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For Immediate Release

Himes Presents Cardiac Surgery & GI Surgery Awards to St. Vincent's

BRIDGEPORT, CT, MARCH 18, 2010-- 4th District Congressman Jim Himes recently presented awards to St. Vincent's for its ranking by Health Grades as number one in Connecticut for cardiac surgery and in the top 5% nationally for GI surgery. The presentation took place in the new Elizabeth Pfriem SWIM Center for Cancer Care, which Himes had earlier toured.

St. Vincent's Cardiac Surgery Program

Recognized over the years for its role in the development of emergency angioplasty for heart attack treatment, St. Vincent's received its current designation for being at the vanguard of the minimally invasive surgical approach to treatment of cardiothoracic disease, which results in much less blood loss, shorter recovery times and better outcomes for patients. At St. Vincent's, minimally invasive techniques are used for endoscopic vein harvesting to treat coronary artery disease, in surgery to correct atrial fibrillation, and also to *repair* rather than replace the mitral valve, a delicate procedure that is safer than traditional valve replacement, and which offers longer, even life-long effectiveness.

Also helping St. Vincent's to achieve this designation is the acquisition of the newest diagnostic technology and medical devices, such as the innovative Ventricular Assist Device (VAD), which allows the heart to rest after a heart attack. This helps to ensure that any surgery necessary to correct underlying problems will be more successful. In addition, exceptional communication and coordination between the emergency department and cardiology teams allows St. Vincent's to care for patients suffering from a heart attack rapidly and efficiently, improving chances of survival.

GI Ranking

Contributing to St. Vincent's ranking for GI Surgery is the fact that it has put in place state-of-the-art operating rooms and equipment, and has instituted a multidisciplinary GI committee. These factors along with the careful expertise of its surgeons, combined with meaningful peer review has led to better patient outcomes and satisfaction.

St. Vincent's has also enhanced its peri-operative care by instituting the World Health Organization (WHO) checklist at the time of surgery, which leads to safer surgery. Due to the development of new surgical techniques and the introduction of the latest diagnostic technology, such as MRI and interventional radiology, St. Vincent's is able to treat and help significantly patients with very challenging problems.

HealthGrades is the leading independent ranking source in the country. The 2010 *HealthGrades* ratings for all hospitals nationwide are available, free of charge, on HealthGrades' consumer website, located at www.healthgrades.com