

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coro Northern California and Coro Southern California Announce Historic Merger to Create Unified Statewide Organization

Leadership development powerhouses unite to expand civic engagement programs across California

SAN FRANCISCO and LOS ANGELES, CA – [September 12, 2025] – Coro Northern California and Coro Southern California today announced their merger to form Coro California, creating a single, unified statewide organization dedicated to preparing people for effective and ethical leadership across the Golden State. Coro's highly-regarded leadership programs have a storied history of helping leaders of all ages, backgrounds, and viewpoints deepen their sense of civic duty and engagement, developing the skills and capacity to work across differences, address complex challenges, and strengthen our democracy. The merger, effective January 1, 2026 pending regulatory notice, is a strategic evolution that will bring Coro's leadership programs to even more communities statewide, and leverage significant new opportunities for partnership and growth.

Both organizations enter the merger from positions of financial and programmatic stability, and with dedicated, mission-driven staff. California faces urgent, complex challenges — and the unified Coro California will meet this moment with increased statewide visibility and influence, and a stronger capacity to strengthen the civic fabric. Both regions will continue to offer leadership programs that are locally grounded and rooted in Coro's experiential leadership development methodology, with the benefit of being powered by a robust statewide infrastructure.

"This is an exciting and historic milestone in Coro's evolution," said the board chairs of both organizations. "Bringing our two organizations together will allow us to expand our reach, increasing access to programs that are the gold standard in training agile, innovative civic leaders."

Natalie Samarjian, current CEO of Coro Southern California and a graduate of the Coro Northern California Fellows Program in Public Affairs, will lead the integration process and step into the role of statewide Coro California CEO on October 1, 2025. Natalie has been instrumental in leading Coro Southern California to a new era of strength over the past nine years — greatly expanding programs, partnerships, revenue, and visibility, and cultivating a vibrant community of alumni.

"Having experienced this transformative programming firsthand as a Coro graduate, I understand the profound impact our work has on developing civic leaders," said Samarjian. "As one united Coro California, we will activate even more courageous and compassionate leaders who are prepared to lead the largest, most diverse state in the union to forge a strong and resilient future."

The launch of Coro California marks the culmination of Coro Northern California CEO Laney Whitcanack's long-planned leadership transition. Coro celebrates Laney's bold, innovative leadership and is deeply grateful for her lasting legacy and commitment to the mission.

During the transition period, both organizations' operations will remain substantially unchanged, with existing programs continuing uninterrupted. The organizations do not anticipate immediate operational changes to current partnerships or programming.

The merger creates expanded opportunities for collaboration with community partners, government agencies, and civic organizations across California. Coro California will continue the organizations' decades-long commitment to developing diverse leaders who drive positive change in their communities, serving with dedication and integrity in the government, business, and nonprofit sectors.

About Coro: For more than 80 years, Coro has developed civic leaders through experiential learning programs that combine hands-on practice with reflection and skill-building. Coro's alumni network includes influential leaders in government, business, labor, and nonprofit organizations who work tirelessly to strengthen the civic fabric and build thriving communities. The organization's approach emphasizes direct experience, diverse perspectives, and collaborative problem-solving.

About Coro California: Beginning January 1, 2026, Coro California will serve as the unified statewide organization continuing the legacy and mission of both Coro Northern California and Coro Southern California. The organization will offer leadership development programs throughout California, with a particular focus on developing and supporting leaders who reflect the communities they serve.

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For More Information:

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