

GET TO KNOW STEPHEN KALACH

We caught up with Stephen Kalach, senior plumbing/fire protection engineer serving our New England division, to find out more about his life, his experiences, and what he loves about engineering!

What inspired you to become an engineer?

In high school I took a chance on joining our FIRST robotics team (Go Team 237!). I am forever grateful for that time, getting to have an amazing group of mentors while designing, solving, building, and competing as a team. I've been chasing that experience ever since.

What excites you about the work you're doing?

The most exciting part of a job for me is the initial design. Taking in the hopes and dreams of your client and figuring out how you make it a reality. Finding the pressure points and advising on how to navigate through. Similarly, it's exciting to get into the weeds of a construction issue to understand how and why the equipment and piping are acting as they are. The excitement of diagnosing a complex set of interconnected elements correctly and helping the team work through it can't be beat.

What is your favorite part about working at AKF?

The team for sure. It makes being a responsible engineer easier when the team is focused on doing the right thing in lieu of the quick thing.

What did you want to be when you were a child?

If I had to choose a profession it would have been an astronaut, but I promise as a child I was much more interested in being a child.

What is your favorite industry to design for? Why?

Science and Technology for sure. The systems involved are more complex and interesting than your standard flush valve. You also get to tour some of the most state-of-the-art buildings out there, see the infrastructure to keep them running, and witness firsthand what our work can help facilitate.

What is the biggest (or most important) change you've seen in the engineering field since you started?

The drive for sustainability and mitigating the consequences of the built world. Whether it ever was I am not sure, but plumbing design definitely is no longer as simple as getting water from a to b. We have to find where we can save water/energy, what codes/guidelines/laws are driving the design, and select appropriate equipment and materials to meet these new requirements.

If you won the lottery, what would be the first thing you'd buy and why?

A one-way plane ticket to Europe and no plan. I don't believe I've experienced that level of pure freedom in my life and I'm sure it would do wonders for the ole soul.

CONNECT WITH STEPHEN

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