Pat and Lynn Lane are strong supporters of academics and athletics at ECU. By donating part of their estate to ECU in addition to financial support, they serve as a model for all ECU alumni, friends, and donors.
Pat and Lynn Lane are purple and gold through and through. And with their current and future support of East Carolina University, they have ensured that their legacy will have an effect for generations.

From their very generous support of the School of Music, College of Fine Arts and Communication, College of Education, the EC Scholars program, to their involvement with college advisory councils, foundation boards of directors, and ECU athletics, the Lanes have become an integral part of ECU, part of its day-to-day DNA.

Pat Lane graduated from ECU in 1967 with an accounting degree after transferring to ECU from Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina. After graduating, he worked at R. J. Reynolds Corporation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where he and Lynn met. They got married in 1979, and Lynn became a Pirate.

“I didn’t know much about ECU at all, until I got married. I quickly figured out I better bleed purple, or I would be in big trouble.”

Since 1979, they have become more and more involved in athletics and academics at ECU, seeking to balance their contributions of time and money between the two.

“We’ve expanded our involvement across the university because we see what a difference it can make for kids,” Lynn said. “Scholarships are a big thing for us. It’s a high priority for us because we see what it can do for students.”

To that end, they have created scholarships in the College of Fine Arts and Communication, endowed a scholarship for the EC Scholars program, and created the Pat and Lynn Lane Education Program in the College of Education, which provides up to two years of scholarship assistance for junior and senior education majors who agree to teach in eastern North Carolina for at least two years.

“We felt like those people will make an impact, they will become teachers,” Pat said. “We restricted it to the eastern North Carolina counties, and we structured it so it was a year-for-year trade off, so if they get the scholarship for two years, they have to teach for two years.”

In August 2011, they also made a planned gift, leaving part of their estate to increase their endowments in the College of Education, College of Fine Arts and Communication, and the university’s flagship merit scholarship program, EC Scholars, and to endow their COE scholarship program.

“We wanted to get on paper, obviously to take care of our family first, but then after that, we wanted to take care of these programs, specifically the College of Education, the endowment we have in the CFAC, and then the scholarship endowment in the EC Scholars,” Lynn said.

They also bequeathed part of their estate to Lynn’s alma mater, Greensboro College.

“The two schools we went to are our priorities, and we had talked about this, but we had not changed our wills,” she said. “We finally decided that now is the time to do it. After taking care of our granddaughters and some other small bequests, we decided to leave the remainder of our estate to leave to our alma maters.”

They plan to continue giving during their lifetime, to fund their endowments even more before their estate plan kicks in.

“In the event we can’t do as much of that as we would like, we would like for it to be taken care of after we’re gone.”

And even though Lynn is not an ECU graduate, she has as much pride as the most devoted Pirate.

“If you have a connection to the university, you need to make a commitment,” Lynn said. “It was part of your heritage. Even though I didn’t go to school here, I feel very much a part of it.”

“We’re pretty strong advocates,” Pat said. “We strongly encourage people to find their passion and get involved in it. Give back to it.”