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Alumnus, Professor Given Award for Excellence

April 29, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University alumnus Eric Gardner recently received the 2010 Earl L. Warrick Award for Excellence in Research from Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU), where he is a professor of English. The award is given each year to one of SVSU's 300 faculty members whose research maintains the highest quality over a period of time.

A 1989 graduate from Illinois Wesleyan with a degree in English, Gardner is known for his work on 19th-century African-American writers and activists. He is the author of *Unexpected Places: Relocating Nineteenth-Century African American Literature* (UP of Mississippi, 2009), and has edited several books, including *Major Voices: The Drama of Slavery* (Toby Press, 2005), which explores the work of African-American playwrights like William Wells Brown and Pauline Hopkins; and *Jennie Carter: A Black Journalist of the Early West* (UP of Mississippi, 2007). [Read more about his work.](#)

Gardner earned his master's degree and doctorate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He began teaching at SVSU in 1996, and received the SVSU Braun Fellowship in 2008.

The Peotone native is the former vice chair of the Library Board of Midland, Mich., and is a member of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW) and the Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature in the United States (MELUS).

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