

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

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

It's that time of year again. The time to be thankful for the experiences we've had during the last year. This is the time when families revel together, in happy spirit, exchanging gifts and acknowledging the successes and defeats of the previous 365 days, to remember the good times and the bad. Hopefully yours are mostly good, and your winter nights are spent reminiscing, laughing and enjoying memories of 2013.

One of my best moments of 2014 was becoming a member of FLEX. I'm honored to be an active participant in such an important and influential group of young professionals in the community. This is the time of year to make New Year's resolutions. It's the time to look forward to the upcoming year by remembering, and learning from, the last. In the spirit of the holiday, let's take a few minutes to remember FLEX's accomplishments in the attitude of improving our organization and our community.

February brought the Young Professional of the Year award ceremony, an opportunity for the entire county to recognize and celebrate the efforts of our entrepreneurs and professionals. While we only host this event once a year, we should be cognizant of the hard work and devotion of this group year round. FLEX Presents is an opportunity for networking, education and career development - the foundation of FLEX. These cornerstones of community aren't limited to one event, though, and we should all remember to encourage the growth of future community leaders. (Text FLEX to 42828 to add your email to our lists and be informed of upcoming meetings and events.)

During 2013, FLEX partnered with several new organizations, including Pennsylvania Career Link, Taking Care of Business (TCB) and Venango College Clarion University to enrich the opportunities for our membership, and offer new opportunities to those organizations employees. These new partnerships will help enrich the lives of many citizens in and around Venango County, along with creating new businesses in the area. In June, FLEX was present at the Oil Region Career Fair to encourage our high school citizens to reap the bounty available in Venango County. Many FLEX members participated at our booth, insuring faith in the future of our region, and encouraging college students and older generations alike to start a career, and realize a future, in the Oil Region.

Not to be forgotten are the innumerable interns who worked in Oil City, Franklin and the rest of the county this summer. You have all filled an invaluable role in the community and we hope - by which I mean will be relentless in encouraging you - to return to the area upon graduation, to continue to pursue the excellent work you performed during this passed summer.

October brought FLEX's first annual meeting. The membership gathered, along with students from Venango College, to hear David P. Gibbons, Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer of UPMC Hamot, speak. Mr. Gibbons gave an enlightening talk on professional behavior and the finer points of achievement, which was informative and helpful for all. At this meeting, members voted to ratify bylaws written by Greg Merkel. These approval of these bylaws will ensure the future success and growth of FLEX.

FLEX sponsors are not to go without recognition. Each donation guarantees our mission; none more valuable than another. To our sponsors, FLEX extends a gracious Thank You. We couldn't do it without you, and your commitment to the future of Venango County is invaluable.

This is a brief synopsis of FLEX's accomplishments for 2013. (We know the past year has been an engaging and productive one for FLEX. We've learned from these experiences, and will use them to improve our organization, and Venango County, during the upcoming year.

2013 was our best year yet. We know the entire community will learn this year's lessons to make a productive, fruitful and inspiring next year. While no one knows the outcome of 2014, let's resolve to make it the most memorable year yet.

Written by Matt Beith, 2014 FLEX Young Professional of the Year



Bobbie Haag grew up just north of the Venango County in Hydetown, PA. While she was pursuing her associates degree in paralegal business studies at Clarion University, Bobbie interned for the United Way and the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce. After graduating from Clarion University she was fortunate to find a position perfectly matched for her field of study as a paralegal. But Bobbie realized her heart was in Venango County and so she began the pursuit of employment here. She now works as an Adult Dislocated Worker Coordinator in the PA CareerLink. She has been an active member of FLEX and will take a seat on the board of directors of the Venango Area Chamber in January. She was recently sworn in as a volunteer for CASA; holds board seats on the Venango Area community foundation, United Way of Venango County, and the Venango College paralegal advisory board. In her free time Bobbie enjoys running, golf, and teaches continuing education classes. She was recently awarded employee of the year for the Northwest region.

Bobbie is quick to identify her attraction to our area, suggesting a perfect summer day might include a canoe trip down the Allegheny, a hike on one of the scenic trails, with picnic in hand. However, Bobbie also recognized the challenges we face as a region and takes very seriously the work ahead in putting people back to work. She is introducing a number of new initiatives at the CareerLink to help dislocated workers. Bobbie will serve as the President of FLEX in 2014.

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## Young Professionals in the Workplace Series

Have you ever thought about updating or even creating your resume and then discarded the notion? No matter what field you are looking to enter, having a resume is a useful tool that can give you that competitive edge. The main purpose of a resume is to highlight your qualifying experiences, whether they be work, educational, or skill related. It is also a chance to highlight those achievements that you may have acquired outside of the work arena.

First impressions are extremely important in a competitive job market and more often than not, this first impression is your resume. Employers typically get many more applicants than they have positions, which means that if your resume does not stand out or isn't up to par, you probably won't make it to the first interview. Your resume should be able to communicate three things to your potential employer: that you are qualified, you care about the job you are applying for, and that you understand the working world. Stay tuned for next month's article on the key elements of constructing a resume!



This month's second Young Professional Profile is Matt Caldwell, partner at Caldwell Printing Services. He works alongside his father, Jim Caldwell, who has operated the business since 1996. Matt has been involved in the business since the beginning, first as a nuisance and later as a contributing member of the business (Jim would say "a bigger nuisance"). After graduating from Oil City High School, he attended Youngstown State University and Slippery Rock University to study music education. When he finished, he took the opportunity to return to Oil City and take on a larger role at Caldwell Printing Services. Since then, Matt has helped expand the business from offset printing services and promotional products to custom signage, vinyl graphics, and vehicle wraps. Matt has been a life-

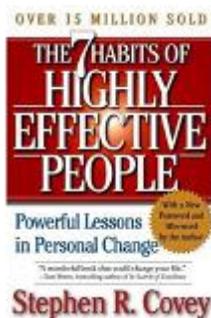
long resident of Oil City and is committed to serving his local community; in fact, he was recently named the Volunteer of the Year by the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce and is the immediate past-president of FLEX. He also volunteers with several local organizations. He hopes that FLEX will continue to enhance the credibility and accountability of the area's young professionals as well as provide them a way to start getting involved in their community.

Although some might call Matt a workaholic, he does take time to stop and smell the roses occasionally – especially at any and all Venango County restaurants. One of his favorite pastimes is sampling all of the local fare. When asked about his favorite thing about living in Venango County, he says "the lack of traffic! After sitting in traffic in Youngstown and Slippery Rock, it is so nice to have a short commute."

**What made you return to/stay in Venango County:** Everything is so close and I like the small town atmosphere.

## Developing Your Future

An oldie, but goodie, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is an excellent starting point for the young professional looking to develop their skills and habits towards becoming a better employee and person. Stephen Covey, the author, is an internationally respected leadership authority who realizes that true success encompasses a balance of personal and professional effectiveness. This book is a manual for improving yourself in both areas. Covey not only teaches you which 7 habits will assist you on your development journey, he also walks you through the necessary changes in how you view the world. These changes will affect how you perceive and act regarding productivity, time management, positive thinking, developing your "proactive muscles", and more. To give you a taste of Covey's work the 7 habits include: be proactive, begin with the end in mind, put first things first, think win-win, seek first to understand then to be understood, synergize, and sharpen the saw. Take good notes and read carefully because this book will help you for years to come!



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## For your information, there is so much to do in Venango County!

A regular feature of FYI will be announcements pertaining to opportunities for employment, volunteering and activities well suited for the young professionals, but not necessarily exclusive to any age group. Chamber members are invited to submit notices to be included in future editions of FYI. We request that items be brief but informational (as opposed to advertising), and include contact information for follow up.

### Volunteer:

Volunteers from the professional world working with students and teachers in the classroom make **Junior Achievement** programs unique. Volunteers do not have to know how to teach to participate in JA. JA provides training, easy to use materials, a concise Consultant Guide and support to help every volunteer have a successful experience. Training lasts 30 to 60 minutes and provides the volunteer with everything they will need to know about program kit materials, student characteristics, and classroom management techniques. Training and program descriptions are also available on-line at [www.jawesternpa.org](http://www.jawesternpa.org) or by contacting Lisa Groner at 814-676-2447.

### Social/Recreational:

The new **12 for 12 Bad Bowlers Social Outing** at Seneca Lanes begins on January 14th, 2014 at 8:00. Teams will consist of three bowlers and everyone receives a free bowling ball and free T-shirt. Sign up your friends by calling 676-4618.

### Workforce:

Did you know that several local businesses begin looking for permanent employees by hiring through **Manpower**? While some positions may be temporary, the majority are intended to be long term. Manpower assists the employer by accessing skill levels and assisting future workers with finding appropriate training. The first step is to register with Manpower, which can be done online at [manpowerjobs.com](http://manpowerjobs.com) or by visiting the local office at 22 Seneca Street in Oil City.

### 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 in January:

First Friday Lunch - January 10 @ noon, The Mosaic

Monthly Meeting - January 15th @ noon, Venango Chamber Conference Room

**Chamber events** - Check out the Business Connector Calendar of Events or [www.venangochamber.org](http://www.venangochamber.org)



VenangoFLEX

Text FLEX to 42828 to be added to our email list

email: [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org)