

Top 10 Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this happening because Coro Leadership Center-St. Louis is having financial challenges? Is FOCUS St. Louis financially healthy?

- Over many years, Coro Leadership Center and FOCUS have independently operated strong leadership development programs and, at various times in their histories, have worked together or discussed partnerships or mergers.
- While Coro-St. Louis' leadership transition provided an opportunity for dialogue, the financial challenges of operating Coro's programs independently, especially during difficult economic times, were a significant part of the decision-making process.
- With a robust donor base, FOCUS St. Louis is in a strong financial position. The additional Coro programs are sustainable as profit centers and will not represent an undue burden on FOCUS.

2. What does it mean that FOCUS St. Louis is acquiring the Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs and the Coro Women In Leadership Program?

- Under the newly ratified Coro National By-Laws, the Coro National Board of Governors oversees a revised Coro network which includes independent Coro Centers and affiliate programs that provide Coro programs but are not Centers.
- FOCUS has negotiated a license agreement for the Fellows and WIL programs from Coro National. This relationship ensures the Coro programs will be consistent with national models and provides FOCUS with technical assistance in executing the programs. Additionally, it ensures that participants in FOCUS' Coro training programs will have access to Coro alumni across the country through the Coro National Alumni Association.
- As a result, the Coro Leadership Center-St. Louis will be dissolved.

3. Will FOCUS St. Louis be making any changes to the Coro programs? Who will train the programs?

- FOCUS does not have any plans to make substantial changes to the programs and is committed to continuing the unique, high-quality training that Coro programs entail. FOCUS programs operate independently of one another, and the Fellows and WIL programs will operate independently as well.
- Additionally, the licensure agreement with Coro National provides specific quality control mechanisms which prohibit many changes to the core of the programs.
- Keith Clark, Coro Fellows Trainer, will join the FOCUS team as of July 25, 2011, to facilitate the incoming 2011-2012 Fellows Class. Some of the material unique to Coro-St. Louis will transition with Keith through agreement with O'Leary Brokaw & Associates, Inc. The WIL Class 57 will be postponed to provide for a robust class and to ensure proper training support is provided. Julie Lawson, Coro WIL Trainer, has decided not to continue training WIL, however will provide her support in transitioning a new trainer.

4. How will Coro alumni be impacted?

- Coro and FOCUS alumni have been a part of this decision-making process over several months. FOCUS will continue to rely on alumni and supporters from both communities to assist in the transition via three defined roles:
 - Two FOCUS Board seats allocated to Coro program alumni;
 - Formation of a temporary Transition Advisory Committee representing five members each from the FOCUS and Coro-St. Louis communities; and
 - Development of a standing Coro Program Advisory Board comprised of a majority of Coro program alumni to offer advice to FOCUS regarding Coro training programs and serve as a support to Coro program participants.

- Coro alumni will still be supported and engaged through alumni organizations, including the Women in Leadership Alumni Association (WILAA) and Coro National Alumni Association (CNAA). Additionally, there will be new possibilities for shared alumni activities from FOCUS' existing leadership programs.
- FOCUS is willing to establish a dedicated fund to support the Coro Women in Leadership Program and Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs. Friends of the Coro community, including alumni and past supporters, can designate donations directly to that fund.

5. What is happening to Coro Leadership Center-St. Louis employees?

- The Coro Leadership Center-St. Louis is in the process of being dissolved. Employees and contracted staff had their last day with the Center June 30, 2011.
- One former Coro Leadership Center-St. Louis employee, Keith Clark, was retained through July 22 at Coro to complete training with a Coro program. Keith has accepted a position with FOCUS to ensure continuity and integrity of the Coro Fellows training, particularly the incoming 2011-2012 class.
- The Coro Community is encouraged to share their gratitude to former Coro staff and be in touch during this time of personal transition. Former staff may be reached as noted below:
 - Abigail Heinz, abigailheinz@gmail.com
 - Anne Walker, 314.221.2213 or anneasmb66@aol.com
 - Dawn Stringfield, 314.909.4656, dawn.stringfield@mercy.net
 - Gerty O'Leary, geoleary@sbcglobal.net
 - Julie Lawson, 314.853.6063 or juliemlawson@yahoo.com

6. Will you run the Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs in Fall 2011?

- Yes! The 2011-2012 Class was selected this spring, and FOCUS is very excited for the program to begin on September 1 under the leadership of Coro Trainer Keith Clark.
- The Fellows' first placement will be in the nonprofit sector from September 12 to October 14. If you would like to host a Fellow, please contact Keith Clark at KeithC@focus-stl.org.

7. I've submitted an application for Women in Leadership (WIL), is there anything I need to do?

- Your application for WIL Class 57 will move with the program to FOCUS. Given the transition, the program will be delayed until early 2012. You will be notified of your status later this summer by FOCUS staff.

8. What are the terms of the deal?

- The agreement between Coro-St. Louis and FOCUS was finalized July 22, 2011. We are not disclosing specific terms of that agreement beyond the transition measures discussed above.

9. Does this mean FOCUS is moving away from some of its traditional policy work?

- We cannot speak on behalf of FOCUS. However, per licensure agreement with Coro National, none of FOCUS' activities may use the Coro brand in a partisan manner or be connected directly to advocacy in support of any issues or policies.

10. How do the programs from the two organizations differ?

- The programs, while complimentary, serve leaders at various levels of leadership development – from emerging to existing leaders, from high school juniors to executive leaders. Furthermore, Coro's programs utilize a different style of training, integrating an experiential learning model with general semantics to promote deep personal development and concrete skill-building. This model of leadership development will complement existing FOCUS training models.