

# Callerro credits residents with award

By Rick Kambic  
Staff Reporter

During his midterm speech, Niles Mayor Robert Callerro refused to take any credit for the village being named the "best place to raise kids" by Bloomberg Businessweek on Dec 14.

"That sort of national recognition does not happen overnight," Callerro said. "Niles rose to that level thanks to the dedicated work of Nick Blase and the countless families who have spent decades investing themselves in our community."

For all those families and devoted businesses, the village is hosting a "Niles Resident Appreciation Day" from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Fitness Center and Senior Center.

Proper identification will be required to verify residency, as both facilities and their services will be available for free during that time.

Aside from the free access, a bingo event and casino night will be offered in the senior center while crafts and other games will be offered in the fitness center.

Denise McCreery, the village business coordinator, is anticipating approximately 300 residents will attend the event, but said more can be accommodated if needed.

"It's a unique opportunity to see our building facilities and services, while also getting to meet our mayor and trustees all for the best price: free," McCreery said.

The village has already installed logos on several village signs, as well as placed ads promoting the award on local benches. A village committee is also working to place 60 banners along Milwaukee Avenue from Touhy Avenue to Monroe Street that will promote the award.

"This is something that we'll hang our hats on for many

years," McCreery said. "Even though somebody new will be named for 2012, we just want our residents to know that we're doing everything we can to win the award every year. Quality service is an ongoing mission."

The award was based on communities larger than their state median but no greater than 50,000. One town was selected from each state, Niles chosen for Illinois, and then Village Manager George Van Geem called Bloomberg and learned that Niles was chosen as the best of all 50.

Niles was acknowledged for being home to an award winning Teen Center and for offering free bus services within the village, as well as having 20 park sites within the park district, having a vibrant economic community, low crime rate, an impressive 14 percent Asian population, and close proximity to Chicago and



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its O'hare Airport.

The Bloomberg article also recognized that Niles students attend a variety of school districts, all of which performing above the state averages.

Specifically, the article

mentioned that Niles Township School District 219's fine arts program was recognized by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington in 2007.

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