



March 10, 2008

Dr. Peter Lange, Provost
Duke University

Re: Name of the Nicholas School

Dear Peter,

In 1991 the school changed its name to the *School of the Environment*. The change reverberated throughout the environmental community. Duke's environmental program was not about "environmental sciences," or "environmental studies," or "environmental science and policy." It was about *the* environment. The name was a bold statement about Duke's vision of a comprehensive program on the environment that went beyond academics to stewardship and engagement.

In 2000, the school's name was changed to the *School of the Environment and Earth Sciences*, in large part to facilitate the integration of the Geology Department into the school.

When I came to Duke last year I felt that the time for the dual school name had passed. We have become a more integrated faculty. The current name, with its inclusion of the word "and," states that we are a divided faculty; it unnecessarily serves as a reminder of a more divisive time and, as such, is no longer appropriate.

I have asked the faculty to consider changing the name back to its earlier, more visionary incarnation. With only one dissenting vote, the faculty has voted affirmatively.

I hereby request that you initiate the process to formally change our school's name to the "*Nicholas School of the Environment*." Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill".

William L. Chameides
Dean and Professor of the Environment