

**Project GOLD**  
**(Gaining Opportunities in Leadership Development)**

Project GOLD is a partnership between two diverse groups: the STEP UP to Leadership Council at The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies (IDS) and the City of Hattiesburg Mayor's Youth Leadership Council (MYLC). STEP UP is an inclusive leadership and transition program for youth with and without disabilities. MYLC targets diverse high school-aged Hattiesburg youth. This year-long planning grant is funded by the Administration for Community Living at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and awarded to IDS' Executive Director, Dr. Beth Bryant. In partnership through Project GOLD, STEP UP and MYLC will conduct a local needs assessment through focus groups and community forums, to inform the development of a curriculum to provide youth with skills and resources needed to transition to adulthood.