



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Student Perspective

Leadership: what it really takes to make it happen

By Steven Bryner, senior, English

Mallory Martin, co-founder and student coordinator of the student organization [CU GOLD](#) (Gaining Opportunities through Leadership Development), is one among many of the student leaders on campus today. Mallory is a senior in the [International Affairs](#) program as well as in the [School of Education](#), where she focuses on a secondary social studies education certification. She is also the vice president of events on the Senior Class Council, a mentor for middle school-aged girls and an employee of the Louisville Community Recreation Center, teaching youth programs and facilitating volunteer projects. Her plans for the future include student teaching one semester after graduation in order to finish her licensure then pursuing a master's degree in higher education and administration.

As a freshman, Mallory longed to get involved in her new campus and surroundings. Through an email, she found her chance. She answered a Student Buff Bulletin searching for advisory board members for a new student organization dealing mainly with leadership development and enhancement. The idea originally came from Leasa Weimer in the [Student Programs Office](#). She, along with co-founder and 2007 graduate Taylor Sale, had a vision to begin a leadership program run by students that would be open and free to all students as well as being nonselective to that same population.

There were many challenges to face when Mallory and Taylor began the program. They had to first create the boundaries of the organization itself. They decided to hire a volunteer staff to stand on an advisory board so that CU GOLD would be a student-facilitated organization. Afterward, they created a mission statement and found office space. Faculty and staff members volunteered as resources to guide the students in the many endeavors ahead of them. With these tasks accomplished, they had only to name the organization. It was just the beginning.

"The most difficult task came from incorporating peoples from different backgrounds and from different places on campus into the program, finding an ideal dynamic for those involved and being able to cater to everyone's needs and still have the ability to move forward in a progressive direction at the end of the day," Mallory said.

CU GOLD, now located in room 444 of the UMC, has come a long way from those early days. There are currently 12 members on the advisory board ranging from student coordinators and assistants, [CLP \(Core Leadership Program\)](#) directors, student liaisons, community service and relations directors, a reception director, workshop directors, a marketing director and Megan E. Howe, CU GOLD's administration advisor. The program focuses on reaching out to the campus population, including other student organizations, and offering the tools and training needed in order to become a campus leader, a community leader and a leader in other realms of life.

The current advisory board has major plans for the organization's future. However, these plans are contingent on one factor—funding. The Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, [CU Parents Association](#) and the [CU Bookstore](#) are the three primary players currently funding the program. At present, CU GOLD's main goal is to obtain student fee funding, "hopefully by fall of 2008," Mallory said. "A student-run organization should be student funded."



Mallory Martin holds an award she received from the [HERD](#) to recognize student leaders who make a difference in their community. Mallory was given the award during this year's homecoming football game halftime, Sept. 30. (Photo courtesy of Mallory Martin)

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Some of the contingent factors include improving the CLP program, beginning an advanced CLP program for all student leaders on campus, and plans for a leadership conference one or two days a semester for all those interested in enhancing their leadership skills.

"No matter how much work that went into the program in the beginning, without the dedication of the advisory board there would be no program and not even half of the current accomplishments of CU GOLD would have materialized," Mallory said.



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