



*Ratna Amin, Coro Fellow in Public Affairs, San Francisco, 2005.*

I was first introduced to Coro by a good friend of mine who did Teach For America with me in Phoenix. She had done the program in Los Angeles. I decided to apply when I realized that I really wanted to grow and be challenged, but I didn't know where I wanted to work or exactly what kind of work I really wanted to do. The Coro Fellows Program seemed like an opportunity to explore several different sectors in order for me to find where I could learn and develop professionally.

During my time as a Coro Fellow, I realized that Coro teaches individuals to look ahead and figure out how to solve problems and how to do things better than we do now. I learned to be more cognizant of how words, actions and processes lead to outcomes, and how to be more responsible for my own outcomes. In addition, I also learned specific information about the people, organizations, and issues in the Bay Area. The areas of focus where I learned the most were in labor, state government, and politics.

During the Follows Program I decided that upon completing the program I wanted to be in a dynamic, decision-making role, and ideally working as a policy advisor to an elected official. This guided my project selection process for my independent field placement, where I had great field faculty (Community Fellows Alum Libby Schaaf) and met my future employer. Currently, I am a legislative aide to Oakland City Council President Ignacio De La Fuentes (District 5). I work on analyzing and writing legislation, media relations, problem-solving across the city, and serve as a liaison to two parts of our District. It is the knowledge that I gained from Coro about various political stakeholders that has helped me navigate my current position successfully.

Due to my connections through Coro, I know a number of people in a broad range of organizations. My Coro network is a group of people who I find ambitious, personable, analytical, and collaborative and I call upon them often for advice or support.