Matthew Thornton
Recipient of the EONS Excellence in Education Award
Matthew Thornton is a Senior Lecturer in Cancer Care Nursing at the University of Glamorgan, Wales. In his current position, he has lead the development and delivery of a distance learning BSc (Hons) Cancer Care degree. As a Registered Nurse (and Registered Mental Health Nurse) he has a clinical background in cancer care nursing and has worked in both surgical and chemotherapy/radiotherapy environments. Matthew is also involved in a multidisciplinary research project exploring treatment orientated decision making in patients with advanced lung cancer.

Description of the project
It has now been five years since a group of health professionals from Velindre NHS Trust, Cardiff, Tenovus cancer charity and Macmillan Cancer Relief specialising in cancer care met with colleagues from the University of Glamorgan to plan an innovative educational programme for cancer care practitioners.

The outcome of their meeting was a plan to develop a work-based, modular course focussing on a variety of psycho-social, biological, legal, ethical and professional issues pertinent to contemporary cancer nursing. This group vision came to fruition in 2003 with the start of a BSc Cancer Care & BSc (Hons) Cancer Care degree delivered by distance learning and supported through e-learning.

This course targets both adult non-specialist and adult specialist cancer nurses who have successfully completed a pre-registration course. To be accepted into the course, the individual must have access to a personal computer, internet access, a H.E. Diploma or its equivalent, and work with individuals with a cancer diagnosis. This course is also open to allied health professionals.

The BSc (Hons) Cancer Care is an organic course. It has evolved over the last four years in response to strategic government documents, service need and students’ wishes. The five-year anniversary sees the course having been transformed since its inception with new modules being developed in response to student feedback and from requests from service providers.

Matthew has been fortunate to work with colleagues who have a passion for cancer nursing and a commitment to delivering the highest quality of learning to students. Students work hard to produce projects which are often exemplary and recommended for publication – not an easy accomplishment considering that most of the students have other personal and professional commitments. Projects produced by students often form the rationale for changes in service delivery or clinical practice which embodies the spirit of this course, which is fundamentally concerned with developing practice.

Meaning of the award for the recipient
Matthew acknowledges that he was delighted to receive the EONS Excellence in Education Award. Receipt of the award is recognition of the hard work and commitment that colleagues from within and outside of the University and students have invested over the last four years.

Because there has been an increase in international students applying for the course, the course directors will need to make revisions in the course content accordingly. Receipt of the EONS award will help tremendously to make needed changes. Matthew believes that nurses involved in cancer care have a unique and often diverse role to play. In this light, he invites experienced cancer practitioners to consider contributing the course through the addition of written work within or the development of an online community of cancer nurses.

Ergül Aslan
Recipient of the EONS Novice Researcher Award
Ergül works as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecologic Nursing at Istanbul University Florence Nightingale School of Nursing where she teaches and supervises students in the nursing care of gynecology and gynecology-oncology patients. Through her regular contact with patients, she is involved in educating women about the treatment of gynecologic cancers. To improve her knowledge in oncology nursing, especially in gynecologic oncology nursing, Ergül participated in the 1st Masterclass in Oncology Nursing that was held in March 2007 in Malta.
Monica feels that her receipt of the EONS Excellence in Management Award has great importance for nurses working in Italy. Monica’s project is “a bit opposite” to current models of nursing education and activities in existence in Italy. With her project, Monica wanted to demonstrate that a nursing group can dedicate time to nursing research as well as to clinical trials. In doing so, research nurses can develop specific skills, knowledge and competencies which will help them not only perform better in their position as clinical trial nurse but also allow them to better collaborate with physicians and other health care professionals in the development and implementation of clinical trials. With their advanced knowledge and skills, the research nurses are a valuable resource for the nursing education department.

Meaning of the award for the recipient
The experience of developing this program and receiving the EONS award has taught Monica a valuable lesson: the importance of believing in “young” research nurses and providing them support to encourage their enthusiasm for nursing and research.

The receipt of the award also shows Monica that she is moving in the right direction and she is proud that her efforts have been recognised by EONS. The award does not represent an end point, but rather the beginning of the creation of improved organisational conditions which allow nurses to grow as professionals.

Monica’s goal for the future is to succeed in her role as a mentor and facilitator and to provide support for the continued professional growth of her colleagues.

Cover
Village with Boats (oil painting 92x75 cm) by Hélène de Beauvoir 1910 – 2001, (younger sister of Simone de Beauvoir). Assumed to be painted at Lake Geneva in 1955.