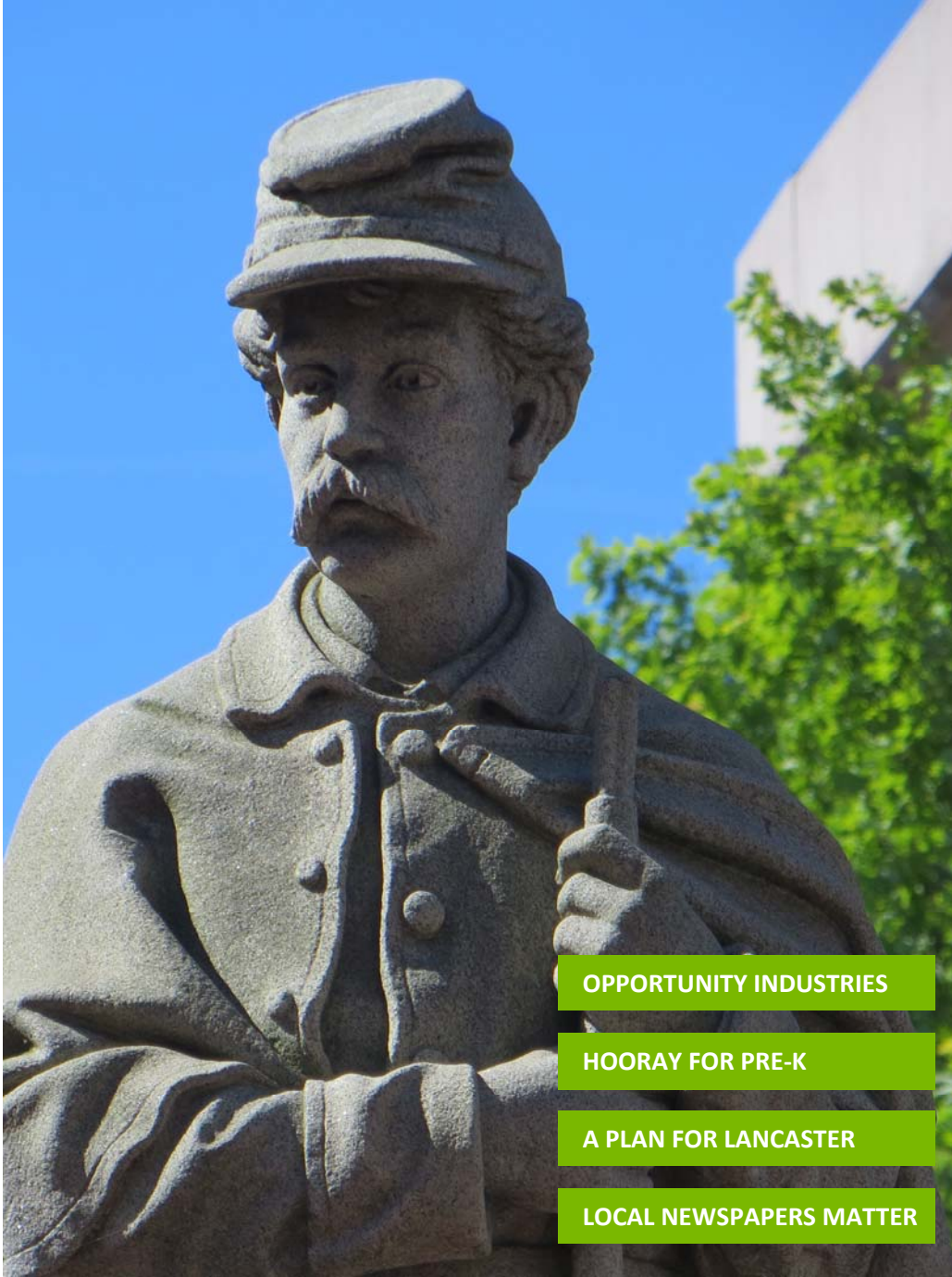


Spring 2019

Hourglass Quarterly



OPPORTUNITY INDUSTRIES

HOORAY FOR PRE-K

A PLAN FOR LANCASTER

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS MATTER

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS MATTER

No news is bad news

The need for quality, objective, fact-based news is critical to the future of our country and local communities. Yet America's daily newspapers are disappearing due to growing economic, technological, political, and social changes. In the last decade, newspaper ad revenue has fallen 63% and circulation has dropped nearly 40%.



Between 2004 and 2018, 1,800 newspapers shut down, merged, or shifted from daily to weekly publications. Some contend that of every one closed, ten have been so hollowed out that they lack the resources to effectively report the news. It is predicted that within the next three years, one-third to one-half of the nation's remaining dailies will fail.

Newspapers have long been the main source of news, making them indispensable to an informed public. Local TV stations have tried to fill the gap with some hard-hitting local news and investigative reporting, but most TV news broadcast content still originates in newspapers. A typical 30-minute news broadcast in L.A. covering local issues such as budget, education, transportation, healthcare, immigration, new regulations, and voting usually accounts for just 22 seconds of airtime.

When coverage of city hall, local police, school and zoning boards, bond issues, local taxes and spending does not occur adequately, corruption more

readily flourishes, the quality of elected officials and government workers diminishes, and important local initiatives are neglected. Because newspapers are civic watchdogs, cities with recently closed newspapers have seen increased payroll expenses from higher wages, greater inefficiencies, and higher cost of municipal borrowing. And more importantly, local residents are experiencing increases in their taxes.

The quality, truthfulness, and reliability of news suffers as local newspapers are increasingly replaced by social media platforms distributing unverified information and misinformation based on what users want to hear. As the traditional business of news is vanishing, new ways of manipulating the news and the public are unfortunately proliferating.



In order for cities to grow and prosper, they need vibrant local newspapers to keep citizens informed and engaged. The problems facing newspapers are complex and enormous, requiring new solutions affecting operation, content, design, and delivery, as well as government support. Local newspapers may need to reinvent themselves.

Lancaster is fortunate to be able to celebrate 225 years with the Lancaster Newspapers.

Based on Manhattan Institute's Urban Policy 2018, chapter 4, by Judith Miller 