PA | Post®

Digital Journalism for the Public Good

PA Post is a digital-first, citizen-focused news organization to hold Pennsylvania's government accountable to its citizens.

The mission of *PA Post* is to connect Pennsylvanians to their state, and each other, with accountability and deep-dive reporting that is multimedia, digital-first, audience-focused and distributed statewide.

PA Post delivers legislative, policy and politics reporting through a network of commercial and non-commercial media organizations assembled to create and distribute multimedia digital coverage.

PA Post was launched by WITF Public Media, a 501(c)3 organization with more than 50 years of experience covering the Commonwealth's legislature, agencies and issues.

PA POST: EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS

- *PA Post* launched in September 2018
- *PA Post* has raised $1.1 million, or 76% of its two-year start-up goal
- *PA Post* website: www.PaPost.org
- *PA Post* e-newsletter: *The Context* published every weekday, 2,639 subscribers, 44% open rate, reported by Emily Previti
- *PA Post* podcast: Thursdays, State of the State, hosted by Katie Meyer

CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

Here's how we've connected Pennsylvanians to their state, and each other, with accountability and deep-dive reporting.

Listening and responding. Our *Listening Post* has generated plenty of reader questions. One former Maryland teacher who had moved to Pennsylvania asked why there were so many superintendents (with high salaries) in our state, as opposed to the one-county, one-school-district setup in Maryland. *PA Post* reporter Ed Mahon answered that question with a story that explained why it would be so difficult to consolidate school districts in Pennsylvania – even though doing so might be a money-saver.

Tackling the questions people are wondering about. A court ruled that Pennsylvania's congressional-district map was gerrymandered to favor Republicans, and the 2018 election was held using a new map drawn by the court – and Democrats gained seats to draw even with Republicans. But what would have happened under the old map? For *PA Post*, reporter Emily Previti painstakingly worked with election-result data and discovered a counter-intuitive news story: Democrats would have made the same gains under the old map. Our story was a statewide exclusive.

Doing quick-turn data-based stories. Gov. Tom Wolf, in his budget address, proposed that municipalities served by state police, instead of by their own police force, would pay more. That night, we published an interactive data-driven map showing what each municipality across the state would pay under the proposal. Wolf also proposed a $45,000 minimum wage for teachers. Two days later, we published a story and database showing how much each district would get.

Doing deep-dive data-based stories. We dove into the teacher salary database to reveal that women account for three in four teacher positions in the state, but only one in four superintendent positions.

Bringing regional stories to a statewide audience. When Air Force Staff Sgt. Dylan Elchin of western Pennsylvania was killed in Afghanistan, we sent a reporter to his community outside Pittsburgh to profile him. We published a map showing all Pennsylvania service members who have been killed in Afghanistan. And we sent two staffers to Arlington National Cemetery to cover his funeral, the only news organization outside western Pennsylvania to tell Elchin's story.

CONCEPT

Two public-service journalism platforms are working together, each bringing impressive news capabilities and a shared mission of service to Pennsylvanians. This initiative is needed now more than ever to cover one of the largest, costliest and most opaque state governments in the nation.

Spotlight PA and *PA Post* address this goal with different approaches designed to complement each other for maximum impact: data-driven investigative reporting (*Spotlight PA*) and multimedia statehouse and policy coverage (*PA Post*), all of it distributed statewide.

PA Post: Legislative, policy and politics reporting led by WITF Public Media, which has assembled commercial and non-commercial media organizations into a network to both create and deliver multimedia digital coverage.

> **Public-service journalism is needed in Pennsylvania now more than ever to cover one of the largest, costliest and most opaque state governments in the nation.**

Spotlight PA: A new investigative newsroom combining and enhancing the statehouse resources of the state's largest print/digital media organizations: *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia Media Network), the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *LNP* (Lancaster Newspapers). *Spotlight PA* plans to announce its editor and launch in the first quarter of 2019.

An Editorial and Fundraising Partnership

PA Post has both a fundraising and an editorial partnership with *Spotlight PA,* which is an investigative news organization whose fiscal agent is the Lenfest Institute. *PA Post* and *Spotlight PA* each seek funding from donors as separate organizations, but also agree to seek funding jointly from select donors. With approval from the Lenfest Foundation, jointly raised funds can be matched.

Values

PA Post and *Spotlight PA* are committed to non-profit, non-partisan, fact-based journalism that seeks donor and sponsor support, but does not permit donor or sponsor influence.

How We Work Together

PA Post is a collaborative news organization with three types of media colleagues.

• *Media Partners* distribute *PA Post* content, provide content for *PA Post* to distribute, and collaborate with *PA Post* on in-depth projects.

• *Media Affiliates* are news organizations that distribute *PA Post* content.

• *Media Project Partners* work with *PA Post* on select shared projects.

Spotlight PA is a media partner of *PA Post* and we have agreed to collaborate across an array of initiatives to help maximize impact on our common mission:

• *PA Post* will distribute *Spotlight PA's* content digitally, on air with *PA Post* partners, and in podcasts.

• Data resources, public records resources and localized data slices of the *Spotlight PA* newsroom will be distributed by *PA Post*.

• *PA Post* will collaborate with *Spotlight PA* to provide audio and video reporting.

• *PA Post* and *Spotlight PA* will leverage one another's events and civic engagement activities in Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Lancaster and elsewhere.

THE ROAD AHEAD

March 2019 marks the 40th anniversary of the accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant. *PA Post* will look back at the incident and response, and forward to the status of nuclear power today. With the possible closure of TMI looming in 2019, this anniversary exploration is both timely and historically relevant.

PA Post is joining with WITF.org and PennLive at the Hop Yard in Middletown on March 19th for a News & Brews event. We'll talk to residents about their TMI memories.

PA Post's series on mental health, *Through the Cracks*, will host a listening session in May 2019 in Pittsburgh. *PA Post* will join with PublicSource, a Media Project Partner, for the community event.

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