

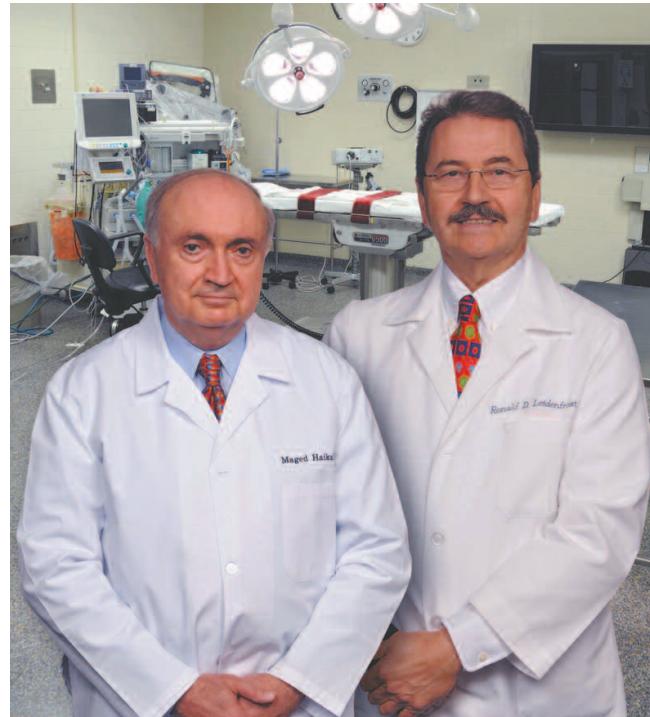
# Taking Top Honors

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL  
By Laura Graesser

**P**atients who step through the doors of St. Luke's Hospital can be happy to know they are walking into one of the 50 best hospitals in America. For the sixth year in a row, that honor has been bestowed by HealthGrades, and the recognition reinforces the hospital's quality reputation, says president and CEO **Gary Olson**. "We feel it demonstrates the skills of our doctors and employees, our teamwork and the fact that we always have had the same mission: to make a difference in the lives of our patients, their families and the community."

An independent health care ratings organization, HealthGrades determined its rankings by analyzing Medicare patient records from 1998 through 2010 for 26 common medical conditions and procedures at all non-government hospitals around the country. The data is then risk-adjusted so all facilities can be compared equally. The results put St. Luke's in the top 1 percent in the nation for clinical excellence, which is based on survival and complication rates. "That's very important to us because it shows that our clinical performance is at the highest level, and our employees and physicians can realize their skills are administered in a high-quality manner," Olson explains.

Along with the top-50 ranking, HealthGrades put St. Luke's as No. 1 in Missouri in 2012 for cardiac services and neurosurgery, neurosciences, critical



Dr. Maged Haikal, chief of cardiac services, and Dr. Ronald Leidenfrost, chief of cardiothoracic surgery, both of St. Luke's

care and gastrointestinal medical treatment. In addition, the hospital earned the Emergency Medicine Excellence, Pulmonary Care Excellence, Women's Health Excellence and Outstanding Patient Experience awards. "It's an honor to be recognized as a hospital in its entirety, but it's those different components that have helped us earn that top 1 percent ranking," Olson says.

Olson attributes much of St. Luke's success to the prestigious doctors, employees and volunteers that make the hospital work. "It's about everyone knowing each other's skills and focusing on each patient individually while applying those skills in a caring manner to create the best possible outcomes," he notes.

A dedicated focus on patients is held in high regard at the hospital, ensuring that "their health is treated as the top priority," Olson says. "How treat-

ment is delivered is very important, and we try to create an atmosphere of compassionate care."

St. Luke's carries that compassion over into its work in the community. The hospital offers ongoing educational programs, as well as a Passport to Wellness program, where it works with area businesses to assess employees' health for insurance and fitness initiatives. In addition, for more than 40 years, St. Luke's Pediatric Care Center on St. Charles Rock Road has provided care to children up to 18 years of age regardless of their family's ability to pay. "We're serving thousands of families every year, including multi-generational families whose mothers came as kids," Olson says.

Despite its many honors, St. Luke's is not willing to rest on its laurels. It continues to seek out quality doctors, new technology and advancements in treatment, Olson explains. "We want to be on the leading edge as health care evolves."

In tune with that attitude, the hospital is constantly working to improve its facilities, including a recent \$6 million renovation and expansion of its oncology department, which features a 21-chair infusion center. Nearby, a new healing garden, donated by Mary Ann Lee, will open in late spring. Those projects are just a hint of the hospital's efforts to sustain its national recognition while living up to a long-established reputation, Olson says. "St. Luke's is almost 150 years old—we have a rich history of high quality care, and we're working hard to maintain that position." ♣