

# WERNER ABSENGER, PhD, MSc

Chief Executive Officer, The Absenger Cancer Education Foundation (ACEF)

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## **Contact Information**

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Foreign Language: German (native)

## **Education**

2006 – 2008 Pre-medical Biology and Chemistry, Muskegon Community College,  
Muskegon, MI

2008 B.Sc., Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Everglades University,  
Boca Raton, FL

2010 M.Sc., Human Nutrition, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT

2015 Ph.D., Mind-Body Medicine, Saybrook University, Thesis Advisor – Eric  
Willmarth, Ph.D. “Medical hypnosis and interleukin-1 beta in breast cancer  
survivors”

## **Research Training**

06/2013 100-Hour Practicum, The University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center,  
Houston, TX

02/2014 Fundamentals of Neuroscience (Part I), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

## **Clinical Training**

10/2010 Professional Training Program in Mind-Body Medicine, The Center for Mind  
Body Medicine Washington, DC

02/2011 Advanced Training Program in Mind-Body Medicine, The Center for Mind Body  
Medicine Washington, DC

10/2012 Cancer Care Fundamentals: A Cancer Guides Seminar, The Center for Mind  
Body Medicine, Washington, DC



## **Relevant Employment History**

- 07/2014-present Chief Executive Officer | Absenger Cancer Education Foundation, Spring Lake, MI
- 08/2016-present Program Director | Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), Secchia Institute of Culinary Education (SICE), Grand Rapids, MI

## **Academic Appointments**

### Undergraduate Student Teaching

- 2015-2016 Adjunct Instructor, CSS 100A College Success Seminar, Muskegon Community College, up to 9 contact hours/year
- 2015-2016 Adjunct Instructor, Nutrition (CUL 141), The Culinary Institute of Michigan, Baker College, up to 8-quarter hours/year
- 2015-2016 Adjunct Instructor, Restaurant Techniques (CUL 201L), The Culinary Institute of Michigan, Baker College, up to 32 quarter hours/year
- 2016-present Assistant Professor, Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), Secchia Institute of Culinary Education (SICE), Grand Rapids, MI

### Graduate Student Teaching

- 2015-present Adjunct Professor, General Biochemistry (MBM 5703), Saybrook University, up to 6 credit hours/year
- 2016-present Adjunct Professor, Advanced Biochemistry (MBM 5671), Saybrook University, up to 6 credit hours/year
- 2016-present Adjunct Professor, Quantitative Research (MBM 5553), Saybrook University, up to 6 credit hours/year

## **Professional Society Membership**

- 2013-present General Member, AAAS: American Association for the Advancement of Science
- 2015-present General Member, MCC: The Michigan Cancer Consortium
- 2016-present Professional Member, TCME: The Center for Mindful Eating
- 2017-present Professional Member, ACBS: The Association for Contextual Behavioral Science

## **Honors & Awards**

- 2010 Michigan Culinarian of the Year Award, awarded by the Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association's Pure Michigan Governor's Conference: Driving Tourism
- 2012 Dr. Herbert Spiegel Award, Saybrook University, awarded for best poster "Hypnosis as a Non-Pharmaceutical Intervention to Keep the Tumorigenic Switch in the OFF Position?"
- 2013 The Crasilneck Award, Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis, awarded for best first paper presented by a graduate student or young scientist at a Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH) annual meeting.

## **Clinical Expertise**

Research scientist and mind-body medicine skills groups facilitator interested in using state-of-the-art imaging techniques and immunological assays, qualitative and mixed methods research to investigate mind body modalities

## **Development of Clinical Programs**

### **The Living Well In Breast Cancer Survivorship Program**

Designed for the Absenger Cancer Education Foundation classes and clinical programs, such as a mindful eating program, mind-body skills group intervention, yoga classes, meditation classes, and hypnosis to assist people in cancer survivorship and with chronic disease

### **Culinary Medicine Program**

In my role as Program Director of SICE I am currently collaborating with Leanne Mauriello, Ph.D., head of Spectrum Health's Behavioral and Lifestyle Management Department, Katherine Swanic, MHA, and Kristi Artz, M.D., CCMS to develop a Culinary Medicine program for Spectrum Health.

Culinary medicine blends the art of cooking with the science of medicine. The objective is to educate physicians, medical residents, medical students, other healthcare providers and the public about the powerful influence that food has on health and disease.

Through hands-on cooking classes, we teach skills for preparing meals with nutritional health benefits of preventing, managing, and reversing chronic illness.

## **Research Expertise**

1. **Absenger, W.** (2012). *Quality of life outcomes following mind-body skills instructions for cancer patients that are facilitated either face-to-face or online.* (Summary Report) (pp. 1–19). Oakland, CA: Saybrook University
2. **Absenger, W.** (2012). *Chronicles of Four: A case study to better understand the experiences of graduate students conducting a 16-week original research project.* (Summary Report) (pp. 1–39). Oakland, CA: Saybrook University
3. **Absenger, W.** (2013). *What are the effects of clinical hypnosis on the modulation of cytokines: A systematic review.* (Summary Report) (pp. 1-51). Oakland, CA: Saybrook University
4. **Absenger, W.** (2013). *A comparison of salivary interleukin 1-beta expression in control, face-to-face, and online hypnosis groups.* (Summary Report) (pp. 1-20). Oakland, CA: Saybrook University
5. Helgason, C., **Absenger, W.**, Sarris, J. (2015). *Telemedicine for mind-body medicine group therapy: A small-scale demonstration project.* Oakland, CA: Saybrook University
6. **Absenger, W.** (2015). *Medical hypnosis and interleukin-1 beta in breast cancer survivors.* Oakland, CA: Saybrook University

### **National Service**

2012-2016 Editor, Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH), Newsletter (4x/yr)

### **Local Service**

2004-2010 Board Member, The Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council, Grand Rapids, MI  
2014-present Board Member, The Revive & Thrive Project, Grand Rapids, MI  
2016-present Member, One in 21 Healthcare Provider Workgroup, Muskegon, MI

### **Teaching Service**

2014-2016 Instructor, Access Health provides classes, programs, resources, and healthcare coverage to lead Muskegon County, MI on a path toward healthier lifestyle

### **Grant Support**

#### **Active Grants:**

04/01/2016-03/31-2017 (PI: 50%)  
"Living Well In Breast Cancer Survivorship"  
Susan G. Komen® Michigan (CGA-2016-MI101-00002)  
Annual Direct Costs: \$23,971  
Total Direct Costs: \$23,971

### **Publications**

#### **Peer-reviewed journal articles**

1. Baker, A. C., & **Absenger, W.** (2013). Sexual Wellness Enhancement and Enrichment Training (SWEET): A hypothetical group model for addressing sexual health and wellbeing. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy, 28*(1-2), 48-62. doi:10.1080/14681994.2013.770142
2. **Absenger, W.** (2015). [Review of the book Hypnotic Approaches in Cancer and Palliative Care, by S. Néron and D. Handel]. *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis, doi:10.1080/00029157.2015.1011515*
3. Heermann, C., **Absenger, W.**, & Sarris, J. (2017). Videoconference mind-body group therapy in a public mental health setting: A pilot study. *Journal of Technology in Behavioral Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41347-016-0001-3>

## **Non-peer reviewed publications**

### **Web based articles**

1. **Absenger, W.** (2014, January). How to increase employee stress resilience in 11 hours or less? *Hotel Business Review*. Retrieved from <http://hotelexecutive.com>
2. **Absenger, W.** (2014, April). Effective communication reduces stress. *Hotel Business Review*. Retrieved from <http://hotelexecutive.com>
3. **Absenger, W.** (2014, May). Stress Management 101: Teach employees how to breathe. *Hotel Business Review*. Retrieved from <http://hotelexecutive.com>
4. **Absenger, W.** (2014, June). Avoiding burnout with heart rate variability training. *Hotel Business Review*. Retrieved from <http://hotelexecutive.com>

### **Abstracts and/or Proceedings**

1. Absenger, W. (2012, April). *Spukhafte Fernwirkung: Can distant healing intentionality (DHI) be explained through imagery induced ultraweak biophoton emission, qubits, and quantum entanglement?* Poster session presented at the Center for Consciousness Studies' 10th Biennial Toward a Science of Consciousness Conference, Tucson, AZ

### **Published Multimedia**

1. **Absenger, W.** (Producer). (2016, January 23). What is integrative medicine? Who is ACEF? [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com>
2. **Absenger, W.** (Producer). (2016, January 26). Living and loving after prostate cancer with guest Dr. Alexzandria Baker [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com>
3. **Absenger, W.** (Producer). (2016, January 26). A FREE breast cancer survivorship program for you from ACEF & @KomenMichigan. Guest Jennifer Jurgens [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com>

### **Major Invited Speeches**

#### **Local**

1. **Absenger, W.** (2014, March 28). *Stress management for hospitality employees*. Breakout session presented at the Grand Valley State University Hospitality Summit 2014: Waves of Opportunity, Oceans of Success, Grand Rapids, MI
2. **Absenger, W.** (2015, September). *Empowering pain & palliative care patients and their health care providers with hypnosis*. Presented at Mercy Health's 6th Annual Pain & Palliative Care Conference, Grand Rapids, MI

#### **National**

1. Willmarth, E. K., **Absenger, W.**, Stanton, E., & DeBlaay, B. (2013, March 18). *Integrating hypnosis and biofeedback: Evidence and trends*. Presented at the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) 55th Annual Scientific Meeting & Workshops, Louisville, KY

"The significant problems that you face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking you were at when you created them." ~Albert Einstein | Page 6 of 6

2. **Absenger, W.** (2013, October 4). *Is there a difference in the expression of salivary interleukin-1 beta between hypnotherapy administered on-line, face-to-face and a wait-listed control group?* Poster session at the 64th Annual SCEH Scientific Session: The Future of Professional Hypnosis: Practice, Process & Outcomes, Berkeley, CA
3. **Absenger, W.** (2013, October 5). *What are the effects of clinical hypnosis on the modulation of cytokines: A systematic review.* Paper presented at the 64th Annual SCEH Scientific Session: The Future of Professional Hypnosis: Practice, Process & Outcomes, Berkeley, CA

## **Proffered Communications**

### Local

1. **Absenger, W.**, Is This the Future of Food? Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan, talk, 2006
2. **Absenger, W.**, Antioxidants & Diet, Michigan Licensed Practical Nurses Association, Muskegon, MI, workshop, 2008
3. **Absenger, W.**, Low Carbohydrate Cooking, Secchia Institute For Culinary Education, Grand Rapids, MI, workshop, 2008
4. **Absenger, W.**, Water-Essential Nutrient For Life, Michigan Licensed Practical Nurses Association, Muskegon, MI, workshop, 2010
5. **Absenger, W.**, The New Medicine and the Central Role of Self-Care, Michigan Licensed Practical Nurses Association, Muskegon, MI, workshop, 2011
6. **Absenger, W.**, Soul Series Talk: Mapping the Cancer Journey, Gilda's Club Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, MI, presentation, 2015
7. **Absenger, W.**, Grief as Spiritual Teacher: The Big Questions on Death and Dying, Gilda's Club Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, MI, presentation, 2015
8. Baker, A, **Absenger, W.**, Living and Loving after Prostate Cancer, Gilda's Club Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, MI, presentation, 2015
9. **Absenger, W.**, Mapping the Cancer Journey, Johnson Family Cancer Center, Muskegon, MI, presentation, 2016
10. Baker, A, **Absenger, W.**, Living and Loving after Prostate Cancer, Johnson Family Cancer Center, Muskegon, MI, presentation, 2016
11. **Absenger, W.**, Mindful Eating, Susan G. Komen Michigan, Muskegon, MI, lunch & learn, 2016
12. **Absenger, W.**, Living and Dying: Confronting Your Mortality, Muskegon, MI, Johnson Family Cancer Center, Muskegon, MI, presentation, 2016

### National

1. **Absenger, W.**, Fighting Breast Cancer One Bite at a Time, Culinary Vegetable Institute, Milan, OH, workshop, 2005
2. **Absenger, W.**, Principles of Phytotherapy, New York Chiropractic College, Seneca Falls, NY, workshop, 2005
3. **Absenger, W.**, Healing Properties of Foods, Culinary Vegetable Institute, Milan, OH, workshop, 2005