



# Recognizing Everyday Heroes

## Think the Oncology Nursing Society Awards Process Is Complicated and Confusing? Read on.

How well informed are you about the various awards, grants, and scholarships sponsored by the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), ONS Foundation, and Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC) that recognize everyday heroes in oncology nursing? Please take a minute or two to take this true-or-false quiz about these awards and the award process.

1. Only a handful of awards, grants, and scholarships are awarded each year.
2. The nomination or application process is cumbersome and time-consuming.
3. The award winners are nationally known oncology nurses, and oncology nurses who contribute on local or regional levels do not stand a chance.
4. Some awards go unawarded simply because no one submits an application for them.
5. Award descriptions and selection criteria for all of the various awards, grants, and scholarships are described in one reference booklet.

**Statement 1 is false.** Many more than a handful of awards are offered each year; in fact, more than 60 opportunities and \$450,000 are available in awards, research grants, and scholarships. Some of the awards are geared toward individuals, and others are awarded to groups. For instance, ONS sponsors three \$1,300 Chapter Excellence Awards to recognize three ONS chapters that have excelled in promoting the mission and goals of ONS. The ONS Foundation offers four \$2,000 Josh Gottheil Memorial Bone Marrow Transplant Career Development Awards to those who practice in bone marrow transplant nursing by providing financial assistance to attend continuing-education programs or to supplement tuition in a bachelor's or master's educational program. In 2002, the ONS Foundation was able to present 52 \$1,000 Congress Scholarships to nurses who applied them toward Congress registration and travel expenses. ONS an-

ticipates being able to offer at least 50 Congress Scholarships for the 2003 Congress in Denver, CO. Twenty-nine research grants and fellowships also are available from the ONS Foundation.

**Statement 2 is false.** Although the nomination and application process does take

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some time to complete, the time involved is not overwhelming and the potential outcome, winning an award, makes that time and effort well worthwhile. Recently, the nomination and application process was streamlined for many of the awards. The instructions on each award application are simple, clear, and easy to follow. For instance, to nominate a colleague for the \$2,500 ONS Foundation Connie Henke Yarbro Excellence in Cancer Nursing Mentorship Award, nominees must complete a half-page nomination form, attach their curriculum vitae or resume, and submit three letters of support. Some award applications include questions, such as the \$2,500 ONS Foundation Pat McCue/New Orleans Chapter End-of-Life Care Nursing Career Development Award. To be considered for this award, nominees submit a resume, obtain one recommendation for the award from a colleague, supervisor, etc., and briefly respond (answers do not exceed a half-page) to six questions related to their role and philosophy about end-of-life care. Other award applications are structured in a similar fashion; the forms and submission requirements are designed to be completed quickly and easily.

**Statement 3 is false.** Many opportunities exist for all oncology nurses to be recognized for their work and contributions to oncology nursing. Some awards recognize lifetime achievement and distinguished contributions, some are targeted at developing nurses' expertise, and others recognize new and novice researchers. Many times, award nominees feel honored and humbled just to be nominated for an award. Joyce Marrs, RN, BSN, OCN®, a staff nurse at Medical Oncology/Hematology Associates in Dayton, OH, received the \$2,000 ONS Excellence in Oncology Nursing Private Practice Award. Many readers will not recognize her name, but her contributions were recognized by this award. Joyce felt honored to be nominated by her supervisor and was very surprised to win this prestigious award. She also noted that it came at a time in her life when she was feeling a bit burned out. The award and recognition associated with the award recharged and rekindled her enthusiasm for her work and her profession.

**Statement 4 is true.** Some awards go unawarded simply because no one submits an application. With so many awards and recognition opportunities offered by ONS, the ONS Foundation, and ONCC, it's difficult to imagine that people do not (or will not) take the time to nominate someone for an award or apply themselves. The awards offer so much to the recipients: recognition, validation, and for the vast majority of the awards, a monetary award. As mentioned earlier, being nominated for an award has a similar effect. For many nominees, just being nominated is an uplifting and validating experience.

**Statement 5 is true.** The booklet "Everyday Heroes in Oncology Nursing" lists the purpose, description, selection criteria, and application deadlines for the more than 60