

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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New Year Trends for Young Professionals By Casey McVay, FLEX President

I network with a variety of professionals, other wide-eyed young professionals similar to me, mountain climbing managers who continuously ascend toward new goals, and seasoned professionals with mounds of knowledge and wisdom. Regardless, I can always learn something from each one. I am a firm believer my network is the strongest asset I will ever have in my career. It offers many lessons I can tap into and some of the most valuable are learned from those who have reached their personal success. At some point, they were a young professional just starting to work their way up the mountain.

YPs are known to desire the journey from Point A to Point B in their career to be swift, but most are willing to put the time, energy, and hard work into earning the next step. YPs are also trendsetters and trend followers, just take a look at this group's social media feeds and you'll see what I mean. And while social media trends are important, let's step away from the digital glow for a moment to explore a few trends the successful followed way before we arrived in the network. We can all put these trends to work in the New Year.

Wise use of time.

Interruptions are inevitable, but we have the power to determine how much of our time we give to them. Successful professionals keep track of their schedules, schedule time to complete assignments and projects, and keep a record of how their time is spent. They also take the time to plan what results they want before they have important conversations, which leads to the next trend.

Graceful communication.

Most people don't master the art of communication, but its important YPs interact professionally. Before hitting "send" after composing your next post, note, or email, take a few moments to consider your message and audience. That can apply before you speak up at the next board meeting or Chamber mixer. Let your colleagues know you value their opinions, not just your own.

Coping with uncertainty.

If you're as busy as I am, you know chaos is unavoidable, even if you're particularly organized. Managing overwhelming situations is a necessary skill. Dale Carnegie said, "Feeling sorry for yourself, and your present condition, is not only a waste of energy but the worst habit you could possibly have."



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Kate Cotter

Venango County hosts many students and young professionals from far-away places, and Kate Cotter is one of those bright, aspiring new faces! The Venango Area Chamber of Commerce welcomes Kate to the area from Green Bay, Wisconsin, while she works at the Golden Living Center, in Oil City, as an Administrator in Training.

Kate is a senior Health Care Administration major at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. For her degree, she is completing a 50-week practicum at the Golden Living Center and finishing her classes online. She is set to graduate in May and plans to sit for a licensure exam. "After passing, I would like to stay in long-term care, hopefully working my way to becoming an Administrator of a skilled nursing facility," Kate said about her plans for the future. So far, her experience in Venango County has proven to her that the area would be an excellent place to start a career.

Kate is a dedicated Green Bay Packers fan and enjoys visiting home where she can get "real" Wisconsin cheese curds, something she misses, but has found a new favorite food spot in the area at the Villa. She also loves to find time to relax with a good read, but right now, she is filling up her free time by getting involved in the community. Kate said, "Everyone I have met here has been very friendly and welcoming to me," and FLEX is excited to welcome Kate to assist with the planning for 2016. Thanks for choosing Venango County to work and study, Kate!



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Resilience.

If you can teach yourself to manage your emotions and actions in stressful times, you can also learn to persevere and ride out failure. Failure can act as a stepping stone to success, but we need tough skin to reach the top of the mountain.

Respect.

Most of the other trends are inward, but the act of respect regards others. YPs might follow the same trends, but we are all different and we are certainly different than seasoned professionals. Many YP's are eager to share their passion, but sometimes it clouds the view of other opinions and thoughts. Keeping an open mind and respecting what each other brings to a network can help build stronger relationships and bigger success.

Some of my YP colleagues would probably suggest cooking and working out should be on the list, too, because both are practical and can massively improve one's life and budget for decades, but chicken marsala won't help us reach the ultimate career goals we have. This year, let's get gritty, and take action based on the trends of the masters in our networks. Happy New Years!



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Kristian Taylor

Another young professional who hails from outside the area is Kristian Taylor, originally from Toledo, OH. Kristian arrived to Oil City a few months ago after living in the Philadelphia area for some time and is the new Coordinator of Recreational Services at Clarion University in Clarion, PA. He has a B.A and M.A. in Sport Management from Morehead State University in Kentucky, where he was Outstanding Sport Management Undergraduate and Graduate Student.

Kristian says moving from Philadelphia has had its challenges, including not knowing many people, but he plans to take advantage of the upcoming young professional networking events to ease the transition. He enjoys staying active and anything sports related. Kristian is also an accomplished piano player and plays the guitar from time to time.

Professionally, Kristian aspires to take the next step in his career and become a Director of Recreation at the D1 collegiate level, but says "it's probably time for a family." Jokingly, he mentioned his mother would love nothing more than a daughter-in-law and a grandchild. In the meantime, he is excited to learn more about Venango County and the wonderful opportunities in the area for recreation and professional growth. If you run into Kristian, please introduce yourself and welcome him to Venango County!

FLEX Presents Nominations Open!

Online form

www.venangochamber.org/flex-presents-nomination/

Form to print

www.venangochamber.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Nomination-Form.pdf

FLEX Presents is an annual event that celebrates the achievements of Venango County's young professionals, those under 40 who contribute to their community through civic engagement.

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.

We've made the nomination process easier. Please see and share the nomination form included in this newsletter.

Nominations will be accepted through February 13th. All nominees will be recognized at FLEX Presents, to be held on April 1st. The location will be announced in the February FYI.

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Bike and Brew Event Planned for 2016 OHF

FLEX members are excited to announce that they are planning a new event to be held during Oil Heritage Festival 2016. The first annual Oil Heritage Festival Bike and Brewfest will begin on the morning of Friday, July 22nd, with a variety of bicycle related activities happening throughout the day, in and around Oil City. Late in the afternoon, the Brewfest will kickoff, expected to last 2-3 hours. Breweries from across the region have been invited to "Save the Date" while details are confirmed. Those interested in participating in the planning of either the bike or brew portion of the event are welcomed to contact the Chamber for more information.



There's a new way to get your fill of local news. It's called Venango Extra. The new website, found at VenangoExtra.com, is geared towards the younger population with features like "Hot Topics" and interactive games.

Studies over the years have shown young professionals and students look for news and entertainment in their hand-held electronic devices rather than in a printed format. Venango Extra was built to reach these younger readers with its clean design and navigable menu list.

Its goal is to engage with younger readers and give them a way to share their own news. The site features many local stories each day, but also includes national and world news as well as a look at professional sports and entertainment stories that people are talking about. Local police news is updated throughout the day to keep readers informed.

Readers with an eye for photography can submit a local photo to be featured on the Home page of the website. High schools in the area have been invited to participate in the website by allowing students to submit information about events and activities at their schools.

The website is offered free of charge. There is no subscription plan needed or paywall to cross in order to read the news. Items of interest to readers may be emailed to venangoextra@gmail.com. There also are ways to share photos and information via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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:

Friday, January 8

- Bike & Brew Planning Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Double Play in Oil City
- Cabaret Night, 8 p.m. at the Barrow Civic Theatre in Franklin **FLEX Members receive free entry with a FLEX business card. If you need one, contact us!*

January 15

- Monthly Meeting/Social Night, 5:30 p.m. Watch your FLEX emails for the location announcement.

Interested in hosting a FLEX meeting at your business? Let us know!

Chamber events - Check out the Chamber's Calendar of Events at

www.venangochamber.org

email: flex@venangochamber.org



VenangoFLEX