

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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

FLEX to Hold Annual Meeting in October

2016 was a great year for FLEX, with active young professional involvement and successful events! Whether you took part in meetings and events or you're looking to get involved in the future, we invite you to attend our Annual Meeting.

The 2016 Annual Meeting will be held on **Friday, October 21**, from **5:30 to 7:30PM** at the Barrow Civic Little Theatre in Franklin. The evening will consist of a brief business meeting to recap the past year, preview the upcoming year, and elect new leaders.

Shaun Alcorn, a local entrepreneur, will join FLEX as a guest speaker. Shaun has worked throughout the U.S. and is happy to now call Venango County his home. He has started or taken over several local businesses with his wife, Marie Alcorn, including Karma Coffee Co, Northside Eatery, and The Yellow Dog Lantern Restaurant. He's passionate about the area and plans to talk to meeting attendees about running a business and thriving in Venango County, including Q&A with encouraged participation from audience members.



Attendees can enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages, as well as drinks from the Barrow Civic Theatre's cash bar if interested. During the beginning networking time, FLEX will offer **free professional headshots** to all attendees—a new feature added to this year's meeting.

The theatre will host its Cabaret at 8 p.m. following the meeting, and all meeting attendees will receive free admission and a drink voucher for the event. Young professionals are also welcome to bring sheet music and sing during the Cabaret!

Please RSVP for the Annual Meeting to Ashley at the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce at acowles@venangochamber.org or (814) 676-8521 by **Friday, October 14**. While attendance by young professionals is encouraged, anyone is welcome to attend. We hope you can join us for this evening of networking and FLEX involvement!

Sponsorship opportunities are available. If interested in supporting the Annual Meeting and helping FLEX, Venango County's next generation of leaders, please contact the Chamber at (814) 676-8521 or acowles@venangochamber.org.



Another great young professional who grew up in Venango County has returned to work in our area! We're happy to introduce Zachary Johnson, Mechanical Engineer for New Product Development Testing Center at Joy Global.

Zakk grew up near Two Mile Run County Park and graduated from Oil City High School in 2008. He attended Venango College of Clarion University for one year, spent his second year at Clarion University's main campus, then finished pursuing his degree at Penn State Behrend, where he graduated in the top 10% of his class and earned a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology.

Many mentors have shaped Zakk into who is he today. He worked for Ron Myers, owner of Myers Custom Woodworks, Inc., at the age of 15 in which he gained skills, punctuality, creativity, and work ethic that he has cherished and taken throughout his life. He was also fortunate to take guitar lessons from Ron Shoup, former Venango Area Chamber director, with some occasional math homework help, too. Ron was also Zakk's mentor for his high school senior project and helped him build a guitar. Not only did he teach him about guitars, but how to be a stand up person and work hard to succeed.

Currently, Zakk lives in Harrisville with his wife, Kayla, and he may have a degree and full-time job, but he's not done studying yet! He's taking classes towards a Master of Business Administration through Gannon University and plans to graduate in Spring 2017. In the future, besides earning his MBA, Zakk plans to complete a few hydraulic engineering courses and hopes to move into a house within the surrounding area.

In his free time, you'll find Zakk relaxing and catching up with family and friends, boating, camping, attending local fairs, and working outside on different projects, including occasional woodworking. Some of his favorite parts of Venango County include events such as the 4th of July fireworks, Applefest, and Light-Up Night, and places such as Two Mile Run County Park, French Creek, and the Samuel Justus Trail.

Zakk enjoys working in Venango County and doesn't plan on leaving! "Unlike the big cities, Venango County is a very welcoming, easy going, and beautiful area to work in," he said. He likes the safety, scenic beauty, friendly people, and relaxed way of living, and he truly sees the potential in our area! We couldn't agree more, and we're happy to have Zakk as one of our young professionals here!

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FLEX Socials

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the first FLEX Coffee Chat! We enjoyed getting to know young professionals in our area.

We're planning to hold some type of social at least once a month! Our next, besides the Annual Meeting, will be a Happy Hour in November (see back page for details).

Have an idea for a fun FLEX get-together? Let us know! Email acowles@venangochamber.org or message us on Facebook.





He may not originally be from Venango County, but Christopher Nocera sure takes pride in our area! Chris, an engineer at Joy Global, grew up in Ellwood City, part of Lawrence County, and went on to Penn State Behrend where he received his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering in May 2011.

He has several accomplishments he is proud of, including continuing education and certification with engineering software and designing a machine sold to a customer in Australia for \$3 million within a year of being hired at Joy. Most importantly, though, Chris is proud that he is “adulting” successfully.

As an engineer, Chris truly enjoys solving problems and in the future he hopes to more directly impact people by improving their quality of life through engineered solutions to common problems. In the next five to 10 years, he hopes to continue his education and to get more involved within the Franklin community.

Chris is rarely bored in his free time, because he plays in two bands based out of Ellwood City—“Generation 2,” a rock and country cover band with his dad, and “One Voice,” a family contemporary Christian music group. When he’s not playing music, he’s hiking at Oil Creek State Park, biking on the Samuel Justus Recreation Trail, helping with a local youth group, camping or fishing at Two Mile Run County Park, enjoying downtown Franklin, or traveling all over the state, country, and world. He enjoys taking trips to Erie, Pittsburgh and State College; visiting big cities in the USA like New Orleans, Orlando, and Baltimore; and he’s even been to Europe and Australia!

“There really is a lot to do in the area, especially if you enjoy being outdoors,” Chris said. “The housing is very cheap and all of the people I work with are fantastic.” We love when young professionals come to our area and we’re so glad Chris is enjoying his new home here!

On-The-Go Leadership Development at Joy Global

Joy Global recently launched the Women In Action leadership program to 130 female leaders worldwide and those identified as emerging talent in the organization. The pilot launch of this program is the first of its kind for the company – new curated leadership content will be released on a monthly basis to relating to short video clips from industry leaders and university professors, along with reflection questions and activities, and book summaries from some of the world’s most prevalent thought leaders.

So, why this program and why now? Understanding that many employees can’t leave the office for two days at a time for training academies leverages our presence to frequently look at material we can offer our employees in which they can access online at their discretion, between meetings or at home on their tablets or smartphones. As an organization, we are engaging our current and future leaders with diversity and inclusion competencies which will enhance our ability to attract, develop, and retain critical leadership talent to drive business innovation for years to come.

Written by Alan McBride, Global Talent Manager

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Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities



FLEX Annual Meeting

Friday, October 21
5:30 - 7:30pm
Barrow Civic Little Theatre, Franklin

(see front page for details)

Oil Heritage Festival Bike 'n Brew Meeting

Tuesday, November 1
5:30 - 7:00pm
Hoss's Steak and Sea House, Cranberry

Join us to discuss date, location, food, music, and more for next year's Bike 'n Brew! The meal will be dutch treat.

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



FLEX Happy Hour

Wednesday, November 9
5:30 - 7:00PM
McNerney's Tavern, Oil City

Join us for an informal social to network with other young professionals, support a local business, and unwind after your work day!

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.

Where you'll find FLEX this month:

Friday, October 21 - Annual Meeting, 5:30 to 7:30PM, Barrow Civic Little Theatre

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



VenangoFLEX

email: flex@venangochamber.org

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