

Gardner-Webb University

## Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

---

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

---

3-23-2020

### **Gardner-Webb Faculty Leader Honored with Prestigious Award for Scholarly Research**

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

---

# Gardner-Webb Faculty Leader Honored with Prestigious Award for Scholarly Research

[webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/yelton-receives-award-for-research/](http://webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/yelton-receives-award-for-research/)

Office of University  
Communications

March 23, 2020

## *Dr. David Yelton Receives Vandervort Prize for His Work in Military History*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A Gardner-Webb faculty leader, who has served the University for nearly three decades, has been honored with a prestigious award for scholarly research. Dr. David Yelton, associate provost for the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of history, received the Vandervort Prize from the “Journal of Military History.”

Yelton is one of four historians to receive the award this year. Formerly called the Moncado Prize, the honor was renamed on March 1 to honor the memory of Dr. Bruce Vandervort, former editor of the Journal. Vandervort was dedicated to coordinating the Journal and supporting the entire field of military history. The Society of Military History voted to change the name of the award three days before Vandervort lost his battle to cancer.



“I was quite surprised to receive the award as it is an honor just to be published in the Journal,” Yelton shared. “Moreover, the selection is done by a panel of five to six scholars in the broad field of military history, so it is an affirmation of having made a contribution to the discipline.”

The Journal is published quarterly, featuring a total of 30 to 35 articles a year. Yelton’s article, “Older German Officers and National Socialist Activism: Evidence from the German Volkssturm,” appeared in the April 2019 issue. The German Volkssturm was a compulsory militia begun by the Nazi Party near the end of the Second World War. Through the profiles of commanders in the German Volkssturm, Yelton examined the extent of active participation by former German military officers in the Nazi Party. His findings show that there were a substantial number of older men who had credentials as both officers and Nazi Party leaders.

Yelton spent the last few years researching and revising the article. “To have it recognized as expanding our knowledge of the Third Reich made all the long and tedious hours of research, writing and editing more than worthwhile,” he related. “It’s an affirmation of knowing that your scholarly work is appreciated by your peers and an acknowledgement that your work makes a difference. Vandervort was the editor who approved the draft of this article with the recommendation of several readers, so that adds to the honor.”



Yelton began studying the citizen militia of Nazi Germany when he was a graduate student at the University of North Carolina in the mid-1980s. “I selected it as a dissertation topic because at that time it had never been thoroughly studied,” Yelton offered. “Once I began researching the topic, I found that there had been little work in English on the German perspective of the end of the war. Interestingly, I finished my dissertation in 1990. The Germanies reunified the next year, which meant that there was a lot of archival material now available that had previously been closed. In 1996, I received a Gardner-Webb sabbatical that let me investigate enough of the former East German archival material to confirm that I didn’t have to revise my conclusions fundamentally.”

Yelton, a resident of Rutherfordton, N.C., was named the associate provost for the GWU College of Arts and Sciences in 2016. He has served the University with distinction as professor of history since 1990. Yelton established himself as a faculty leader at Gardner-Webb, serving as Chair of the Social Sciences Department from 2002-07 and Chair of the Faculty from 2007-09. Before coming to Gardner-Webb, he served as a teaching and research assistant to the History Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned his Master of Arts and his Ph.D.

[Learn more about the Gardner-Webb Department of Social Sciences.](#)

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at [Gardner-Webb.edu](http://Gardner-Webb.edu).*