For the seventh consecutive year, Mercy has been recognized as a Best Regional Hospital in central Iowa and Des Moines by U.S. News & World Report. Mercy is ranked second in Iowa and achieved high performing status in eight procedure and condition ratings.

The annual Best Hospitals rankings, now in its 29th year, are designed to assist patients and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions or for common elective procedures. The U.S. News Best Hospitals methodologies in most areas of care are based largely or entirely on objective measures such as risk-adjusted survival and readmission rates, volume, patient experience, patient safety and quality of nursing, among other care-related indicators.

“Achieving this ranking and care ratings demonstrates the dedication of our physicians and colleagues to providing the best quality care possible,” said Mercy President Karl Keeler. “As an organization, we are committed to delivering a remarkable Mercy experience to every person we are privileged to serve.”

For the 2018-19 rankings, U.S. News & World Report evaluated more than 4,500 medical centers nationwide in 25 specialties, procedures and conditions. Mercy – Des Moines was ranked as a high performing hospital for:

- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair
- Aortic Valve Surgery
- Heart Bypass Surgery
- Heart Failure
- Colon Cancer Surgery
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Hip Replacement
- Knee Replacement

Mercy’s efforts to provide access to new treatments played a role in this year’s study. Iowa Heart Center’s continuing development of the Advanced Heart Failure Clinic at Mercy and the left ventricular assist device (LVAD) surgical program for heart failure patients were recognized for the first time in this year’s study. The LVAD program has provided improved quality of life for 39 patients since the first LVAD implant in 2014. Iowa Heart Center remains active in research of additional new treatments and technologies.
Every summer, high school students representing schools from across the Des Moines metro volunteer at Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines, giving back and gaining a firsthand look of what it is like to work in health care.

Offered to children of Mercy colleagues and others within the community, Mercy Volunteer Services welcomed 37 students in this summer’s cohort, including Dowling High School Senior Sara Mullenbach, who spent her time helping in Mercy’s Mother/Baby Unit. To follow is more about the experience, in Sara’s own words.

“I heard about Mercy’s student summer volunteer program through an organization I am part of at my school called, ‘Maroons in Health Sciences.’ They were talking about how to get involved early in the health care industry and it sounded like a lot of fun. I know I want to be in health care when I am older, but I am so passionate and excited to learn about medicine that I wanted to get involved as early as possible.”

“I was lucky enough to be a special projects volunteer in the Mercy Mother/Baby Unit. I organized binders, made laminated copies, restocked items, made baby hats or any other similar job that needed to be done. My favorite part, however, was when the pediatricians would do rounds or exams. I would like to be a pediatrician when I am older, so my supervisor was kind enough to let me observe whenever I could. I would also get to snuggle a baby or two if there was not much needed to be done.”

“I learned so many things about pediatrics through the exams I got to watch, and I even got to listen to a newborn’s heartbeat a few times. It was a very special experience and I hope that I can return to volunteer during the school year.”

If you know of a high school student who may be interested in participating in next summer’s volunteer program at Mercy, watch for registration information to be shared by Mercy Volunteer Services in late spring 2019.

A big THANK YOU to Hailey and Riley Gojkovich; Mallory, Norah and Gabe Kell; Jillian and Melanie Mayer; and Alex Perez for your donation to Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics! The group made tons of homemade treats for a bake sale and used the money to purchase the items for children in the hospital. The items donated included video games, arts and crafts supplies, board games, movies and more. Child Life Specialists Erin Biegert, Caitlin Sturms-Salyer, Rebecca Gerecke and Allison White gratefully accepted the items on behalf of Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics.

**Student art displayed at Mercy Clinics Norwalk**

Young artists, their families and other community members enjoyed paintings by Lakewood Elementary students at an open house and art show Wednesday, July 25, at Mercy Clinics Norwalk. Those in attendance got to see dozens of paintings that now decorate the walls in the clinic’s exam rooms, hallways and reception areas. Carolyn Klein, Lakewood Elementary art teacher, worked with clinic leaders to coordinate the project among the third, fourth and fifth-grade students, who worked in groups to create paintings expressing what health means to them.