



## The Explore Kentucky Initiative (EKI)

From their website:

EKI is a Black-owned and led outdoor-oriented social enterprise dedicated to inspiring Kentuckians and visitors to the Commonwealth to engage in an active lifestyle fueled by outdoor adventure while preserving the natural resources of our 120 counties.

EKI partners with activists, artists, brands, communities, governmental + nonprofit organizations to bring diverse groups of people together, build accessibility to the outdoors, improve environmental literacy, and invigorate ecotourism--thus creating a broader community of outdoor enthusiasts & better quality of life.

Some of their noteworthy projects:

Development of the [Beaver Creek Blueway Trail](https://www.explorekentucky.us/beavercreekbluewaytrail-project) in Barron County for kayak, canoe, and stand up paddleboard access. EKI partnered with the City of Glasgow, National Park Service, & VFW Post 5906 to clean up a 3 mile section of Beaver Creek. EKI facilitated the mapping of the stream, developing an identity for the stream as a blueway trail, leading the heavy clean-up work, fundraising, and hosting an initial community clean-up event. This project will positively impact Barren County's quality of life, public health, and Beaver Creek's ecology for future generations to come.

<https://www.explorekentucky.us/beavercreekbluewaytrail-project>



Providing technical assistance and support to [Friends of Cherokee State Historic Park](#). Cherokee Park, situated on the banks of Kentucky Lake, was open from 1949-1963 as **Kentucky's only state park for its African American population during the Jim Crow Era**. EKI's role is to help the Friends continue growing Cherokee into a premier site for cultural, historical, and educational resources concerning African American history, culture, achievements, and contributions to the commonwealth.



Hosting and assisting with free to affordable environmental education workshops, guided hikes, race events, and festivals. Events have included the Bluegrass River Run, In My Backyard Red River Gorge, Drakes Creek Watershed Festival, Ohio River Paddlefest, Black Lives Matter Paddle Out Kentucky, and Explore Kentucky's Ancient Forest. These are just a few of EKI's awesome projects! Learn more about the Explore Kentucky Initiative at <https://www.explorekentucky.us/>

You can support their work by purchasing tee-shirts and stickers with their logos here:

[https://kyforky.com/collections/explore-kentucky?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=journal&utm\\_campaign=explore-ky&utm\\_content=explore-ky](https://kyforky.com/collections/explore-kentucky?utm_source=website&utm_medium=journal&utm_campaign=explore-ky&utm_content=explore-ky)



About the founder, Gerry Seavo James:

**Alma Mater:** Campbellsville University

**Member** U.S. Airforce Reserve

**Areas near and dear to Gerry's heart:** Blueway Trail development, environmental + experiential education, creative direction, ecotourism development, JEDI+A (justice, equity, diversity, and antiracism), encouraging positive health outcomes through outdoor recreation, paddlesports, photojournalism, social art, storytelling, strategy, regulatory policy and legislation, & research.