

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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

The 5 Ws of Giving

'Tis the season for holiday parties, sled riding, singing Christmas carols, hot cocoa by the fireplace, and time with friends and family. Don't forget one of the most important actions to take this time of the year, though, which is GIVING.

WHO: No matter what you have, you can always give back in some way. You can give to charity organizations, a family in need, local businesses, a friend, a stranger—anyone!

WHAT: Giving doesn't necessarily have to involve money or items. Your time is just as valuable, whether you spend it volunteering, helping a neighbor, or just listening to a friend who needs to talk.

WHEN: While many give back during the holidays, there are needs in the community all year round. We encourage you to give back whenever you see the opportunity.

WHY: There are countless reasons to give! Give to help someone who is in need, support the community, put a smile on someone's face, gain a new perspective, and more.

WHERE: Anywhere! We do encourage you to support our community and give in the Venango Area. You can find a list of nonprofit organizations in the member directory on the Chamber website and we suggest trying to be aware of needs in the community as you are out and about each day.

Thank you to those who joined us in November by wrapping gifts with Community Services of Venango County at the Cranberry Mall. Rebecca Beach, a FLEX member who volunteered, said "I enjoyed helping Community Services. The opportunity to give back and make a difference in the community through gift wrapping has been a great experience." So, how are you going to give this month?

Nominations Open for FLEX Presents Young Professional of the Year!



FLEX Presents is an annual event that celebrates the achievements of Venango County young professionals, those under 40 who contribute to the community through civic engagement. Community members are invited to nominate those who they believe meet the criteria (see insert in this newsletter). Like communities across the country, we recognize the value of retaining our talented and motivated young people. A key to this should be recognizing those who choose to work and volunteer here now!

We encourage you to pay careful attention to those "under 40" that you encounter each day in your community, your work and even in your home and help us to celebrate our most valuable assets and the future of our region.

Nominations will be accepted through January 31. All nominees will be recognized at FLEX Presents, to be held on March 31. The location will be announced in the February FYI.

We knew our area had great artistic and musical talent, but we are amazed at how much young professional **Destanie Armagost** had accomplished! Destanie grew up in Oil City and graduated from Oil City High School in 2012, where she went on to Clarion University and studied music education. She took a break from school, but plans to finish her education at Edinboro University in the fall of 2017, where she will study Art Education and Art Therapy as an honors student. Destanie lived in Denver Colorado for a short time, then returned to our area and is now an after-school tutor and mentor at Youth Alternatives and an author and illustrator for "The Tender Life," a mental wellness blog.

Music is one of Destanie's passions, in which she played lead roles in many musicals at the Barrow Civic Theatre and Oil City High School, was the section leader of the Oil City High School Marching Band drum line for 3 years, went to District and Region Choir for 3 years, sang in multiple choirs, and student directed the Venango Youth Choir, Holey Jeans, and the Oil City High School A Capella Choir.

After graduating high school, she began to experiment with writing her own music, in which she sang; played guitar, ukulele, and keyboard; and wrote lyrics for many bands that performed in and out of the Oil Region. Destanie also began organizing small-scale concerts that featured local and regional independent musicians and has served on the Oil Region Indie Music Festival Committee for four years, where she has booked a large portion of the festival's music.

As if that wasn't enough, Destanie founded and organized "Art Mart", a developing art and music festival that has taken place in Pipeline Alley for the past two years; has written, recorded, and produced several albums of original music; and has co-hosted a radio program on KQW that featured independent artists. She's not only skilled with music, though! Destanie has an artistic side too. She has had artwork featured in galleries and independent magazines and has designed album and merchandise art for musicians and flyers for concerts. She also interned at the Graffiti Gallery in 2015 and has served on the Graffiti Gallery Committee, as well as the Oil City Arts Council.

Besides art and music, Destanie has made an impact in our community as an Activity Coordinator at Golden Living Center in Oil City and a Peer Support Specialist at UPMC Northwest Behavioral Health. Some of her favorite spots include the Oil City Library, Neverending Stories Book and Comic Store, Karma Coffee, Spilling the Beans, Famoore's Restaurant, Hasson Park, The Graffiti Gallery, God's Little Garden, and China City.

Looking towards the future, she would like to continue on for her master's degree in Art Therapy and secure a job teaching art at the elementary or middle school level, as well as be a mobile Art Therapist for hospitals and nursing homes. She also hopes to begin working on writing, illustrating, and publishing a series of web comics and self-help books and expanding her blog's reach.

Destanie loves the options available in our area for underprivileged people who need a fair chance to succeed. "I love being able to make a difference in people's lives when they need that extra boost or resources to enhance their lives," she said. What an inspiring and impactful young professional we're happy to have in our area!



We had a great time at our Happy Hour at McNerney's!

Thanks to all who joined us!

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Born and raised in Ohio, Jessica Salyer is now happy to call Venango County her home! Jessica grew up in Dayton and attended Sinclair Community College. She moved to our area six years ago following a job for her husband and describes it as an “amazing move” for her family, in which they absolutely love it here.

Jessica earned her license in Property and Casualty in the State of Pennsylvania and now works for the Sandy K. Hovis State Farm Insurance Agency. She would love to go back to school to get her bachelor’s degree in Business Administration in the near future.

Her greatest achievement is raising three amazing, independent children, whom she loves to spend time with in her free time. Jessica also enjoys camping and hiking at Two Mile Run County Park, visiting local wineries, reading, playing board games and cards, shopping in downtown Franklin, and cheering for her sons at Franklin Knight football games every Friday night and Saturday morning. Additionally, Jessica volunteers at Sandycreek Elementary where she is the co-president of the parent-teacher organization.

While working in Venango County, Jessica has enjoyed getting to know co-workers and other professionals and the sense of community and trust that comes with that. “They see you at sporting events and out in the community and soon you become more than just another face in an office chair. You become a neighbor, a smiling face, or even a friend,” she said.

She is happy to work on the supportive team at the Sandy K Hovis State Farm office and appreciates the hard work they all put into each day and how they serve the community in the best way possible. She told us, “They have made my transition from being a stay at home mom to a working mom so much easier. I couldn’t have done it without them!”

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence

As young professionals, we strive to develop leadership skills which will propel our ability to influence others and lead future teams while also focusing on enhancing our business acumen. There is one key competency that has garnered even greater attention in the talent development space – emotional intelligence. What is emotional intelligence and how can it assist in developing your personal effectiveness?

Emotional Intelligence can be applied by establishing and sustaining trusting relationships by accurately perceiving and interpreting one’s own and others’ emotions and behavior, and leveraging insights to effectively manage one’s own responses so that one’s behavior matches one’s values and delivers intended results. It’s important to value others, as we are well reminded during the holiday season, to learn more about others’ life experiences and commonalities you share with them. This can also assist in the workplace by appreciating diversity of thought or in one-on-one coaching sessions with employees. Emotional Intelligence is a constant in the breadth of leadership development and its significance, in both your professional and personal lives, should not be forgotten.

Written by Alan McBride, FLEX VP/Secretary



SAVE THE DATE!
July 15, 2017



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Upcoming Events & Meetings



Oil Heritage Festival Bike 'n Brew Meeting

Thursday, December 8
5:30 - 7:30pm
Venango Chamber, Oil City

Join us to plan next year's Bike 'n Brew! We will be ordering food for dinner, so please bring cash to pitch in if you plan to eat.

Please RSVP to acowles@venangochamber.org or (814) 676-8521.



Venango County's Young Professionals Organization

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, December 14
12:00 - 1:00PM
Venango Chamber, Oil City

Join us at our monthly meeting to discuss upcoming events and opportunities for the organization!

Happy Holidays!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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.

Chamber events: Check out the Chamber's Calendar of Events at
www.venangochamber.org

email: flex@venangochamber.org



VenangoFLEX