On a daily basis, I’m sure you hear, like I do, the dismal news on various aspects of America’s economic situation. Wouldn’t you like to hear positive news on how you can save money and be recognized for your work? I have some great news to share with you.

To maintain accessibility of certification for oncology nurses, ONCC has several financial incentives of which you can take advantage.

• ONCC funds 75 Roberta Scofield Memorial Certification Awards per year. These awards cover the cost of a registration fee for certification test or renewal. The application deadline for the 2010 awards was August 1, 2009. Watch for information about the 2011 awards next spring.

• You could save $100 on certification renewal through option 1 (Practice Hours + Oncology Nursing Certification Points Renewal Option, or ONC-PRO) if you use the early renewal incentive by September 15 of the year you’re due to renew. Even better, if you submit your renewal by June 15, you save the $100 and become entered into a drawing for a prize of free recertification renewal for life.

• Chapter grants are a new funding opportunity. ONCC funded five grants totaling $5,000 in 2009. These grants were designed to help ONS or Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON) chapters encourage, support, and recognize certified nurses. Watch for more information about this funding opportunity in the future.

• Lastly, ONCC has not raised the cost of the certification examinations or renewal in several years so that it remains affordable.

All of these grants, scholarships, and financial incentives are part of the ONCC plan to assist oncology-certified nurses in their endeavor to become and remain oncology certified.

Being rewarded and recognized for something you’ve accomplished is always welcome. So think about those nurses with whom you work and nominate your colleagues for the ONCC Awards. ONCC annually awards an Advanced Oncology Certified Nurse of the Year, an OCN® of the Year, and a Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse of the Year Award. These awards come with national recognition and a monetary award. In 2010, we will present two Employer Recognition Awards: one for employers with 25 or more nurses on staff, and one for employers with fewer than 25 nurses on staff. If you work in an organization—large or small—that has innovative ways to encourage, support, or recognize certification of oncology nurses, submit a nomination for one of these awards. Nominations are due December 1, 2009 (Note: Nominations for the Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse of the Year Award are due April 1, 2010).

The ONCC Board is concerned for and understanding of the economic situation in which many of us find ourselves right now. I wanted to make sure you knew of the opportunities ONCC offers for you to strive for your certification, maintain the one you have, and recognize those oncology-certified nurses that are truly making a difference in their daily work. I hope you’ll consider using these opportunities for certification and recognition.
Meet the Candidates in the ONCC Election

The ONCC Nominating Committee has slated four candidates to appear on the ballot for the ONCC Board of Directors election to be held in November. Each candidate’s response to how he or she would further the mission of ONCC, which is to promote and provide oncology nursing certification for the enhancement of patient care and professional practice, appears below.

The election opened on November 5, 2009. An e-mail message was sent to certified nurses, which contained a link to a personalized online ballot. Certified nurses who did not have a valid e-mail address on file were sent a letter containing instructions on how to access their online ballots. If you didn’t receive an e-mail message or letter, please check your e-mail system’s spam or junk e-mail folders. All voting must be completed online; paper ballots will not be available. Voting must be completed by December 10, 2009.

The order in which the candidate’s names appear was determined by computerized random selection. The candidate’s names will appear in the same order on the ballot. Additional information about each candidate’s leadership experience can be found at www.oncc.org and on the online ballot.

Cheryl Lacasse, MS, RN, OCN®
Clinical Professor
University of Arizona College of Nursing
Tucson, AZ

Certification has a major impact on maintaining excellence in oncology nursing practice in a challenging healthcare environment. My commitment to promoting oncology nursing certification has spanned over 20 years and included active involvement at both the local and national levels. My experiences as a clinician, educator, and researcher have provided rich opportunities for me to work with oncology-certified nurses who contribute innovative ideas and insights to clinical practice and professional issues. These nurses are exemplary role models in demonstrating the value of oncology certification in delivering quality oncology care. In addition, I support the importance of developing professional networks with certified nurses across specialties such as critical care and gerontology to enhance the oncology nurse’s ability to meet the complex care needs of today’s patients. As an ONCC Advocate, I promote the value of certification within the oncology nursing community, healthcare institutions, and to patients and their families. While serving on the OCN® Test Development Committee, I listened carefully to the voices of oncology nurses and used their valuable contributions to enhance the test development process. In addition, the opportunity to participate in ONCC committees has enhanced my knowledge of the certification process and the leadership needed to maintain a quality certification organization. As a member of the ONCC Board of Directors, I hope to make a broader contribution to the sustained future of oncology certification by providing innovative insights into current practices in health care and educational perspectives in oncology nursing, certification, and the nursing profession.

Anna Vioral, MSN, MEd, OCN®
Oncology Quality Coordinator
West Penn Allegheny Health System
Pittsburgh, PA

Professional certification evokes values of professionalism, competence, and commitment indicating to employers, colleagues, and clients that nurses have mastered a specialized body of knowledge and skills. However, one of the most challenging aspects of oncology nursing in today’s healthcare arena has become maintaining excellence as oncology specialty units are dissipating and survivorship is flourishing. The increasingly diversifying demands and challenges placed on oncology nurses underscore the importance of maintaining competency and increasing the level of expertise.

(See “Meet the Candidates,” page 3)
Meet the Candidates (continued from page 2)

Therefore, certification is paramount in advancing excellence in oncology nursing. My commitment to educate and uphold excellence in oncology nursing has spanned over 20 years in a variety of roles including clinician, educator, researcher, and coordinator. In addition, my involvement at the local and national levels has further enriched this excellence. These opportunities have enabled me to gain valuable insights into oncology nursing as well as to integrate oncology nurses at all levels of practice to a higher level of excellence through promotion of oncology certification.

I believe that by becoming a member of the ONCC Board of Directors I would be instrumental in the advancement of certification in oncology nursing. As a member of the ONCC Board of Directors, I look forward to advocating oncology certification, exemplifying the value of certification, upholding the integrity of certification, providing visionary contributions, and demonstrating a provocative role in promoting excellence in a more formalized leadership role to further enhance quality patient care and professional practice.

Victoria Wochna Loerzel, PhD, RN, OCN®
Assistant Professor
University of Central Florida College of Nursing
Orlando, FL

Certification is an important milestone in the career of the oncology nurse. It is a symbol of excellence, advocacy, and integrity. It sends an important message to our patients, co-workers, and employers that we are committed to our profession and the people we care for. Certification in oncology always has played a vital role in my career as an oncology nurse. I earned OCN® certification in 1996 and became involved with ONCC in 2004. As an OCN® and CBCN™ Item Writer and OCN® Test Development Committee Member, I was able to support certification by training oncology nurses to write test questions and working with others to develop fair and balanced examinations. Supporting oncology certification in this manner was a wonderful learning experience that has made me a better educator and advocate for staff and patients.

If elected to the ONCC Board of Directors, I will continue to promote education and certification and work to help shape the future of oncology certification. My goal always will be to act in the best interest of the oncology nurse seeking certification to enhance patient care and professional practice.

Michael Smart, RN, BSN, OCN®
Certified Oncology Nurse
Huntsville Hospital
Huntsville, AL

A convert to the cause of nursing certification, I have come to see how the process of becoming certified greatly benefits the nursing profession, nurses themselves, and (most importantly) the patients who entrust themselves to our care. If chosen to serve as an ONCC Board member, my own goals include helping the organization build on prior achievements and move toward an era in which the certified oncology nurse is more the norm than the exception—that certification becomes the expectation rather than the exception among those who choose to call themselves oncology nurses. Many barriers exist for nurses considering certification. While fear of the examination is certainly a barrier that often needs to be addressed, it is also important to realize how cost barriers are very real for many nurses. In the current economic environment, there is certainly the risk for employers to fail to provide support or pull back on support of certification that was given in the past. Now, perhaps more than ever, it is imperative for ONCC to provide nurses with the tools, information, and support to ensure the value of a certified nurse is recognized by employers, the public, and nurses in general.

I hope to provide a voice for ONCC to continue moving in a direction that encourages more nurses to take the journey of becoming certified and ensures the nurse certified in oncology feels rewarded for having gone through the effort and never feels taken for granted.
Lyndon B. Johnson said, “It’s the price of leadership to do the thing you believe has to be done at the time it must be done.” Heather Mackey, RN, MSN, AOCN®, knows how to get things done to serve her target audience well. I should know, as I benefitted from her leadership as an ONCC Certification News editorial board member while she was the chair. Whether she’s implementing a new practice change, educating students, or advocating for certified oncology nurses, Mackey passionately moves her nursing practice and professional life forward to impact the care she provides to her patients and the service she provides to her colleagues.

Mackey’s peers have much to say about her professional qualities. According to one of her nominators, Mackey “is a model for professional oncology nursing and exemplifies the highest standards related to clinical practice and education. She is committed to the education of patients, families, the community, and fellow oncology nurses.” As an educator, Mackey functioned as a preceptor for nursing students as well as an educator for medical students, interns, residents, and hematology/oncology fellows at Wake Forest University Cancer Center. She regularly presents educational topics to community groups, nurses, schools of nursing, and at regional, state, and national professional conferences, such as the ONS Congress and Institutes of Learning.

When it comes to program initiation and patient services, Mackey created a patient navigator program for thoracic oncology and a palliative care program that included the advanced practice nurse as a core component of the program. Her experience as a palliative care nurse practitioner allowed her to create care algorithms for patients with life-limiting disease. Mackey shared her knowledge with a larger audience as she assisted in creating the first ONS AOCNP® Review Course in 2004 and contributed to the online course.

Mackey’s record of service to the oncology community at large is remarkable. She served on the ONCC Certification News Editorial Board from 2004–2009. As its chair from 2006–2009, she led the transition to an electronic newsletter and spearheaded a redesign. Within ONS, she served as a Fellow in the Leadership Development Institute; chaired the Institutes of Learning Project Team; served on the Membership/Leadership Advisory Board; served as a reviewer for various ONS and ONS Foundation awards; served as a reviewer for the ONS Advanced Practice Nursing Conference; served on the Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing Review board; and has served as president of her local chapter. Locally, she serves as a volunteer with the American Cancer Society and on the Board of Directors of the Josh and Marie Reynolds Hospital Guest House.

As an ONCC Advocate, Mackey promotes the benefits of certification and assists candidates with test preparation. She discusses the benefits of certification with nursing students and educates multi-disciplinary team members on the role of the oncology-certified nurse. Through her role as editor of the ONCC Certification News, she scripted articles aimed at increasing awareness and educating readers on the benefits of certification. It is my honor to congratulate Heather!

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Heather Mackey Named Advanced Oncology Certified Nurse of the Year

Janice Nuuhiwa, MSN, RN, APN/CNS, CPON®

Five Nurses Win Lifetime of Free Certification Renewal

Congratulations to Heather Hillman, RN, OCN®, of Texas; Linda Jeffrey, RN, OCN®, of Missouri; Deborah Kisko, RN, OCN®, of Florida; Anne McManus, RN, AOCN®, of Massachusetts; and Erin Myklebust, RN, AOCNP®, of Oregon.

Each of these nurses has won free certification renewal for life from ONCC. These five lucky nurses were randomly selected from all of the certified nurses who renewed their certification in 2009 before June 15. All nurses who submitted their 2009 renewal by June 15 were automatically entered into the drawing to win one of the five prizes. Congratulations to these nurses!

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Readers Respond

“How do you recognize certified nurses in your workplace?”

E-mail your responses to oncc@ons.org or fax to +1-412-859-6168.

Please reference “Readers Respond” in your comments.
Elaine Sein Wins Certification Champion Award
Susan Bruce, RN, BSN, OCN®

Webster’s Dictionary defines a champion as a person who fights for or defends any person or cause. “Champion” and “advocate” often are used interchangeably. Elaine Sein, RN, BSN, OCN®, CBCN™, the recipient of the 2009 Pearl Moore Certification Champion Award, is all that and more. Sein is the Senior Project Manager at Fox Chase Cancer Center (FCCC), where she works with 20 breast cancer nursing coordinators to enhance education, quality care, and research at FCCC and their affiliate sites. Sein has been a staunch supporter of certification ever since she was a young breast cancer survivor and daughter of a patient with breast cancer.

Several years ago, Sein developed a breast care coordinator project for her ONS Leadership Development Institute project. She was pivotal in transforming the ONS Breast Care focus group into a SIG. Chairing the certification subgroup within the Breast Care SIG, Sein began championing the cause for a breast care subspecialty certification examination. Sein was an active member of the ONCC Breast Care Certification Advisory Committee. Unwavering in her dedication, her dream was realized with the administration of the first breast care certification examination in February 2009. Sein was in this first group of applicants to take the examination and, to no one’s surprise, passed the test and earned the certified breast care nurse (CBCN™) credential.

Sein’s mission has been to ensure that nurses caring for patients with breast cancer and their families cover the entire continuum of care. She is widely recognized for her ongoing leadership in breast cancer care. Sein is a true advocate for certification and how it benefits nurses, employers, and patients. Elaine Sein is a champion in the truest sense of the word. Congratulations!

Readers Respond
Institutions Celebrate Certified Nurses Day, Oncology Nursing Month

The spring issue of the ONCC Certification News asked readers how they celebrated Certified Nurses Day or Oncology Nursing Day at their facilities. The following is a sampling of the responses received.

At Childrens Hospital Los Angeles, we made little popcorn baskets filled with popcorn, red vines, and a candy bar for the certified pediatric oncology nurses. They were wrapped in cellophane with a bow and an attached embossed card that read “Thanks and Celebrate Being a Certified Pediatric Oncology Nurse!” Also included was a quote from James Matthew Barrie—“Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others, cannot keep it from themselves.” The nurses were so appreciative, and it was a great hit.

—Peggy Townsend, RN, MS, CPON®
Childrens Hospital Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA

Coborn Cancer Center in St. Cloud, MN, held a recognition event for RN staff who had their national certification. Their names were posted in our newsletter and a bulletin board was decorated with pictures and names of the staff members who received their certification. We had a cake and coffee gathering and cards thanking them for their efforts to impact patient care. We also had a slide show presentation about becoming certified, and applications were available to encourage the staff to take a certification test. The staff liked the recognition, and it was an opportunity to encourage other staff to become certified.

—Karen Swiencki, RN, CNS, AOCN®
New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia
New York, NY

In an effort to promote certification at our institution, specifically oncology certification, I arranged for our first Oncology Certified Nurse Pinning Ceremony. The plan is for this to become an annual event held during Oncology Nursing Month. All currently-certified RNs will be recognized, and RNs certified in the past year will receive pins at the ceremony.

—Brenda Eveslage, RN, OCN®
Coborn Cancer Center
St. Cloud, MN

In an effort to promote certification at our institution, specifically oncology certification, I arranged for our first Oncology Certified Nurse Pinning Ceremony. The plan is for this to become an annual event held during Oncology Nursing Month. All currently-certified RNs will be recognized, and RNs certified in the past year will receive pins at the ceremony.

—Karen Swiencki, RN, CNS, AOCN®
New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia
New York, NY
Roswell Park Cancer Institute Takes Top Honor for Employers

Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) in Buffalo, NY, was recognized with the 2009 Employer Recognition Award for its dedication and commitment to oncology nursing at the ONCC Recognition Breakfast for Oncology-Certified Nurses, which was held at the Oncology Nursing Society 34th Annual Congress in San Antonio, TX.

At RPCI, encouragement for certification is incorporated in the hiring and promotion process. Certification is required for nurse administrators, nursing supervisors, clinical nurse specialists, and staff nurses.

To assist nurses in preparing to attain or renew certification, RPCI provides on-site, accredited continuing nursing education (CNE) programs and a review course. A two-day review course is provided at no cost to all nurses and includes CNE contact hours, review materials, and paid time to attend the course. Nurses also are provided paid time off to take the examination. Financial reimbursement is available for nurses who successfully obtain certification. Certified nurses receive an increase in their geographical differential pay of up to $2,000 when they become certified, and it continues upon renewal of certification.

Certified nurses are recognized through announcements internally through the Department of Nursing publications as well as in external RPCI publications. Oncology credentials are included on name badges, business cards, and displayed in clinical areas. Nurses who obtain certification receive a letter of congratulations from the Chief Nursing Officer.

Nurses are provided with up to four paid days for educational programs. RPCI encourages certified nurses to participate in professional development activities, including volunteer activities through ONS and ONCC, and provides paid time to do so. The ONCC Certification News congratulates Roswell Park Cancer Institute and all of its nurses on a great job in supporting and celebrating certification!

Chapters Receive ONCC Grants for Certification

Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) chapters in Baltimore, MD, Missouri Valley, ND, Richmond, VA, Miami-Dade, FL, and Detroit, MI, will each receive $1,000 from ONCC to help fund projects designed to encourage, support, or recognize certification of oncology nurses. These chapters were selected from applications submitted by 24 chapters of ONS and the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON) for the five available awards.

The projects described in the funding proposals include recognition events for certified nurses, community awareness projects, review courses, and educational resources. Watch for reports on these projects in upcoming issues of the ONCC Certification News.

ABNS Seeking Nominees for Nursing Certification Advocacy Award

Does your organization, department, or unit demonstrate or conduct activities that advance the cause of the specialty nursing certification? If so, consider submitting a nomination for the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) Award for Nursing Certification Advocacy.

This is an excellent opportunity to be recognized for the many ways in which you support and recognize certified nurses. The application is due by January 29, 2010, and is available on the ABNS Web site at www.nursingcertification.org.
Faith Chennette Honored as 2009 OCN® of the Year
Susan Wozniak, RN, BSN, OCN®

“...I never thought of being anything but a nurse. I found oncology with good fortune and recognized my niche. I am blessed with a rewarding career.”

Those are the words of Faith Chennette, RN, BSN, OCN®, who was honored at the 2009 ONCC Recognition Breakfast for Oncology Certified Nurses as the OCN® of the Year. I asked her how this acknowledgment has changed her practice. “The recognition of my efforts to better the lives of patients with cancer in practice and in education means more to me than words can convey,” Chennette stated. “I am honored and still amazed that I received the OCN® award.”

Chennette began her career as a certified nursing assistant 22 years ago and is currently working on her master’s degree in nursing. She integrated certification into her career trajectory in 1998 and became an advocate for certification within her institution. As a mother of a childhood cancer survivor and daughter of a two-time cancer survivor, Chennette understands the value of certification in the provision of care for patients with cancer. Her experiences in the realm of oncology afforded her the opportunity to participate in cancer awareness activities in the community. Chennette is a Board member of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, and she volunteers with the American Cancer Society, the Idaho Cancer Coalition, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Chennette’s roles as a provider of direct patient care, educator, community service volunteer, and coordinator of philanthropic events are born out of her personal and professional interest in cancer care. Her peers hold her in high regard and identify Chennette as a role model and mentor. Colleague Celeste Sorenson, RN, OCN®, stated, “She inspires me to be a better nurse and to strive to become more than I am.”

As a source of encouragement to all oncology nurses, Chennette shared the following. “Just before my son was in kindergarten, he turned the hose on and put it in the window well of our basement. We didn’t find it until 5 hours later, at which point there was a hole in the wall and water was gushing onto my spare bed. The basement was ruined, insurance didn’t cover it, and my house smelled like an old sock. I thought it was the worst thing that ever happened. Two weeks later, I found out that my sweet little boy had a cancer that was capable of doubling in size every day. A cancer I had watched kill one of my healthy young patients in less than a month. Suddenly, I realized that my basement did not matter. I understood what matters in our lives. It is not our home, our car, or our bank account . . . it is the life we are given, the way that we live it, and the people that we allow in it. It is love, and it is good.”

Congratulations!

New DVD Illustrates Importance of Oncology Certified Nurses

ONCC recently launched a new DVD, “Oncology Certified Nurses Make a Difference,” to communicate the importance of having oncology-certified nurses on the cancer care team. The four-minute DVD presents the value of oncology nursing certification as seen from the perspectives of a patient and his family, certified nurses, and a nurse manager.

“Oncology Certified Nurses Make a Difference” is appropriate to share with patients and families to explain the benefits of having oncology-certified nurses provide their care. It also is useful for demonstrating the value of certification to administrators and nurses who are not yet certified. The DVD is ideal for playing in waiting areas or for making available in patient resource areas.

A companion brochure, “Oncology Certified Nurses Make a Difference,” is an excellent resource to distribute to patients and families that briefly explains the benefits of having oncology-certified nurses provide their care.

The DVD can be viewed on the ONCC Web site at www.oncc.org. The DVD and companion brochure are available to nurses and institutions upon request. To obtain a copy, contact ONCC at 877-769-6622 or oncc@ons.org.
## Mark Your Calendar

### 2010 Certification Test Dates and Deadlines Announced

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<tr>
<th>OCN®, CPHON™, CBCN™ Test Dates</th>
<th>Early Application Deadline (save $75)</th>
<th>Final Application Deadline (full fee)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2–31 2010</td>
<td>April 7, 2010</td>
<td>April 21, 2010</td>
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*Note. AOCNP® and AOCNS® tests are offered year-round beginning February 1, 2010. Candidates may apply at any time, and if eligible, will receive an authorization to test that provides for a 90-day testing window.*