

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

brought to you by the future leaders & entrepreneurs exchange

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## Be Here this Summer!

As we welcome summer, FLEX is gearing up to make this season not only enjoyable but also meaningful. Venango County offers a variety of activities, from local restaurants to parks and landscaped downtown areas, with many people enjoying the local trails and waterways. Summers in Venango County are special, yet we often hear the same old phrase: “there is nothing to do here.”

With programs such as Be Here and Venango Heart & Soul, the goal is to spread the word about ways to live, work, and play in our region because oftentimes many residents and visitors are unaware of all that we have to offer. The Be Here website is a great place to find information about what is going on in our region. You will find information on parks, trails, canoeing & kayaking, golfing, theater, art & music, museums & societies, libraries, youth & family activities, festivals & events, and more! We encourage you to take advantage of everything the area has to offer this summer.

FLEX is inviting young professionals and community members alike to get involved in the vibrant atmosphere, connecting with fellow young professionals and community members. Here are three ways to get involved:

1. **Attend and Experience:** Join the lively events, connect with other community members, expand your network, create lasting memories, and support the community.
2. **Spread the Word:** Be an advocate for the region. Share the excitement with your friends, family, and colleagues, inviting them to join in on the festivities. By spreading the word, you contribute to the growth and impact of these events, making them even more memorable.
3. **Volunteer and Give Back:** Volunteering provides an opportunity to directly contribute to the community, make new connections, and build your professional skills.

### Upcoming FLEX Events

**Bike 'n Brew:** The first event on the summer calendar is the highly anticipated Bike 'n Brew on Saturday, July 20, at the Venango Chamber in Oil City. Bike 'n Brew includes a Biking Scavenger Hunt and a brewfest portion with live music and entertainment from 4 to 7 p.m.

There are two ways to participate:

- **Curbside Pickup (\$45):** Get a ticket to pick up a cooler tote bag full of at least 10 craft beers from local breweries along with fun swag from brewers and sponsors.
- **VIP Ticket (\$55):** Includes the curbside tote bag PLUS a tasting of several different craft beers from our local Brew Crew at the brew-festival outside the Chamber of Commerce with live entertainment and outdoor games.

**Ice Cream Social:** The second event on FLEX's summer lineup is the Oil Heritage Festival Ice Cream Social. Mark your calendars for Thursday, July 25, at Central Ave Plaza, adjacent to the Oil City Library. From 5 to 7 p.m., FLEX will be serving up ice cream and beverages to the community during the festivities.

Whether you're a craft beer enthusiast, an ice cream fan, or simply looking to contribute to your community, there are lots of ways to engage and make a difference. To get involved or stay updated on FLEX's upcoming events, visit us on Facebook.



*"The Future of Venango Area Business!"*

# Navigating the Path to Success: Strategies for Young Professionals

As young professionals, navigating the complexities of career growth while maintaining personal well-being is paramount. Here are essential strategies to help you achieve balance and success:

## Prioritize Self-Care

Begin with self-care. Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and adequate rest are foundational. These practices enhance productivity and overall well-being, crucial for sustained success.

## Define Clear Goals

Set specific, achievable goals for career and personal development. Break them into actionable steps to maintain focus and measure progress effectively.

## Commit to Lifelong Learning

Continual learning keeps skills sharp and opens doors to new opportunities. Pursue further education or professional certifications to stay competitive in your field.

## Build a Support Network

Cultivate relationships with mentors, colleagues, and peers. They provide guidance, encouragement, and valuable insights for career advancement.

## Master Time Management

Efficiently allocate time to tasks by prioritizing and using productivity tools. Delegate when possible to streamline responsibilities and maintain work-life balance.

## Enjoy Meaningful Activities

Engage in hobbies and activities that rejuvenate and inspire you. Balancing work with personal passions enhances overall satisfaction and creativity.

## Contribute to Your Community


Volunteer or participate in community initiatives. Giving back fosters a sense of purpose and strengthens personal connections outside of work.

## Nurture Personal Relationships

Invest time in maintaining strong connections with loved ones. They provide support and perspective, crucial for navigating professional challenges.

Achieving success as a young professional involves more than career milestones—it requires a holistic approach that values personal well-being and meaningful connections.

By prioritizing self-care, setting clear goals, embracing learning, building a support network, managing time effectively, enjoying hobbies, contributing to your community, and nurturing personal relationships, you pave the way for a fulfilling and balanced professional journey. Strive for a life where achievement is complemented by happiness and resilience.



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## Member Profile: Ashley Gravatt



**Ashley Gravatt** works in the Accounting & Payroll Department at Klapec Trucking Company. She holds an Associates in General Studies from Columbia College and is currently pursuing an Accounting Bachelor degree at PennState.

Originally from California, Ashley spent most of her childhood in Oklahoma and Texas. She moved to

Venango County with her husband in 2018 and has since grown to love the area and its community.

Ashley served in the Army from 2010 to 2015, earning several commendations, including the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with a Campaign Star, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, and an Army Good Conduct Medal. She completed Intelligence Analyst training, Combatives Level I, and a Warrior

Leader Course. Ashley was also on the Dean's list at Columbia College for two semesters and earned a spot on a Female Engagement Team before her deployment to Afghanistan in 2013. Recently, she was named Secretary of the VARHA board.

Ashley's professional goals include finishing her degree, earning a Master's in Accounting, and passing the CPA exam. Personally, she enjoys running, biking, lifting weights, and camping with her family. She has also started conditioning workouts with her kids and takes pleasure in reading and crocheting in her spare time.

Ashley values the community's support and enjoys working for KTC, where the leadership is committed to community involvement. She appreciates the friendly interactions with local businesses and the variety of kid-friendly activities available in the area.

*Welcome to FLEX, Ashley!*

## Go Outside. You deserve it!

Sunshine is more than just a mood booster—it's a vital element for overall well-being, especially for young professionals who often find ourselves indoors. Exposure to sunlight triggers the production of Vitamin D, essential for bone health, immune function, and mood regulation. Regular time in the sun can enhance mental clarity and productivity by reducing stress and promoting better sleep patterns.

Aim for at least 15-30 minutes of sunlight daily, whether through outdoor exercise, a walk during lunch breaks, or working near a window. Socialize with a colleague or enjoy a quiet moment to yourself. Incorporating sunshine into your routine not only improves your health but also boosts your energy and focus, leading to a more balanced and productive professional life.

Want someone to join you outside: try posting in the FLEX facebook group to setup a meetup spot using your FLEX network to meet new people or get closer to people with similar interests.



*Pictured: Bobbi Jones teaching paddleboard yoga at Two Mile County Park—Trailasana Yoga*

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## Event Photos: Coffee Chat at PerkUp and Bike 'n Brew Meeting



## July Events & Meetings:

**Marketing Committee:** Thursday, July 11 • Noon • Zoom

**Events & Fundraising Committee:** Tuesday, July 16 • Noon • Zoom  
• *Bike 'n Brew Planning Meeting following the Events Meeting*

**OHF Bike n Brew:** Saturday, July 20 • 4-7pm

**FLEX Monthly Meeting:** Monday, July 22 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

**OHF Ice Cream Social:** Thursday, July 25 • 5-7pm

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

### **New Members:**

Colby Alauzen  
Mark Sedlak  
Maddison Bakker  
Becky Savage

### **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)

