

January 26, 2015

Board of Trustees  
East Carolina University  
202 Spilman Building  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

I'm writing to you in support of the ad-hoc committee's recommendation to change the name of Aycock Hall. Quite honestly, it is unfathomable to me this decision continues to be debated. As you are well aware, Governor Aycock is a confirmed white supremacist and segregationist.

It seems contradictory East Carolina University proclaims to be committed to one of their guiding principles, "diversity and inclusiveness", yet they continue to memorialize a white supremacist on one of their buildings?

In accordance with the ECU Mission the Board of Trustees is asked to lead by example to encourage students and alumni to live the mission. "...be a national model for student success, public service and regional transformation..." Use, "the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society." "Develop tomorrow's leaders to serve and inspire positive change."

If there is a commitment to the mission, how can there be any remaining questions on whether or not ECU should continue to immortalize Governor Aycock's name? Charles B. Aycock does not symbolize "positive change", nor does he embody a "multicultural society".

Growing up in New Bern, North Carolina and having attended West Craven High School, I have had the opportunity to have had a front row view of the university and its athletic programs.

From a football perspective, East Carolina University was the only university that appeared to be progressive, separating itself from the other universities in division one programs. This is what brought me to the realization that I wanted to wear the purple and gold. Primarily because I saw football players that looked like me, playing in positions that were nontraditional for African Americans. Positions such as quarterbacks and middle line backers.

In 1995 I was involved with the *Shared Vision Campaign*, I was the first professional athlete to make a financial donation to my Alma Mater – East Carolina University. I have served on the Board of Visitors, as well as five different search committees. I have had the privilege of playing football for East Carolina University and in the National Football League. In my lifetime, I have humbly been inducted into four different Halls of Fame. I am proud to be the first ECU football player to go on to earn his Ph.D.

East Carolina University has played a very influential role in my life. It has afforded me an excellent college education and as first in the family from a low income background the cards were not stacked in my favor to become a college graduate. I want nothing more than to see the University show its current students, alumni, and supporters its commitment to their guiding principles and mission. I don't want to be the only ECU football player to have earned his Ph.D., I want to be part of creating a University that encourages the next ECU football player to earn his Ph.D.

Please consider this letter as my request to have Governor Aycock's name permanently removed from any and all structures associated with East Carolina University.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George E. Koonce Jr.", written in a cursive style.

George E. Koonce Jr., Ph.D.

Inducted into the East Carolina University Hall of Fame in 2002

Master of Art's Degree, 2006