Henrik Ibsen, a Norwegian playwright born in the 1920’s once said, “A thousand words will not leave so deep an impression as one deed.”

2015 OCN® of the Year: Lasting Impressions of an Oncology Nurse
Theresa M. Gannon, BSN, RN, OCN®

2015 OCN® of the Year, Carol Lynn Cole, RN, BSN, OCN®, was deeply impressed in her teen years as she watched the nurses care for her dying grandfather in the Veteran’s Hospital where he spent his last days. While only a high school student at the time, she was taken by the sincerity of their care for him as he lost his battle to lung cancer. She still remembers “the nurses who inspired and forever touched my heart” as they went about their duties caring for her grandmother, as well as her mother, who as a caregiver traveled a 100-mile round-trip to be with her husband. She remembers how the grandchildren were able to spend precious time with the family patriarch. It was at this poignant and pivotal time in her life when the seed was planted to become a nurse.

Cole began her career as a general nurse to gain experience, and then specialized in oncology—her first real love. Twenty-five years later, she has solidly planted her feet in oncology and made significant strides in improving cancer care for patients, families, and her community.

Gibbs Cancer Center & Research Institute, part of Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System in South Carolina, is where Cole’s position as Thoracic Clinical Navigator allows her to realize and strengthen her contributions. Professional praise from colleagues, Patricia Hegedus, MBA, RN, OCN® and Rebecca Robertson Franey, RN, OCN® supports Cole’s commitment to her patients in their recommendations for this award. “Lynn has been instrumental in advancing lung cancer patient care within our organization. She facilitates the weekly Thoracic Multidisciplinary Planning Conference, in which all newly diagnosed lung cancer patients are presented and their treatment plans are formulated. In the

From Orthopedics to Oncology to the 2015 AOCNP® of the Year
Jeri Ashley, MSN, RN, CHPN, AOCNS®

As oncology nurses, it is not unusual to hear stories of nurses who were headed one direction professionally before landing in oncology nursing. The same can be said of the 2015 AOCNP® of the year, Dr. F. Diane Barber.

Barber lives in Texas and works as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) in medical oncology at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. Her entry into medical oncology began in 1998, when her husband was preparing to retire from the military and she was seeking a career change. She had spent the first 10 years of nursing working in general surgery and orthopedics. Applying at M.D. Anderson, she was seeking a position in orthopedic surgery, but as fate would have it, she was asked to interview for and was offered a position in medical oncology. Oncology nursing became her second specialty.

Barber shares that she has stayed in oncology because of her patients and the

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CBCN® of the Year - An Award Winner’s Perspective

Erica Fischer-Cartlidge, MSN, CNS, CBCN®, AOCNS®

My desk phone rang on a normal morning and the caller ID said ‘Utah’. I paused for a moment to think who would be calling me and then remembered that I had placed a call to an educator at a hospital in Utah a few weeks before. I answered the phone, grabbing the notes on what I wanted to speak to her about, but was greatly surprised to find that it was Lauri Linder, the President of the ONCC Board of Directors, on the other end of the line. She began to tell me that I had been selected as the CBCN® of the year, and I was overtaken by surprise and deep feelings of gratitude. Words to truly express what this meant to me evaded me.

Becoming a CBCN® changed how I saw the world of oncology nursing. It opened my eyes to all of the facets of nursing care within the specialty of breast care across the disease trajectory. That new vision changed how I approached the care of each of my patients and empowered me as I took on opportunities to improve clinical practice. I began to look for various methods to bring the CBCN® certification within reach of all those around me. It felt natural to share the incredible feeling that certification brought to me with others. There was no personal goal, no pursuit of an award; just the desire to help other nurses bring their practice to the next level.

As nurses, our focus is always on others, not ourselves, and we rarely seek recognition for what we do. It’s just who we are. We relish the kind words of a thank you note from a patient and are humbled by recognition from peers, often minimizing the accolades because ‘it is just what we do.’ So, when the recognition comes from a place like ONCC the magnitude is overwhelming. To be selected from deserving individuals across the country causes you to take pause and reflect on what others are seeing in you; how you impact those around you; and where you go from here. Still being in the first decade of my career, this award is not a culmination of my efforts but instead has been an accelerant to my fire. Those who nominated me for this award and those who selected me saw something in me that is valuable and important to breast oncology. This honor will forever be at the forefront of my heart and mind, pushing me to always work in a way that is reflective of what those individuals saw in me.

UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center Demonstrates Winning Ways

Ashley Leak Bryant, PhD, RN-BC, OCN®

UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center was honored with ONCC’s 2015 Employer Recognition Award. Located in Santa Monica, California, this 266 bed hospital has 26 oncology beds and an increasing number of certified nurses. Under the direction of Chief Nursing Officer, Edith Matesic RN, MS, DNP, NEA-BC, the facility has embraced a culture of professional development by encouraging nurses to take the next step in their careers—certification.

When Deborah Lorick, RN, MSN/MHA, CMSRN, OCN®, Director of Oncology arrived in 2012, about 24% of the staff was oncology certified. She knew she wanted to grow that number. She and the Clinical Nurse Specialist, Patricia Jakel RN, MN, AOCN® developed strategies to empower nurses to take a certification exam. Over the last 3 years, they have increased certification rates to 76%. Lorick and the nurses of 4SW Oncology have become the model for other units in the hospital who have a desire to achieve certification.

Lorick and Jakel are appreciative of the ongoing support by the California Freemasons that helps to offset the cost of certification through their By Your Side program. Founded by former state Masons Grandmaster William Bray and his wife Linda, the program has helped many nurses achieve their certification in oncology.

Successful certification is celebrated in different ways at UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica and these are just a few:

- Their job descriptions include “OCN® preferred” and during interviews...
Pediatric oncology is a highly specialized field of nursing. Nurses who enter this field are committed to providing optimal nursing care for children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer and blood disorders and for their families. The goal of this patient- and family-centered approach is to provide safe, high quality patient care to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Pediatric nurses can be recognized and rewarded both individually and at the organizational level by obtaining a certification offered by ONCC. The opportunity to become certified in this pediatric specialty practice area has been available since October 1999.

Between 1999 and 2010, the only certification available to pediatric nurses practicing in oncology was the Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse (CPON®). This certification was bestowed on those nurses who could demonstrate they had the knowledge to practice competently at the basic level in pediatric oncology nursing. The CPON® certification is no longer available to those wishing to pursue an initial certification. However, nurses who currently have CPON® certification can renew by meeting the required number of practice hours and fulfilling the renewal points requirements. Currently, 1,143 nurses still maintain this credential.

In 2010, ONCC introduced a new certification test for pediatric nurses. The Certified Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurse (CPHON®) examination was designed to validate a nurse’s knowledge in both pediatric oncology and hematology nursing and boasts a proud number of 1,722 individuals who carry this credential. The CPHON® test consists of 165 multiple choice items based on the most recent test blueprint, developed in 2013 from the results of a role delineation study. The test covers eight major subject areas, which are each further broken down into sub-areas.

The most recent certification for pediatric nurses emerged in February 2014, the Blood and Marrow Transplant Certified Nurse (BMTCN™). This certification is different from both the CPON® and CPHON®, as it was developed for nurses routinely caring for adult or pediatric blood and marrow transplant patients. Nurses earning this certification have demonstrated basic level competency and knowledge in caring for this patient population and their families. To date 642 nurses have already earned this credential. The BMTCN™ test also consists of 165 multiple choice items but is based on a unique test blueprint developed in 2012 from results of a role delineation study for this specialty. The differences between the major subject areas for this certification exam and the CPHON® exam can be seen in Table 1.

Certification has become the standardized way to validate nursing knowledge in many specialty areas and is often viewed as a major milestone of personal excellence and significant achievement along one’s professional journey. Take time to explore the diverse certification opportunities available and determine which best fits your area of practice – only you can make the decision that will best meet or exceed your current professional goals.

Employers across the nation are placing increasing value and recognition on certification. After all, patients and families deserve to receive care from nurses who have embraced the changing landscape of both nursing and health care. New treatments are being developed which means new standards of care, and the need for nurses who strive to maintain knowledge and expertise in specialty areas to promote optimal patient outcomes.

ONCC, on behalf of both pediatric and adult oncology nurses working in the day-to-day practice environment, has proactively chosen to stay current and respond to the trends occurring in health care and medicine. Nurses who obtain a certification through ONCC should feel confident their knowledge is validated based on the most current issues and trends in practice.

Table 1: CPHON® and BMTCN™ Examination Major Subject Areas

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<tr>
<th>CPHON®</th>
<th>BMTCN™</th>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial dimensions of care</td>
<td>Basic concepts and indications for transplantation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disease related biology</td>
<td>Types of transplants and sources of stem cells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>Pre-transplant care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive care and symptom management</td>
<td>Preparative regimens and stem cell infusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric oncology and hematologic emergencies</td>
<td>Graft-versus-host disease (GVHD) prevention and management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health maintenance and survivorship</td>
<td>Post-transplant issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palliative and end-of-life care</td>
<td>Survivorship issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional performance</td>
<td>Professional practice</td>
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On January 1, 2014, there were approximately 14.5 million children and adults living with a history of cancer in the United States (Cancer Facts and Figures, 2014-2015). While many of those chose to seek treatment in a large academic medical complex, others stayed closer to home and sought treatment in their community hospital setting. While staying close to home during active treatment offers some advantages—primarily a close proximity to family, friends and work—those hospitals are always challenged to provide the best in cancer care within the boundaries of a smaller orbit. The evolution of community hospital programs is a process that requires time, patience, dedication, passion and commitment. It also requires the intellectual resources of specialty physicians and specialty nurses in order to grow, mentor, and nurture the professional growth of other medical and nursing staff.

In 1989, I made a professional move from a large teaching hospital with 611 beds to a community hospital with 292 beds and no established oncology programs. My reasons were both personal and professional; the community hospital had a reputation for providing stellar care and also meant that they were probably more comfortable practicing at the bedside of those patients who were in the last stages of their illness. By the end of the first year, 100% of the nursing staff on the unit were certified nurses who were assisted by student nurse technicians and an experienced oncology unit secretary recruited from the larger hospital. With the arrival of two additional medical oncologists and a radiation oncologist, the demand for those 13 beds was high and there was a waiting list to be moved onto the unit. Priority was given to patients waiting to receive chemotherapy and those who were end-stage. Staff morale and satisfaction were incredibly high and the call-in rate was virtually zero. As a Nurse Manager, I could not have asked for a better staff; something I attributed to the commitment of certified nurses who understood their roles and the importance of the contributions they made each day.

Twenty-five years have passed and our oncology unit is now a 30-bed unit that hums with activity. A certification plaque is displayed on the wall, proudly announcing to visitors and staff that their care is being provided by oncology certified nurses. Our program carries both the Commission on Cancer (CoC) accreditation with commendation and the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) accreditation. The program has expanded to offer stereotactic radiosurgery, robotic surgery, and the services of a nurse navigator for anyone diagnosed with cancer. Several staff have obtained a second certification in addition to the OCN®. Regardless of our role within the oncology program, the staff culture is one that believes certification equals quality in care. We have learned over the years that when building a cancer program, the foundation is stronger and sturdier with certified staff.

Watching the Program Grow: Oncology Nursing in the Community Hospital

Deirdre Young, RN, BSN, OCN®, CBCN®

Say Good-bye to an Old Friend—ONC-PRO Logs

ONC-PRO Logs have been used for certification renewal by thousands of nurses since their introduction in 2000. Several years ago, electronic ONC-PRO Logs replaced the paper copies. With the changes to the Individual Learning Needs Assessment (ILNA) for renewal beginning in 2016, ONC-PRO Logs have been replaced by personalized Learning Plans. As a result, ONC-PRO Logs will no longer be used, accepted, or accessible after 2015.

What does that mean for you? It depends on whether you have ONC-PRO Logs in the system. If you have online ONC-PRO Logs with entries you plan to use for renewal in 2016 or later, you need to record those entries in your Learning Plan. (ONC-PRO Logs and Learning Plans are on separate systems and entries can’t be automatically transferred from logs to Learning Plans.) If you have online logs you’d like to keep for reference, you should print them before the end of 2015. If you don’t want any online logs you may have in the system, you don’t need to do anything.

If you don’t have ONC-PRO Logs, you don’t need to take any action.

Contact ONCC Customer Service at 877-769-ONCC or oncc@oncc.org if you have questions or would like assistance.
Living in the computer age requires that we all navigate websites, whether we want to or not. Sometimes it’s fun—we have time to spend browsing or searching for gifts, bargains, or information. At other times, it is an essential way to communicate or complete necessary requirements. As anyone reading this newsletter is aware, ONCC’s website has been the go-to resource for learning about every aspect of certification, recertification, ILNA, the advocates program, how to contact ONCC staff, and any other question you might have. Over time, we learned of your frustrations with navigating the website. That’s why the first part of the website redesign process included interviews with certified nurses, who provided insight on what would make navigating the site better. This feedback was incorporated into the newly redesigned ONCC website which launched in the spring.

We know that most of you come to oncc.org for the essential information about certification testing and renewal, so this is now “front and center” for your convenience. Visually, the new site is appealing and easy to navigate. The Access My Account tab will give you one convenient location to login to a variety of certification related services—such as Profile, Learning Plans (LearningBuilder), and ONC-PRO Logs. Another new feature is Search functionality—making it easier to find information quickly.

We hope you find that the new website meets all of your needs and welcome your feedback!

2015 AOCNP® of the Year (continued)

Dr. F. Diane Barber’s story would not be completely written if her many contributions to oncology nursing were not highlighted, for these form the basis for her AOCNP® award. She serves as president of the largest ONS chapter in the U.S., the Houston Chapter of ONS. She is the past-secretary of the M.D. Anderson Advanced Practice Nurse Orientation Committee and past-board member of the Texas Cancer Council. She serves as an active member of the Department of Investigational Cancer Therapeutics Community Outreach Committee and Electronic Health Record Committee. Also, Barber serves as a preceptor to nurse practitioner students and new oncology fellows, as well as mentors peers and staff nurses.

Barber has shared her knowledge with the nursing profession at large through several poster and podium presentations at national and local nursing organizations, authoring several articles, and serving as an associate editor of the Nurse Investigator Journal at M.D. Anderson and as a reviewer for The Journal of Nurse Practitioners and Psychology Health and Medicine.

She is also the recipient of many local, state and national honors and awards—too many to list here.

Barber’s story is best described by one of her nominators, Tiffany Jackson: “In summary, Diane is an example of an exemplary Advanced Practice Nurse who has all the vital qualities to influence others to strive to be the very best in their profession. So to Dr. F. Diane Barber, we say “Congratulations for being awarded the ONCC 2015 AOCNP® of the Year!”

CertificationStrong: There are more than 37,000 ONCC-certified nurses.
Lasting Impressions: 2015 OCN® of the Year (continued)

Conference, Lynn is the voice for the patient and caregiver, advocating for a treatment plan that best meets their needs while optimizing outcomes.” Hegedus goes on to describe Cole’s attributes as “team-oriented, a facilitator, mentor, educator, and most of all, a friend. She breaks down barriers for her patients to improve patient care and quality of life.”

Cole has been a certified nurse since 1998. She believes in certification and has been instrumental in assisting others to gain this designation as well, through mentoring of an estimated 75 nurses. She is a member of the South Carolina Upstate ONS Chapter where she serves as Treasurer.

One of Cole’s recent accomplishments has been the establishment and coordination of the Low Dose CT (LDCT) Lung Cancer Screening program she began in 2012. Bruce Chapman Grant, Cole’s nominator, shares that “through her efforts 91 patients have received the LDCT screening with 3 new lung cases detected.” She has also gone on to share the program’s success model with local, state, and national organizations.

Cole secured, $7,000 in grant funding to assist underinsured/uninsured patients to receive LDCT Lung Cancer Screening. Her advocacy for the underserved extends even further to her collaboration with The Medical University of South Carolina where she works on a clinical trial focusing on disparities in lung cancer treatment in the state. She has also initiated the annual Shine a Light on Lung Cancer Event. Cole describes the event as providing “patients and caregivers an opportunity to celebrate life!” and shares, “I’m glad to have this opportunity to allow my patients to express their faith, hope, joy, and love.” Lynn is quick to praise those she works with for her successes, adding “the leadership support at Gibb’s is phenomenal – they’re right on board.”

It is not surprising that this level of growth and direction stemmed from one adolescent girl’s impression of the nurses who cared for her grandfather. Imagine the incredible inspiration that will come from those who are exposed to the nursing care that Lynn Cole provides her patients and their families.

UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center (continued)

nurses are highly encouraged to become certified within a specific time period after joining the unit.
- They offer an annual 4-day certification review course based on the OCN® Test Blueprint
- They encourage nurses to become involved in their local chapter and those with certification receive preferential scheduling to be off for meetings
- They send an encouragement card to the nurse prior to taking the exam
- They send a congratulations card upon passing, add the nurse’s name to the OCN recognition plaque displayed in the hallway; display a banner with the nurse’s name at the nursing station, send a congratulatory email recognizing the nurse to all staff
- They recognize newly certified nurses on a poster and host a Certification Tea
- They provide financial incentives for certified nurses.

Congratulations UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica on this honor!