

One Kansas hospital was recently named among 100 best in US — and it’s in Wichita

BY LINDSAY SMITH
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Medical care review platform Healthgrades recently released its ranking of the 100 best hospitals in the U.S., and one Wichita facility made the list.

Wesley Medical Center, located on 550 N. Hillside, was named among the 100 best for the third year in a row.

“This achievement reflects the unwavering dedication of our physicians, nurses, and caregivers who show up every day to deliver safe, high-quality, and compassionate care,” Bill Voloch, president and CEO of Wesley Healthcare, said in a Jan. 27 news release. “Across our system, we continue to invest in leading-edge technology,



Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, seen in this file photo, was recently named by Healthgrades as one of the 100 best hospitals in the nation.

evidence-based clinical programs, and the professional development of our teams — because our patients deserve nothing less.”

The rankings and awards from Healthgrades are meant to provide patients with information to help guide them in making health care decisions, according to company’s website. “Navigating the com-

plex healthcare system can feel daunting, but taking a proactive stance to understand where to access superior care can enhance your healthcare journey and overall experience,” Alana Biggers, MD MPH, medical advisor at Healthgrades, said of the specialty awards. “The ability to make informed decisions about your health is a cornerstone of self-advocacy, and we are proud to help make that information accessible to all patients.”

Wesley was the only hospital in Kansas to make the top 100 list, which puts the facility in the top 2% in the nation, according to Healthgrades. It was also named as one of the 100 best for joint replacement and one of the 100 best for orthopedic surgery this year.

Previously, the Wichita hospital was named one of Healthgrade’s best for critical care in 2025 and 2024, spine surgery in 2024 and won the stroke care excellence award that same year.

Healthgrades is far from the only organiza-

tion offering patient and safety focused reviews of hospitals. Wesley Medical Center most recently got a B grade from nonprofit patient watchdog Leapfrog, while U.S. News and World Report recognized the facility as the best hospital in Wichita.

OTHER WICHITA HOSPITAL RECOGNITIONS

While Wesley was the only Wichita facility named to the best hospitals list, there were other health care providers recognized by Healthgrades in its 2026 report.

Ascension Via Christi St. Francis, located at 929 St. Francis, was recognized as one of the 100 best for spine surgery, one of the 100 best for stroke care and the Neurosciences Excellence Award.

Kansas Surgery and Recovery Center, located at 2770 N. Webb Road, was named one of the 100 Best Hospitals for Joint Replacement award, the Outpatient Joint Replacement Excellence Award and the Outpatient Orthopedic Surgery Excellence Award this year.



Members of the Texas National Guard at their temporary barracks in Elwood, a suburb south of Chicago, on Oct. 7. All Guard troops that were supporting aggressive immigration operations have left Chicago, Los Angeles and Portland, Ore., according to U.S. military officials.

Guard troops fully withdraw from Chicago, Portland and LA

BY CHRIS HIPPENSTEEL
NYT News Service

All National Guard troops that the Trump administration tapped to support aggressive immigration operations have left Chicago, Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon, according to U.S. military officials.

The demobilizations in those cities, first reported by The Washington Post, were noted on the website of the U.S. Northern Command and followed the Pentagon’s plan late last year to withdraw guard troops.

Their departure, which according to the Northern Command occurred throughout January, signals the formal end to monthslong deployments that pitted Democratic cities against the Trump administration and tested the limits of presidential authority over the state-based military forces. By the end of the assignments, only skeleton forces of a few hundred guard troops remained in those cities.

In Portland and Chicago, the guard troops, who had been sent to support federal law enforcement and protect buildings, never actually operated on the streets. The move in Portland was tied up in court, and the one in Chicago was blocked by the Supreme Court.

Troops in Los Angeles were allowed on the streets despite a pending court case, but the Pentagon significantly reduced their numbers toward the

end of the year.

National Guard units answer to state governors, though their troops can be placed under the president’s command. Historically, a governor’s request has almost always preceded federalization.

President Donald Trump has broken sharply from that tradition in his second term, starting with his decision to send thousands of federalized guard troops and a contingent of Marines to counter protests against immigration enforcement in Los Angeles.

Trump federalized National Guard troops in Illinois, California and Oregon in response to contentious protests against immigration raids in major cities, at times supplementing them with other guard troops shipped in across state lines. It was the first time a president had sent the National Guard to a state over its governor’s wishes since

the civil rights era.

The deployments came amid a broader push by Trump to use the National Guard to enforce law and order.

Deployments in other cities, including New Orleans and Memphis, Tennessee, continue under the command of Republican governors or, in the case of Washington — a federal district, rather than a state — Trump.

In Memphis and New Orleans, Republican governors welcomed deployments that focused on fighting crime. In Washington, troops have largely patrolled tourist areas and engaged in cleanup efforts. In late November, two National Guard members deployed there were shot, one fatally, after a man opened fire on them near the White House.

The deployment in Washington is expected to continue through the end of the year.

KS woman sentenced for lying about astronaut wife’s bank access from space

BY AMY RENEE LEIKER
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A 51-year-old Sedgwick County woman received a three-month federal prison sentence on Thursday for lying about her NASA astronaut wife illegally accessing her bank account from space.

Summer Heather Worden was also ordered to pay \$210,000 in restitution to a group of real estate investors whom she never paid after selling a piece of property in Spicewood, Texas, court records from the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas show. She will be subject to two years of supervised release immediately after her prison sentence is complete, according to a news release from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Worden pleaded guilty in November to making false, fictitious and fraudulent statements and representations to law enforcement related to the accusations against her wife, the news release says. The charges related to the real estate scheme were dismissed in exchange for her plea, court records show.

Worden accused her astronaut wife of logging into her bank account without permission from the International Space Station while they were going through a divorce. She continued to lie about it even after an internal investigation exonerated her wife, including talking to news outlets and hiring a media consultant “to amplify the claim,” according to the news release.

She also released to the public personal informa-

tion about her estranged wife, the release says.

Worden claimed in 2019 that her wife logged into the account without her permission after guessing her password. But an investigation showed that Worden had given her wife access to her bank records, including the login credentials, as early as 2015 — and that both women accessed the bank account until Worden changed the account credentials in January 2019.

According to her plea agreement, Worden lied to special agents of the NASA Office of the Inspector General in Houston about the date she opened a new USAA Federal Savings Bank checking account, about the date she changed her online banking profile credentials and that her wife didn’t have permission to access it.

Worden was living in Travis County, Texas, at the time. She moved to Kansas, in the Wichita area, around June 2019, her plea agreement says, and currently has an address north of Valley Center and Park City.

“Worden was permitted to remain on bond and voluntarily surrender to a Federal Bureau of Prisons facility to be determined in the near future,” the news release says.

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