

WORK SAMPLES

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NEWSLETTERS

NOVEMBER
MARCH

ARTICLES

EMBRACING INNOVATION:
AI IN THE AEC INDUSTRY

BECOMING A CONSTRUCTION
LAW PANELIST:
MERRA'S JOURNEY

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CONSTRUCTIVE INSIGHTS
Navigating Today's Construction Challenges

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Navigating Today's Construction Challenges

- DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT
- PROJECT CONTROLS
- CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY



Embracing Innovation: Artificial Intelligence in A/E/C



Manufacturing Boom: Mapping the Biggest Projects in the US

- DISPUTE RESOLUTION
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TxDOT Reaches \$400M Harbor Bridge Settlement



Austin-Bergstrom Airport Terminal Expansion In Progress



Risk Management Lessons Learned

Author: Chris Caddell PE CCP DRMP FAACE PMP

Maximize the value of your risk management plan by avoiding the pitfalls others had to learn the hard way.



Project Success Mindset

What does project success look like for each role in your company?

Read more about the concepts Spire teaches in workshops across the country.



Construction Company Management Planning Best Practices

How to Establish Them, Assess Success, and Keep on Track

"Why do contractors fail? What are the stakes? How do you avoid risk?" Get answers here.



Becoming a Construction Law Panelist: Merra's Journey

Author: Merra Kurubalan

Wanting to make an industry impact, but don't know where to start? Follow Merra's journey of becoming an A/E/C leader.



Developing a Construction Contract Playbook

Authors: Chris Caddell PE CCP DRMP FAACE PMP

Having a playbook of the contract can increase a project team's compliance with the contract terms, help protect against claims, and even improve project performance. Learn how to develop your own playbook!



Guide to Disaster Safety and Preparedness on Construction Sites

If you're a project manager, contractor, or other stakeholder, you must ensure you and your workers are prepared for disasters to mitigate risks. Developing an emergency action plan is the first step.

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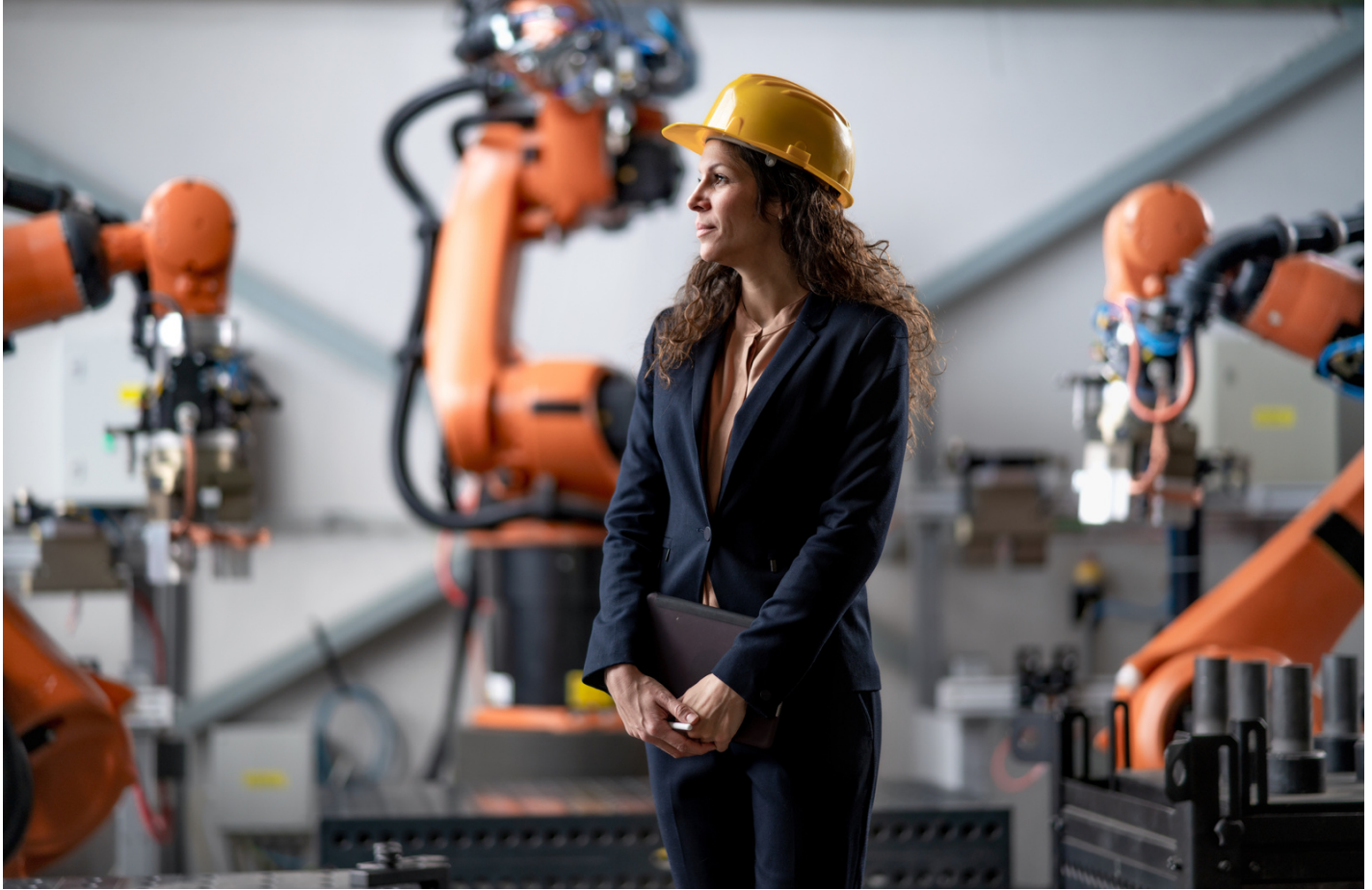
SERVICES

- DISPUTE RESOLUTION
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- PROJECT CONTROLS
- CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY

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SPIRE OFFICES	PROJECT CONTROLS	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	DISPUTE RESOLUTION	CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY
Austin	Project Planning	Program Management	Claims Management	Management Consulting
Dallas	Schedule Development	Construction Management	Schedule Delay & Disruptions	Strategic Planning
Houston	Schedule Oversight	Earned Value Management	Damage Assessment & Quantification	Construction Contracts
Miami	Schedule Analysis	Project Controls	Construction Defects	Risk Management
San Francisco	Cost Estimating	Staff Augmentation	Standard of Care	Due Diligence
	Value Engineering	Change Order Management	Acceleration	Process Development & Audit
	Budget Management	Claims Avoidance & Prevention	Productivity Loss	Performance & Productivity Improvement
			Request for Equitable Adjustment	Disaster Prevention & Relief Planning
			Expert Witness Testimony	Talent Development & Construction Training

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EMBRACING INNOVATION: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN A/E/C

The construction industry has long been known for its reliance on traditional methods and manual labor. However, with the rapid advancement of technology, we are now seeing a paradigm shift in construction consulting and project management. As experts continue to face challenges in completing projects on time and within budget, the integration of technology like Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly widespread. Senior Consultant David Carlson weighs in on this hot-button topic that continues to come up at industry events worldwide, dives into the pros and cons of AI in the construction industry and explores the potential impact on construction consultants, delay experts, and project managers.

AI is revolutionizing construction, offering new possibilities for the A/E/C industry. With AI, construction professionals can enhance their capabilities in areas such as scheduling, cost estimating, delay analysis, and project controls. This innovative technology allows for more accurate predictions, faster decision-making, and improved efficiency. By embracing AI, construction experts can leverage its capabilities to streamline operations, reduce costs, and ultimately deliver projects more effectively. The construction industry is entering a new era of innovation, and AI is at the forefront, transforming the way we approach and execute projects.

Spire attended a panel on the impacts of artificial intelligence last year. The panel consisted of seasoned construction experts with similar hopes and similar fears regarding the leap in technology. Common concerns included the initial investment required, data privacy concerns, and the need for skilled professionals to implement and manage these technologies, but the biggest fear was that this technology might eventually make some construction roles obsolete.

“AI is going to help an analyst review, compile, and process data faster. It’s going to make our lives easier,” says Mr. Carlson, “but new technology will not eliminate the need for a human element on these projects. First you must understand how it works and how to use the tool to your advantage. However, you will need to maintain proper QA/QC protocols to ensure that the information is accurate and reliable.”

Mr. Carlson compared AI to the introduction of scheduling software. Software like Primavera P6 and MS Projects has not always existed, and when they were introduced, they were met with similar concerns, but today they are seen as helpful, or even crucial to the success of a project while making the life of a project manager easier.

A key element to embracing AI as a helpful tool is to fully understand the software. As construction professionals, keeping up with technological advancements, it is impossible to know what a tool can do for you without testing it. Providing training and upskilling opportunities can address this challenge and ensure a tech-savvy workforce for the construction industry’s future. By addressing these challenges head-on, the A/E/C industry can unlock the full potential of AI and make way for a more innovative and efficient future.



Becoming a Construction Law Panelist:

Merrra's Journey

When I started attending conference panel sessions, I was initially nervous about meeting strangers and sitting in such proximity to A/E/C industry experts. However, I soon discovered the excitement of learning from professionals who are passionate about the subject matter. Witnessing someone shine in their element gave me the motivation to become a panelist myself.



3 TIPS FOR BECOMING A CONSTRUCTION LAW PANELIST

➔ Don't Sell Yourself Short



While you may consider yourself junior, your experiences might very well place you in a unique position to wholistically contribute to panel sessions.



The first lesson I learned was not to underestimate myself. Even if you consider yourself a junior, your experiences and unique perspective can make a valuable contribution to panel sessions. I originally overlooked my experiences as an in-house counsel, assuming that my youth in the practice of law made me less qualified. However, a wise friend reminded me of the value of my perspective, which gave me the confidence to land my first speaking engagement.

➔ You Don't Have to be an SME



You don't have to be a subject matter expert to meaningfully contribute. There are plentiful sources from which you could learn all about the new subject matter.

The second lesson I learned was that you don't need to be an expert to make a meaningful contribution. There are many sources to learn about new subject matter, and it's essential to apply your unique lens to the issues addressed during the panel sessions. I did this by identifying gaps in my knowledge base and using my perspective to fill them.

➔ Network



The biggest takeaway from my experiences thus far has been understanding the importance and value of networking with colleagues in the industry.

Finally, networking with colleagues in the industry is crucial. Don't limit yourself to networking within your profession but instead widen your network. This strategy has helped me in many ways, including being on panels with experts from varying fields. Consider construction-related conferences that stretch your professional knowledge and usual circle of influence. Many of these conferences even offer learning credits, so you won't be expected to be an expert in the field. You can learn from, then mingle with the best and brightest minds in the industry.





Attending conference panel sessions can be an excellent opportunity to learn from professionals and become a panelist in the future. It's essential to remember not to sell yourself short, even if you're just starting in your career. Networking is also crucial and should not be limited to your profession. Remember that your unique perspective can make a valuable contribution to panel sessions, even if you're not an expert on the subject matter. Finally, be motivated to learn more and apply your lens to the issues addressed during the panel sessions. Hopefully, these lessons will encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities presented by industry conferences and make significant contributions to A/E/C discussions.



MEET SPIRE'S TEAM

In 2024, Spire will be attending numerous A/E/C conferences, and cheering you on.

- ➔ **CLFT Annual Construction Law Conference**
San Antonio, TX | March 7-8
- ➔ **Associated General Contractors of America Convention** San Diego, CA | March 19-22
- ➔ **Florida Bar Construction Law Institute**
Orlando, FL | March 21-23
- ➔ **ABA Construction Law Forum Annual Conference**
New Orleans, LA | April 11-13
- ➔ **Society of Construction Law Annual Conference**
Montréal, Québec, Canada | July 10-12
- ➔ **ICC Miami Conference on International Arbitration**
Miami, FL | December 1-3
- ➔ **Construction Super Conference**
Las Vegas, NV | December 9-11



PROJECT SUCCESS MINDSET

KNOW WHAT SUCCESS IS

UNDERSTAND THE NORTH STAR. KNOW WHAT MATTERS MOST ON THIS PROJECT SO THAT THOSE ASPECTS GET THE NECESSARY FOCUS AND ENERGY.

ZOOM OUT

MONITOR SUCCESS ACROSS MULTIPLE TIME HORIZONS. HOW ARE THINGS TRACKING TODAY? GIVEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROJECT, WHAT DO YOU ANTICIPATE OVER THE NEXT WEEK? MONTH? 6 MONTHS? WHAT BLIND SPOTS MAY EXIST? PAY ATTENTION TO THE EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT MIGHT IMPACT THE PROJECT AND ADJUST THE PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS

BUILD SOLID RELATIONSHIPS AND ENSURE EACH INDIVIDUAL AND ENTITY HAS ROLE CLARITY. UNDERSTAND PERFORMANCE TRACK RECORDS, STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, AND THE COMMUNICATION STYLES THAT WORK BEST FOR EACH. CHECK IN FREQUENTLY ON RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS.

BALANCE THE OUTCOMES

EXERCISE JUDGEMENT TO BALANCE THE NEEDS OF THE JOBSITE, TEAM, CLIENT, PLAN (MILESTONES), AND FINANCIALS IN A WAY THAT DRIVES OUTCOMES WITH MINIMAL RISK.

THINGS TO MONITOR EVERY DAY

JOBSITE

TEAM

CLIENT

SCHEDULE

FINANCIALS

JOBSITE

- ✦ The environment where the work gets done safely including the construction site, surrounding areas, material/equipment storage facilities, and the trailer/office.
- ✦ Is the jobsite defined and organized?
- ✦ Is the jobsite safe?
- ✦ Does the jobsite “work” for everyone?
- ✦ Does the trailer/office workspace layout drive communication and collaboration?
- ✦ Are the neighbors/community informed and bought in?
- ✦ Is the jobsite accessible (if not, do you have accommodations)?
- ✦ Is the team informed about the safety plan?

TEAM

- ✦ The group responsible for delivering a successful project, including employees and trade partners.
- ✦ Do you have the right people on the team?
- ✦ Are roles & responsibilities clear?
- ✦ How is your relationship with the lead superintendent?
- ✦ Does the team work well with the client, neighbors, and community?
- ✦ Does anyone on the team need more support or development?
- ✦ Is the team working well together and effectively aligned?
- ✦ Have there been any recent changes to the team that require your attention?
- ✦ Is morale eroding or is the team tired?

CLIENT

- ✦ The owner, principal, or end user of the product or service created by the project that will serve as the ultimate decision maker for the project.
- ✦ Is the client part of the team?
- ✦ Do you and the team know the expectations of the client and what is most important to them?
- ✦ Is the client available and responsive?
- ✦ Is the client up to date and informed about the project?
- ✦ Do you understand what success is (business drivers) for the owners' project?

SCHEDULE

- ✦ The set of requirements for the project that defines the overall milestones, activities, sequence, resources, and time to complete the project.
- ✦ Does the schedule match the plan?
- ✦ Do the trade partners buy into the schedule?
- ✦ Is the schedule updated weekly (at least)?
- ✦ Are milestones understood by all and being met?
- ✦ Do you have solutions to schedule impacts?
- ✦ Is the critical path reasonable and clearly communicated?
- ✦ Is the client aware of the status and is their activities in the schedule?

FINANCIALS

- ✦ The historical and current capturing, reporting, and monitoring of costs and expenditures against the budget to determine profit.
- ✦ Are the cost to complete forecasts accurate and trusted?
- ✦ Do you know the cash position on your project?
- ✦ Are the NR's reasonable and appropriate?
- ✦ Are change orders being managed proactively?
- ✦ Do you know where the financial exposures are on the project (and do you have a plan to address them)?

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES



CAN WE GROW?

- + CAN WE INCREASE REVENUE?
- + CAN WE INCREASE ACTIVE PROJECTS?
- + CAN WE INCREASE HEADCOUNT?



HAVE WE EVOLVED?

- + CAN WE DIVERSIFY & EXPAND?
- + CAN WE TAKE ON LARGER OR MORE COMPLEX PROJECTS?
- + CAN WE INNOVATE HOW WE WORK?



ARE WE DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE?

- + ARE WE DEVELOPING OUR TEAM?
- + ARE WE TRAINING TALENT TO BE LEADERS?
- + ARE WE MEETING OUR TEAM'S DEVELOPMENT EXPECTATIONS?

PRACTICE

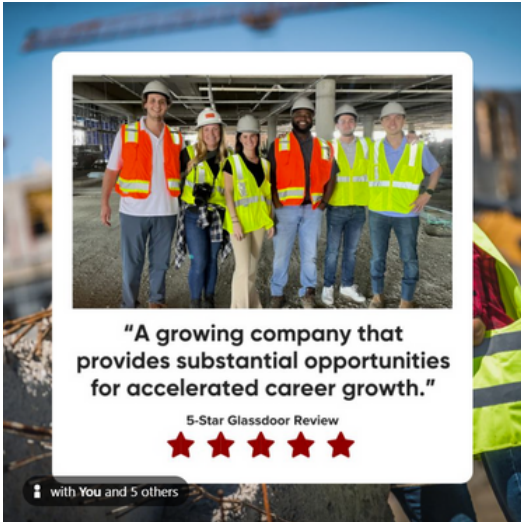
**ONE
SIZE
DOES
NOT
FIT
ALL**

**SPIRE PREPARES
WORKSHOPS FOR
YOU AND YOUR TEAM
TO PRACTICE THESE
CONCEPTS IN REAL-
TIME, AND DIVE DEEPER
INTO WHAT THESE
IDEAS LOOK LIKE
FOR YOUR SPECIFIC
COMPANY CULTURE &
STRUCTURE.**

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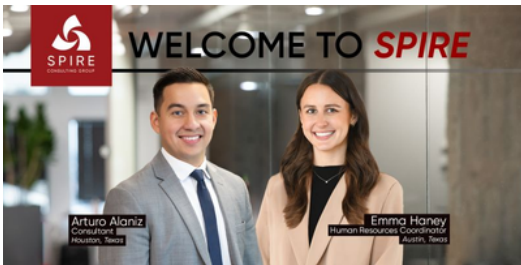
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At Spire Consulting Group, our focus is on encouraging career growth and inspiring our team to make their vision a reality. We believe that having the brightest minds in the industry who love what they do is key to achieving success. Our team is dedicated to elevating each other, celebrating individual accomplishments, and supporting one another because we know that our work makes a difference. Join us at Spire and let's make a difference together!

See our full list of open positions here: <https://lnkd.in/e6zh5HeU>



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Spire Hire | Welcome to Spire, [Arturo Alaniz](#) and [Emma Haney](#)!

With a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management, Arturo Alaniz possesses a professional background spanning both the public and private sectors. Notably, his involvement encompasses large-scale commercial ventures, including educational facilities, stadiums, and multifamily developments, where he actively supports and leads time management efforts. Beyond his central focus on construction management, Mr. Alaniz brings an additional layer of expertise to the table, with extensive experience in teaching scheduling. This educational aspect adds a valuable dimension to his skill set, demonstrating a commitment to sharing knowledge and contributing to the professional development of others.

Emma Haney, Spire's Human Resources Coordinator, has a Bachelor of Science in Management and Marketing. She has experience as an executive assistant and in human resources management and training. Emma's "all in, team first" attitude is infectious, and she is dedicated to creating the most productive work environment possible.

Spire is thrilled to have these two talented individuals on our team!

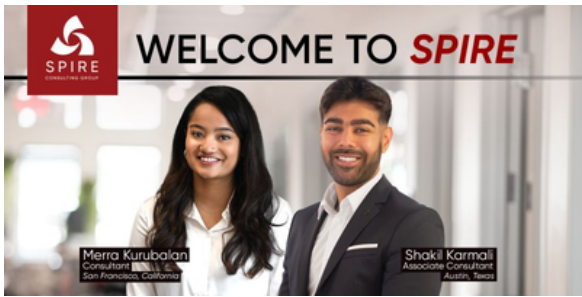
Click to learn more about Spire: <https://lnkd.in/gkFrD8Dx>



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Spire is proud to say that Dr. General Marshall Middle School has opened it's doors! This school is just one of the many new or renovated schools produced by the [Austin Independent School District](#) 2017 Bond Program. Our project managers have worked tirelessly to ensure that students walk into these new facilities excited to learn. Spire's own Senior Project Manager, [Joseph Pille](#), helped bring Austin ISD's vision of "creating 21st Century learning spaces" to life. Spire wishes students, families, and school staff a fun and successful year of learning!

Learn more about Spire's participation in the 2017 Austin Bond Program here: https://lnkd.in/gqjs_EJg



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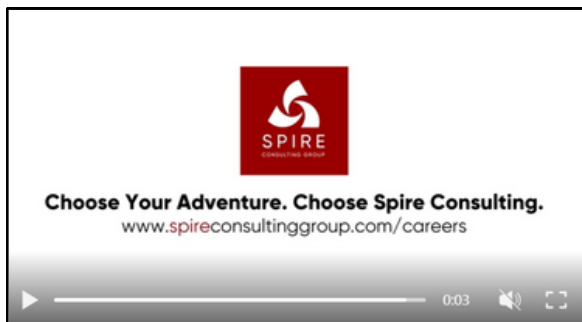
Spire Hire | Welcome to Spire, Merra and Shakil!

Merra Kurubalan, Consultant, brings a 6-year track record of specialized expertise in international and domestic dispute resolution, with a primary focus on the construction and energy sectors. Her qualifications include a Juris Doctor and a Bachelor of Commerce with a specialization in Accounting and Business Law. Miss Kurubalan brings to the Spire team her legal and business acumen, which she has cultivated through her experiences from her in-house roles and from private practice. She has advised on projects totaling over \$50 billion in value and has engaged with clients from a global spectrum.

Shakil Karmali, Associate Consultant, has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the [The University of Texas at Austin](#) and a Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering from [University of California, Berkeley](#). His hands-on experience includes collaborating with local contractors and design firms, where he has contributed to project execution. His ability to communicate industry concepts in understandable terms makes him effective in communication with clients and team members. At Spire, he is able to use his analytical skills to approach projects with a keen eye for problem-solving and data-driven decision-making.

We look forward to accomplishing big things with these two on the Spire Team!

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At Spire, we don't just offer a job, we offer an opportunity to pursue your passion. Our focus is on encouraging career growth for all our employees, and we strive to attract the brightest minds in the industry who love what they do. We elevate each other, celebrate individual accomplishments, and support our team because we know that our work makes a difference.

Choose your adventure. Choose Spire Consulting Group.

See our full list of open positions here: <https://lnkd.in/e6zh5HeU>

Help Spire Eliminate Lunch Debt

All proceeds of Spire's Lunch Debt Fund go directly to school lunch debt in Pflugerville ISD.



Scan QR Code to Donate Today!

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1 in 5 Texas children experience food insecurity, according to [Feeding Texas](#). Food insecurity is defined by the [USDA](#) as the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life. By donating to Spire's lunch debt fund, you are allowing children to receive full and healthy lunches. In some cases, school lunch could be a student's best and/or only meal of the day.

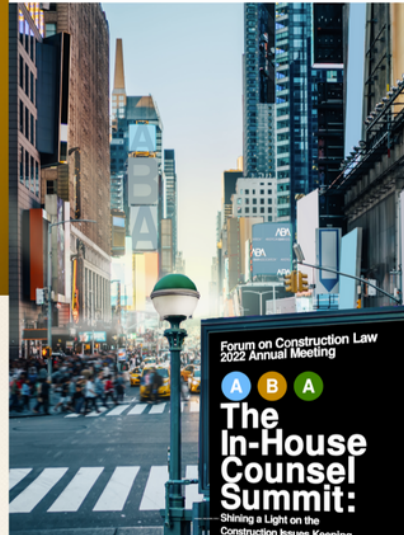
Spire is taking donations to decrease the lunch debt of families in the greater Austin area. According to Pflugerville ISD, as of July 2023, there was \$126,000 worth of unpaid lunch charges owed to the district. The average price of school lunch in Texas is almost \$4/day, and many families struggle to keep up with the growing cost.

Please consider donating today! Click here to donate: <https://lnkd.in/gu4iZ8gY>



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