

# [***Takeaways: How Lara Trump is reshaping the Republican Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C33-24C1-JC5B-G2YT-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Associated Press

May 22, 2024 Wednesday 4:05 AM GMT

Copyright 2024 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

**Section:** DOMESTIC NEWS; POLITICAL NEWS; STATE AND REGIONAL

**Length:** 775 words

**Body**

Lara Trump is wasting no time rebranding the typically staid Republican National Committee in the image of her father-in-law, showcasing her own version of his pugilistic ***politics*** and brash management style.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Lara Trump spoke about her famous family, the upcoming election and her vision for the party going forward.

Here are four takeaways about the new RNC co-chair's first few months on the job.

**MERGING WITH THE TRUMP CAMPAIGN**

When Lara Trump and Chairman Michael Whatley [*took the reins in March*](https://apnews.com/article/republican-national-committee-trump-whatley-legal-fees-53402f8e8ac845db3cf4ab82c882ea74), they promised to enact sweeping changes. And they did: They merged the GOP and the Trump campaign into a single operation.

Brian Hughes, a spokesman for the Trump campaign, told the AP the strategy was essential to ensuring Republican victories in November.

“By joining the two organizations together,” he said, “we are all rolling in the same direction to get President Trump elected, as well as to increase the majority of the House and the Senate.”

Lara Trump said party and campaign staff are “all part of organizing the ground game, working on day-to-day operations.”

Critics say such a laser focus on the presidential election could mean less time, money and resources spent on state and local races. That could hurt the party in the long term.

Lara Trump brushed off such critiques, saying the restructuring will ensure the RNC is supporting candidates in state and local races.

“It would be very silly of me to assume that only having the presidency would be able to achieve the goals of the Republican Party,” she said. “Obviously, that requires majorities in Congress, and that’s our goal.”

**STEPPING INTO THE SPOTLIGHT**

Unlike some previous party co-chairs, Lara Trump is embracing a very public role. She is doing [*television interviews*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6qGb0q8ZC8&t=3s) and speaking on right-wing media outlets to promote her father-in-law’s bid for reelection.

Whatley said Lara Trump is among the Republican party’s biggest assets: Her charismatic personality, along with her last name, makes her a draw at fundraising events.

Her public turn hasn’t been without controversy: She’s made a few public gaffes, including an appearance on Newsmax, a conservative cable channel, during which she said the RNC had filed lawsuits in “81 states.”

Conceding that she is confronting a “big, big learning curve,” Lara Trump told the AP she has the requisite background to succeed, having worked on both of Trump’s previous presidential campaigns.

“You’d be hard pressed,” she said, “to find someone who has had as much political experience as I have in any campaign right now, and that’s kind of unique to be able to say.”

**FUNDRAISING TURNAROUND**

Lara Trump appears to have already helped turn around the committee’s anemic fundraising operation. Republicans say she is a sought-after speaker on the fundraising circuit and has helped excite donors.

The RNC brought in $76 million in April and $65.6 million in March — up from just $10.6 million in February. The increase also reflects changes in donation limits after Trump, in March, became the party’s presumptive nominee. The DNC, by comparison, raised far less in April, [*$51 million,*](https://apnews.com/article/fundraising-april-2024-biden-trump-6cf5f83fd9579829554c33dbb9aeb186) down from $72 million in March.

The RNC’s ability to pump money into the election could prove critical to Trump’s chances, in part, because he is choosing to spend campaign donations on legal fees. The former president is facing dozens of federal and state criminal charges over his alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election and retention of classified documents. He is currently on trial in New York, accused of making hush-money payments to bury allegations of extramarital affairs. His political action committee, Save America, presidential campaign and other fundraising organizations [*have spent at least $76.7 million on legal fees*](https://apnews.com/article/trump-spent-millions-legal-fees-2024-presidential-campaign-3384cbfc2df69d3e97ba9e47c2384312) over the last two years.

**MAIL-IN VOTING**

Lara Trump is hoping to encourage Republicans to adopt an election tactic that Trump and many of his supporters view with suspicion: [*mail-in voting*](https://apnews.com/article/trump-republicans-rnc-mailed-ballots-voting-759f2277e00532dedaaa93e17f7329a1). The former president and his closest allies have long criticized the voting method as being rife with fraud — an unfounded assertion. Sizable contingents of voters rely on this method, and Lara Trump sees value in making it as easy as possible for Trump supporters to cast their ballots.

She said she supported a nationwide policy of not counting any ballots after Election Day but declined to go into specifics, saying it wasn’t her area of “expertise.”

That strategy is unworkable. States set their own election laws, and most rely on postmarks to determine if a vote was cast in time. That’s because it can take days — even weeks — for ballots cast on or before Election Day to arrive in the mail.

**Load-Date:** May 22, 2024

**End of Document**