

Kid's Book Inspires Aviation and Engineering Careers

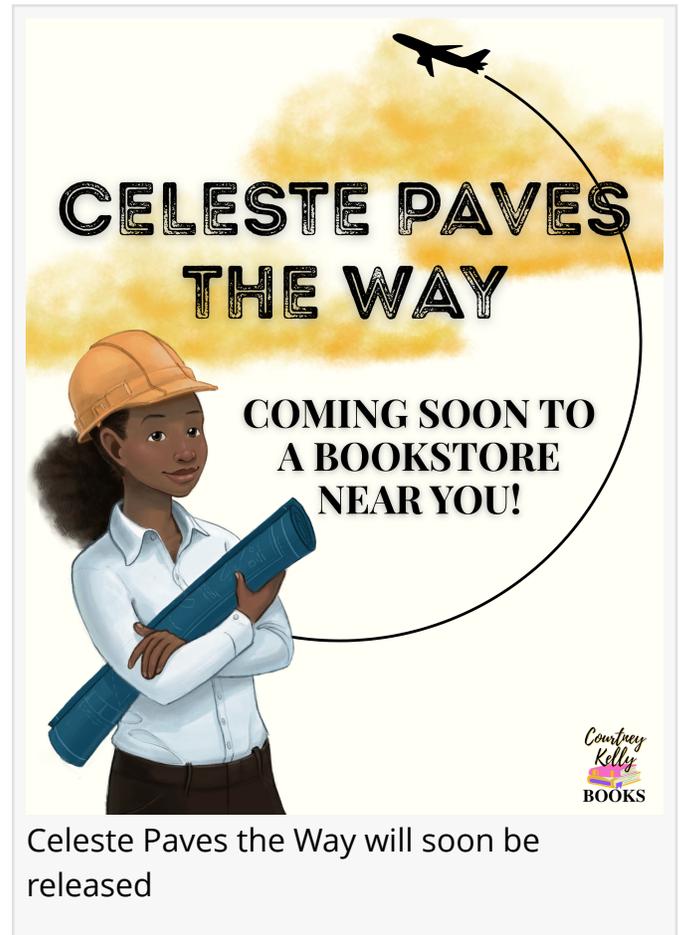
Celeste Paves the Way, the third children's book by self-published author and civil engineer Courtney Kelly, MBA, PE will be available in July 2026

DALLAS, TX, UNITED STATES, February 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Through the pages of [Celeste Paves the Way](#), an appreciation for aviation and the people who make airports work is interwoven into a behind-the-scenes look into the world of civil engineering. Based on the real-life experience of author and civil engineer Courtney Kelly, this insightful story showcases careers in STEM while educating readers on key aspects of construction management in the aviation industry.

The third book in the Celeste collection continues to inspire the next generation by bringing audiences along the journey of a young female civil engineer who travels the world and observes the unique features of the airports that she visits. Intrigued by the pavement design in Atlanta,

Georgia, Celeste joins a project team that is developing a new runway to accommodate larger planes. Before construction can begin, considerations for pavement design are examined and tested for strength at a materials testing lab. On a quest to find out more, Celeste speaks with a female mechanic, whose toolbox is adorned with images of aviation pioneers, about conditions like FOD (foreign object debris) that can cause issues for engines. When the construction phase of the project begins, it starts with a safety meeting followed by major activities like placing rebar, setting concrete and adding texture to the surface. This is followed by a celebration of all the people who made the project possible, with a special emphasis on

trades workers. With each page of *Celeste Paves the Way*, readers are provided with different



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perspectives of what aerospace, aviation, engineer, and construction management professionals look like, allowing them to see themselves represented.

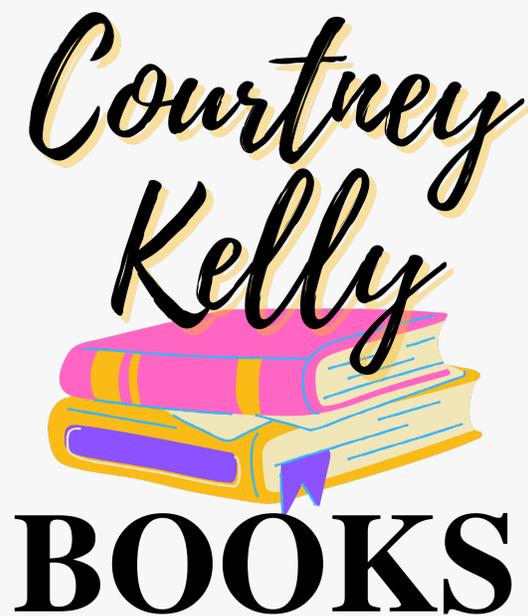
Author Courtney Kelly says, “Completing projects at airports has been a great source of joy and pride throughout my career as a civil engineer. I’m hoping that *Celeste Paves the Way* opens people’s eyes to the great opportunities that are available within the aviation industry for future builders and engineers while fostering an appreciation for the hardworking professionals who operate airports all over the globe. Early reviewers have said that it’s even better than my first two books, which is really encouraging.”

Celeste Paves the Way will build upon the momentum of *Celeste Saves the City* and *Celeste Tunnels Underground*, the first two books of the collection, that have sold over 6,000 copies in more than 15 countries since 2022. It’s timely release in July of 2026 comes as the world is seeing a steady increase in aviation travel, leading to a high demand for people to design, construct, and run the expanded capacity to accommodate it. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers’ [2025 Report Card for American Infrastructure](#), our aviation

infrastructure received a grade of D+ while passenger traffic is projected to grow 58% to 1.28 billion annual passengers by 2040. [CAE’s 2025 Aviation Talent Forecast](#) predicts that nearly 1.5 million new civil aviation professionals will be needed worldwide by 2034. This coincides with multibillion dollar expansions currently underway in places like Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Ethiopia’s Bishoftu International Airport, and Singapore’s Changi Airport. By reading *Celeste Paves the Way*, youth will be



Author Courtney with her self-published books, *Celeste Saves the City* and *Celeste Tunnels Underground*



Courtney Kelly Books Logo

introduced to the types of jobs that are possible in the aviation and civil engineering industries today, expanding the talent pipeline for the essential roles of tomorrow.

Celeste Paves the Way is slated for release in eBook, hardcover, and paperback formats on July 2, 2026, and will be available in the languages of English, French, German, and Spanish. To find out more or preorder an autographed copy, visit www.courtneykellybooks.com.

About Courtney Kelly Books

Courtney Kelly Books is on a mission to empower and inspire people of all ages through our books and STEM-themed merchandise based on Celeste, a young civil engineer who encourages girls and kids of color to see themselves in underrepresented fields. During author visits to schools and organizations we effectively weave storytelling sessions with educational workshops to create an experience that leaves students motivated to dream big. We support aspiring authors with consultations, seminars, and workshops providing game changing resources that lead to success. Driven by her accomplished career as an engineer and entrepreneur, Courtney's dynamic speaking engagements deliver insight and impact to audiences of all sizes.

About Author Courtney Kelly, MBA, PE

Born and raised in New Orleans, award-winning civil engineer Courtney Kelly has made a name for herself as a well-respected construction management professional and accomplished children's book author. Courtney currently resides in Dallas, Texas where she serves as a Project Director for H.J. Russell & Company. Courtney holds bachelor of science degrees in civil engineering and math, as well as a master's degree in civil engineering from Southern Methodist University (SMU). She also holds an MBA from Lamar University and is a licensed professional engineer in the state of Texas. In 2023 she was selected as an Engineering News-Record Texas & Louisiana Top Young Professional. Her self-published children's books, Celeste Saves the City and Celeste Tunnels Underground, have been translated into three languages and sold in over 15 countries. In addition to sitting on several advisory boards, she is also an adjunct professor at SMU teaching civil and environmental engineering courses.

Courtney Kelly

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