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Health Careers

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“Best in the Nation” Ranking Goes to Seven TMC Hospitals

The numbers have been crunched, the lists have been compiled, and the verdict is in. The list of “America’s Best Hospitals,” featured in the July 28 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, spotlights seven Texas Medical Center hospitals.

In alphabetical order, with rankings in respective specialties, the hospitals are:

- **Memorial Hermann Hospital**, 42nd in kidney disease (This year marks the sixth time Memorial Hermann has placed in *U.S. News* rankings since 1997.)
- **The Menninger Clinic**, fifth in psychiatry (Menninger has been listed as one of the top five psychiatric hospitals in the country since the survey was initiated in 1990.)
- **The Methodist Hospital**,

ninth in urology; 11th in neurology and neurosurgery; 13th in ophthalmology; 15th in heart and heart surgery; 18th in gynecology; 21st in psychiatry; 22nd in ear, nose and throat; 33rd in orthopedics; 35th in geriatrics; and 38th in kidney disease. (Methodist is ranked in 10 specialties – more than any other hospital in the city. The hospital has ranked consistently in a variety of clinical areas since the rankings began, and improved its previous rankings in five specialties this year.)

• **Texas Children’s Hospital**, fifth in pediatrics (This is the fourth consecutive year Texas Children’s has been ranked among the top 10 pediatric hospitals in the *U.S. News* survey. This year, Texas Children’s jumped up three places from last year’s eighth place ranking, and also is ranked as the

best pediatric hospital in the South and Southwest by *U.S. News & World Report*.)

• **Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital**, eighth in heart and heart surgery (The institute has consistently ranked among the nation’s top 10 heart centers since the survey began.)

• **The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research**, second in rehabilitation (This is the third con-



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Project Brays: Bringing Flood Damage Reduction to the Texas Medical Center

By KATHLEEN CHARTER
Texas Medical Center News

The 31 miles of water in Brays Bayou – which flows from just south of the Barker Reservoir, through the Texas Medical Center, to the Houston Ship Channel – is about to flow down a “new” path. The bayou is about to undergo a “facelift” that will bring flood damage reduction to residents and businesses along its banks, while enhancing the community with natural surroundings.

Alisa Max, Harris County Flood Control District communications division assistant manager, said the Army Corps of Engineers first paved the channel in the 1950s and ‘60s.



BUILDING BETTER BRIDGES—The Fannin Street bridge that spans Brays Bayou near the intersection of Fannin Street and Braeswood Boulevard, was the first bridge to be completed as part of the Brays Bayou Flood Damage Reduction Project. The project aims to reduce flooding along the bayou’s 31 miles by widening the bayou’s channel and renovating or replacing existing bridges.

Although the project significantly reduced flood losses, flood risks remained a problem. To address the flooding issue, the Brays Bayou Flood Damage Reduction Project, known as Project Brays, was developed.

“This is a very large project for the Harris County area. Therefore we look for federal partnerships to bring in federal money – in this case, the Corps of Engineers,” Max, who is a professional engineer, said. “Typically in the past, the

Corps would set timelines, procedures and requirements for projects. The Corps would take the lead and sponsors would pay their share as projects progressed. In 1996, the Water Resources Development Act’s section 211F allowed non-federal sponsors, in this case the Harris County Flood Control District, to take the lead. We can now follow the Corps’ processes locally, and be reimbursed by the Corps for the federal share of work.”

“That change was initiated by our executive director, who went to Washington to have it changed by Congress to enable the local sponsor to take the lead,” said David Goldberg, Harris County Flood Control District engineering division manager. “Knowing what we were up against, we figured we could do the job in half the time and at half the

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Bringing News to the Texas Medical Center Community for 25 Years

Best in Nation

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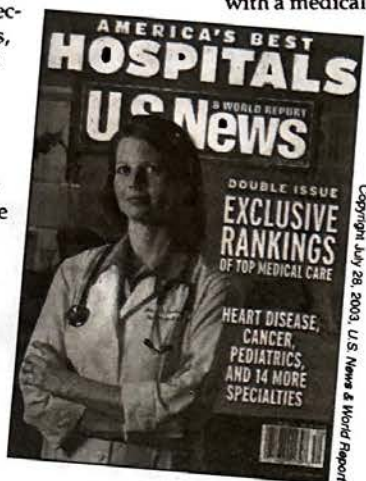
secutive year TIRR has ranked No. 2 on the survey.)

• **The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center**, first in cancer care; fourth in gynecology; 10th in ear, nose and throat; and 13th in urology. (For the third time in four years, the cancer center has been ranked as the nation's top cancer hospital. M.D. Anderson has ranked as one of the top two hospitals in cancer care since the magazine began its annual survey 14 years ago.)

For 14 consecutive years, U.S. News has published its "Best Hospitals" survey, based on methodology devised by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. The list recognizes the nation's

most exceptional medical centers, and is intended to be a resource for consumers who are seeking the highest level of skill in the diagnosis, treatment and management of medical problems.

This year, data was obtained from 6,003 U.S. hospitals. From this number and after passing a series of strict specifications, 50 were selected for inclusion on the "Best Hospitals" list, which is divided into 17 medical specialties. Criteria for inclusion included, but were not limited to, membership in the Council of Teaching Hospitals, affiliation with a medical school, and experience in conducting a minimum number of defined procedures. ■



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What the Top Hospitals Had to Say:

Memorial Hermann Hospital

"We are gratified to have our internationally renowned kidney disease program recognized by this distinction. The program has consistently developed and implemented therapy that has become the standard of care. We are excited about the even greater accomplishments still to come from this highly talented service." — **Steve Allen, M.D.**, medical director, Memorial Hermann Hospital

The Menninger Clinic

(Last fall, Menninger moved from Topeka, Kan. to Houston to partner with Baylor College of Medicine and The Methodist Hospital to create a comprehensive, world-class center for psychiatric care, research and education.)

"I'm proud of our staff for earning this recognition from psychiatrists nationwide. Their dedication and expertise makes the clinic a truly patient-centered place for someone who comes here for treatment. Through research with our partners, we are working to understand devastating disorders that affect so many people and develop effective treatment." — **Ian Aitken, president and CEO, The Menninger Clinic**

The Methodist Hospital

"These rankings demonstrate

Methodist's nationwide leadership in clinical research and medical care, including quality nursing, investment in top medical technology and extensive medical experience and expertise." — **Ron Girotto, president and CEO, The Methodist Hospital**

Texas Children's Hospital

"The upward climb of Texas Children's in the rankings is a testimony to our mission of providing the finest possible pediatric patient care, education and research. Certainly, Texas Children's is experiencing tremendous momentum, and our jump from No. 8 on last year's list to No. 5 on this year's list indicates that our overall commitment to excellence in every area is being recognized nationally." — **Mark A. Wallace, president and CEO, Texas Children's Hospital**

Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital

"The consistency of this honor reflects the unwavering dedication and outstanding work of our physicians, scientists, and nursing and support staff. We value this recognition as we move forward to expand our world-renowned leadership in education, research and treatment of heart disease." — **Denton A. Cooley, M.D.**, founder, president and surgeon in chief, Texas Heart Institute

"It is an honor to be once again recognized as not only the top heart center in Houston, but also throughout the Southwest. It illustrates what an outstanding group of physicians and staff we have and the importance of our partnership with the Texas Heart Institute." — **Michael Jhin, president and CEO, St. Luke's Episcopal Health System**

The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research

"There have been changes in health care over the years, but our focus on quality patient care, education, and research has never changed. We want to make a tangible difference in the lives of our patients." — **John Kajander, president, TIRR Systems**

The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center

"To be named the best in cancer care recognizes the commitment and skills that our faculty, employees and volunteers bring to our patients every day. New discoveries and knowledge continue to advance ways to treat this devastating disease. We are proud to be ranked No. 1 for our accomplishments, and are grateful for the progress we have been able to make for our patients." — **John Mendelsohn, M.D., president, M.D. Anderson**

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