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# Today's faces of Kentucky coal

## By way of explanation:

Today there is no such entity as a "typical" coal miner, even though many who work in the industry do so as part of a multi-generational family tradition.

Accordingly, in this series, we'll be profiling several individuals who are actively engaged in mining and representative of a new generation of mining professionals within Kentucky's vital coal industry.

Was a career in coal mining "pre-destined" for Eric Anderson? He grew up in Pennsylvania in an area known as "the heart of the Northern Appalachian coal fields." His childhood home was actually located near a coal mine site—so when an uncle involved in the industry suggested that Eric consider a career in mining engineering, he enrolled at and graduated Summa Cum Laude from West Virginia University with a BS in Engineering of Mines in 1996. However, Eric readily admits that "without the love of the coal industry I had instilled in me early in my career, I don't think that I would have decided to make a lifelong career of coal. It's a unique industry, sewn together with a brand of people that you only seem to find around coal mining. We get to do things and go places that only a handful of people will ever know or experience."

What's involved in a typical day on the job at Warrior Coal? "I interface with just about everyone—on production, costs, purchasing, scheduling, and safety. My best days are when I get to go underground and visit with our crews in their actual work setting."

When asked if he would recommend a career path in the coal industry to others, Eric's response was a candid one: "As much as I enjoy what I do, I don't believe coal mining is for everyone. Hard work, long hours, odd shifts, sometimes

dangerous work, and other facets of mining coal may not fit everyone's pistol. I think there are many opportunities for young professionals to enter the mining industry—and I'd tell them, 'If you want to be a part of coal's bright future, and you're not afraid of hard work, then you ought to consider a career in coal.' They'll know quickly if they made the right choice or not."

Eric Anderson lives and works in Western Kentucky—an area rich in coal reserves. He noted, "Kentucky has been blessed with coal at both ends of the state – and with this natural resource come jobs for Kentuckians as well as employment for others in supporting industries. Additionally the (severance) tax benefits for communities, cities, and counties in our coal areas have been tremendous. The addition of clean coal technology power plants will only further enhance coal's outlook."

In response to the question, "What can and should be done to help all Kentuckians better understand and appreciate the coal industry?" these insights from Eric: "Because of the importance of coal to Kentucky's economy and energy supply, I'd mandate that students across the state receive accurate and truthful coal education at every grade level. Our kids need to grow



## Eric Keith Anderson

Age: 33  
General Manager, Warrior Coal  
(a division of Alliance Resources)

### Information on Eric Keith Anderson:

#### Personal:

- Born in Waynesburg, PA; raised in Mt. Morris, PA
- Graduated from Waynesburg Central High School, where he played football and was class valedictorian in 1992
- Graduated Summa Cum Laude from West Virginia University—where, while playing trumpet in the band, he met his future wife, Tonya Lee Anderson, who was a member of the color guard
- Eric and Tonya are parents of 2 children—Mason (7) and Brooke (5)
- Currently resides in Madisonville, KY, 9 miles from his work site

#### Professional:

- General Manager/Alliance Resources-Warrior Coal, a UG mining complex located near Madisonville, KY
- 1st Vice President—Kentucky Mining Institute
- Member/Secretary to Board of Directors for Cedar West, Inc.'s Coal Education Program

up realizing just how important coal-fired electric generation is, and they need to be armed with a proper understanding of clean coal technologies and the abundance of steam-generating coal right here in Kentucky. If this and future generations of our youth have a healthy, positive view of coal, they'll be able to make more well educated decisions in the future on state and national energy policies, and on the election of people who vote on energy-related issues." He added, "As an industry, Kentucky coal gets enough negative publicity without trying—we need to counteract some of that with intentional, positive information!"

## Coal Facts

**17,190 miners earning an average \$47,000 per year.**

**124 million tons produced in 2005, selling for \$4.9 billion.**

**73% of Kentucky's coal is exported out of state, bringing \$3.5 billion into Kentucky. 85 cents on each dollar stays in Kentucky.**

**91% of Kentucky's electricity comes from coal.**

**Kentucky has one of the lowest electrical rates in the nation because of coal.**

**The Kentucky coal miner is safer from injuries than the average Kentucky worker.**

**Paid for by the Kentucky Foundation.**

For more information on Kentucky Coal visit [www.kentuckycoal.com](http://www.kentuckycoal.com)



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