursday, August 29 • 5:30-8p • The Haven, Franklin—  
*More info coming soon!*

*Check out our Facebook page or contact us for meeting zoom links at [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org)*

### New Members:

*Join today to be our newest member! :)*

### **Interested in joining?**

Email the FLEX Membership Committee Chair

Juliet Hilburn

[Juliet.hilburn@gmail.com](mailto:Juliet.hilburn@gmail.com)

or join online:

[VenangoFLEX.org](http://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](http://VenangoFLEX.org) • [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org)

