

From the Editorial Board | LGBT RECOGNITION

# NIU's LGBT rank a glowing improvement

**A**s NIU seeks to enhance its image and develop its attractiveness as a diverse university, it should be proud of its recent recognition as one of the best 100 college campuses in the nation for LBTB students.

Placed in this category by the Advocate College Guide for LGBT students, NIU's status is based on feedback from its own students and faculty regarding NIU's policies, institutional commitment and support, and overall environment regarding the LGBT community. NIU has also joined other college

campuses in providing health benefits for its employees' domestic partners, and also boasts an LGBT Resource Center.

In an Oct. 16 article in the Chicago Tribune, LGBT Resource Center director Margie Cook explained that NIU has made significant progress in welcoming the LGBT community since Cook was an NIU student in the mid-80s. Cook explained that during that time period, it was very difficult for students to come out and the college environment was less than welcoming.

The students who were

involved in the meager gay advocacy group at that time were afraid to use their real names and didn't post the locations of their events due to fear of being harassed. Now, Cook said, NIU's LGBT group is able to be very active.

This recognition suggests NIU is doing well in maintaining and nurturing a diverse student body. Not only is this effort a great way to make NIU known as a competent and welcoming university, it serves as an important resource in the support of our local LGBT community.