

Kristen Jacoby – The Mile High Analyst

Mindy: [00:00:00] Welcome to analysts Talk with Jason Elder. It's like coffee with an analyst, or it could be whiskey with an analyst reading a spreadsheet, linking crime events, identifying a series, and getting the latest scoop on association news and training. So please don't beat that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession one episode ahead.

Time.

Jason: Thank you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason Elder and today our guest has 16 years of law enforcement analysis experience all with Denver Police Department in Colorado. She's was the chair of some great I A C A conferences and she's here to talk about process improvement.

Please welcome Kristen Jacoby. Chris, how we doing?

Hey Jason, how are ya?

Very good. I am excited to talk to you. It was great catching up on the prep call. We met because of the I A C conferences years ago, we always talk about how those can feel like [00:01:00] family reunions after a while.

If you go to enough of 'em, . Yeah. And you were a staple there. Then all of a sudden I didn't see you. And so it's like what happened to Chris? Now, it's been like seven, eight years I think since I seen you so.

Kris: I think you can blame my small children.

Jason: Yeah. That ha directly. Yeah. That happens. But that makes me grateful that we are friends on Facebook because I have seen your children , the pictures of you and your wife and all that. It's, it's been great. Yeah. Seeing seeing them grow up

so, but it's certainly understandable why you haven't made it to the I A C A conferences , so, oh, great. Great. Yes, yes, yes. All right. So how did you discover the law enforcement analysis

Kris: profession? Yeah, so I actually was fortunate enough to take a class in my undergraduate studies for criminology that was called Crime Mapping and Analysis.

[00:02:00] And I took it because I was kind of at the point in my in my studies that I was like, okay, I gotta find something. , you know, tangible to do with this degree when I graduate. Like I need a job. You know, theory is great and interesting, but but I want to work in the field and not in a patrol officer capacity.

So I took this class and my professor is a guy you might have heard of, Noah Fritz. Yes. , he was the adjunct professor where I went to school at the University of Denver. So he was teaching this course and come to find out, it's, it's somewhat similar to the CMAP course that used to be offered just in a, a longer, more academic setting.

So that's how I was kind of introduced to crime analysis and crime analysis as. Potential profession. And that's how I got hooked up with Noah. Nice.

Jason: Well, that, that paid off certainly . I think so. . [00:03:00]

Kris: All

Jason: right. This is at the National Law Enforcement Corrections and Technology Center

Kris: is Right?

Right. So the class was actually through du but after the class, and I think after a, a study abroad session with a lot of fun, I came back and I was like, okay, time to buckle down. Mm-hmm. . So I reached out to Noah and ended up kind of doing a, like an independent study slash internship sort of thing with him through , the National Law Enforcement Corrections and Technology Center.

So I was kind of his. We called me Crime Analysis Assistant. Mm-hmm. and I helped him with whatever projects he was working on through the center. And also got my foot in the door at Denver PD as an intern. Good. I was doing some. Crime mapping for them. It's interesting if this was at a time when the, the department, Denver was just sort of newly exploring crime analysis [00:04:00] and they had actually taken sworn community resource officers and for lack of a better word, made them do crime analysis, mm-hmm.

they called them. Mm-hmm. , they called them community resource officers slash crime analysts. So they had. Training and we're just kind of, you know, like, here do do this new thing. I think some of them went through the Cmap program, but certainly it was at that time when, you know, sworn we're not necessarily interested in, in kind of doing this work.

So, needless to say, they were happy to have a college student come in and do some free crime mapping for them. And I think I was probably, I don't know, 2005 ish if I'm gonna date myself, but yeah, yeah, definitely using Esri products, maybe 3.1 or 3.2 making, making some kernel density maps. Super old school.

Yeah,

Jason: I just thought, I just thought it would, it would be great just to have someone that [00:05:00] use. Esri products now to just put them in front of a computer that has 3.1. 3.2 . Yeah. Wouldn't that be great?

Kris: Oh, I would love that. Like a, like even like a college student now and be like, here you go.

This is what we have. Yeah, yeah,

Jason: yeah. Go ahead. Go ahead Geo. See how we get like that. Yeah. Hope we got some

Kris: time. . You're gonna love matching addresses. It's the best.

Jason: Oh man. So, yeah. But there, there, I've had several on the show now that we have talked about the. , arc Map 3.1, 3.2. And I, I always say this, that that program I swore at that program more than any other program during my career as a law enforcement analyst.

Oh, for sure, for

Kris: sure. I, oh man. I remember coming across old files, you know, as I was kind of cleaning things out and I'll just say some of the file names were profanity, not probably appropriate for this podcast, but , I could very easily see my level of frustration by my file name, choice [00:06:00] on the whatever, and time I've run something.

So I feel that.

Jason: Yeah. So then you got the internship at, at Denver PD and this leads to a position, an associate crime analyst position.

Kris: Exactly. So I. Was fortunate enough to just step right out of undergraduate and right into D P D. I think I started 10 days after I graduated maybe.

Nice. And I, the job lined up before and I think it's pure happenstance. It, it was at a time when the department had made the decision to civilianized crime analysis. So they relieved some happy police officers from that duty . And and were hiring six patrol district analysts. So I think that that's really, you know, I attribute a lot of my starting my career to obviously, [00:07:00] Networking and by happenstance, you know, taking the right class with the right people, getting my foot in the door, Noah helped a lot.

And then, you know, working with D P D that I had enough name recognition and, and FaceTime in there as an intern to kind of have them take a chance on me as an analyst with fairly limited experience. And I, I'm not sure that I would've gotten that position right away had they not been trying to hire six of us at the same time.

So yeah, some, you know, some networking and some pure luck, I have to admit. Yeah,

Jason: and I, I, I understand it, it in a way I, I kind of equate it to, you know, when you buy a. In a neighborhood before it, it gets expensive and then yeah, then you get into it where it's expensive and now it's like, well if I, if I was to try to buy a house in this neighborhood now I don't know if I could do it type thing.

And so when you did, if there was actually a lot of competition to some of those things, you wonder, it's like, oh, [00:08:00] when I have gotten in there, if I didn't have that internship and got the foot in the door and this was an open competition, would I have gotten that position right?

Kris: Yeah, a hundred percent. I, I mean, I think of that often when, you know, I've been sitting on several hiring panels as we've grown our unit and our, our hiring new analysts.

And, and I look at the, the qualifications to. Get an interview, let alone the job. And I I certainly did not have quite that much when I started, so yeah, I guess I bought at the right time. .

Jason: Yeah, that's a good way to summarize it. And because it, I, I also too feel that it's just fantastic that you had a job 10 days after under.

You know, you graduated college.

Kris: Yeah, I I felt pretty lucky about that too. I mean, lucky on one hand, mostly lucky, but also like, oh, I guess I gotta do this grown up life now, like right away, . [00:09:00]

Jason: Yeah, yeah, yeah. . So, you know, so then when you first start, you're walking in the door , as an analyst for the first time and they've hiring six of you.

, what's it like? What are they trying to establish , in the beginning of these positions? So

Kris: I think that's, that's interesting because it was being built from the ground up with kind of the cmat, you know, with their sort of instruction and, and guidance. . And so we were fortunate to have some training through that department and lucky that the National Law Enforcement Corrections and Technology Center was local and right there.

So we had, we had some resources, but I think, you know, certainly it's, it's always hard when it's kind of a new thing that, that no one's ever done before. So I think it was kind of like the blind leading the blind to some extent. But it was getting buy-in, you know, that was mm-hmm. the hardest part to do.

Because it's a, it was a new thing that a lot of [00:10:00] detectives and patrol officers. Had never utilized before. They hadn't had that resource and they didn't really know what it was. So almost kind of felt like a marketing campaign to some degree. I think, you know, it was, that was a little bit of a tricky thing for me to step into as not only my first, you know, full-time adult grownup job, but also that it's, this is a new position and a new a new resource in the department.

So it was a lot all at once. And and to boot, we had paper reports, handwritten paper, police reports at the time, , we had not, not yet. invested in a records management system that came a couple years later. But yeah, you know, we had, we had some, like, some rudimentary capabilities, but it was like, you know, relying on patrol officers to hope, hope they remembered to make a photocopy of the police report they were turning in and like put it in the crime [00:11:00] analyst box, you know, and that's how I, I read reports at the beginning.

And yeah, so it was , a lot of new stuff all at once. , I can think of one story that kind of sums up, how it started off for me. So there was a detective and he was, I don't know, within, within a year of retirement. So he was plenty, plenty crusty. I'll just say that

And he you know, and here I walk in like. , a, a, a civilian, and b a young person. And like he takes one look at me and says, I got shoes older than you . And right then and there I was like, okay, so I'm gonna have, you know, all my work cut out for me. Like, I gotta got some stuff to prove here. And that's, I think what I spent a lot of time doing is just figuring out how I could be a good resource to the patrol and the detectives in my district.

Jason: It's just listening to, to someone talk about, there's [00:12:00] situations where folks move up the corporate ladder and are very successful at each step along the way, but then they get up and eventually become c e O. and they're horrible at being and c e o, and they were perfectly fine and successful being in that realm where they understand exactly what's expected of them.

They know the goals, the goals are set for them, and they're just doing right. Mm-hmm. , they're not mm-hmm. thinking, planning, leading, they are just doing. They're, they're there to do. And in a way it got me thinking about situations where you have these analysts brand new just like you were in, in your position.

And it, it is really daunting that they're just like, it's brand new to the department, brand new to you. You're not really boxed in in any way. You can go literally in any direction that you want and.[00:13:00] . I struggled with that concept a little bit. I'm like, I need you to kind of box me in like, what are my goals?

Like what do you want to see? What's success look like for us? But I How did you, how did you feel th thinking back,

Kris: right? I, I totally agree. I mean, I think, given my experience now how, if I were put in a situation where it's like, here you go blank. You know, it's blank slate. You can build this what you want.

I would love that, you know, but at the time being that it, that I was so brand spanking new in my career, it was. definitely daunting. And I, I certainly could have used, you know, some, some boundaries, some guidance kind of, some some direction. And I think, you know, eventually we got there and, and it was

just a little bit of Baptism by fire, but it was also it was also kind of nice to be able to shape that mm-hmm.

even if I didn't quite feel prepared in my career to do so. Yeah.

Jason: Hmm. Now did you eventually get the buy-in from the curmudgeon ?
[00:14:00]

Kris: You know, I think I think a little bit. I think, I think after a while he was like, okay, you're not so bad. And, you know. Yeah. And, and yeah, like I said, he, he was gone not, not long after, within a year I would say.

So, yeah. I

Jason: just, and that reminds me, that, remind me, I started at my first a l s gig was at Baltimore Police Department. I was Washington Baltimore Haida employee stationed. Baltimore Police Department and I, you know, guys, there again, it's kind of the same thing. I was 23 and, and those, a lot of those guys were, I think they were civilian.

Most of 'em were civilian, but they had retired as Baltimore police officers. Right. So, again, I, they had shoes older than me. Just let you describe I'm trying to remember how the nickname. Came about, but they called me Snots . I was like, , I think it was based on the dog from a, a national Lampoons Christmas [00:15:00] movie.

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I can't remember, but I can't remember how that name stuck with me or whatever it was. But I eventually did win them over, but they did have that nickname of Snots

Kris: for me. But yeah. And that's funny because that's when you know that you've kind of like made it, that you're a part of the team is when you, you know, get nicknames and like get, get teased and get, you know, joked around with it's, I think that's somehow comforting to know that that's the same everywhere that.

Like, oh yeah. Okay. The guess, I'm guess I'm part of the team now.

Jason: It could be good or bad, but in this case it definitely was good. So, yeah. All right. So let's talk about your analyst badge story. Now for those that may be new to the show, the analyst badge story is the career defining case or project that an analyst works on.

And so for you it's, it's 2008, you know, it's just around the time you, you hadn't been an analyst for very long that you get linked to a pretty big

Kris: case. Yeah, and and just kind of along [00:16:00] the lines of what we've been talking about is I, I chose this as my badge story mainly because it, it really got me a lot of buy-in me personally as an analyst, but also just I think the, the department, at this point was recognizing what, what we can do and how we can be helpful.

So. real quick. The story was that I identified a team of individuals. They were led by two brothers and they were taking vehicles, putting them up on blocks, and then they would take the high-end rims and, and sell them. But it was, you know, like in 2008 we're talking like \$15,000 rims. Wow. Yeah.

So that's kind of blew my mind then. And still even, I guess, . . . But basically the crew was, was using stolen trucks, so they would steal trucks and then go and jump the rims to hit several, several cars a night and dump the rims and just leave them on blocks. And what [00:17:00] I started doing was tracking the stolen trucks, but more importantly, the recovery of the stolen trucks.

And it just so happened that they were. kind enough to me to just dump them within blocks of their house, . So yeah, . So again, again, a little bit of luck. That's, we gotta take what you can get. Yeah, yeah. So we, we pretty quickly had a very small area to focus on where they, they likely were, their headquarters was.

So once we kind of narrowed that down, I worked with one of the detectives to, to identify, you know, who in that area and set up some surveillance and, and eventually the case went to grand jury. And so I testified in grand jury. But it was, it was a pretty long drawn out investigation. and I think I also got a little street cred because I went on some of the operations mm-hmm.

Which was super cool. And I was glad [00:18:00] that, that my command was supportive of that. I mean, not only obviously is it fun, let's be honest, but I think mm-hmm. , it is actual actually beneficial to the analyst to kind of see operationally how things happen and how the information that, that you provide might be useful and how you could make better recommendations or provide different types of information.

. So I think it serves two purposes. And, and in this case, you know, like I said, I, I suddenly was looked at maybe a little bit cooler, like, oh, you, oh, you're out in the middle of the night with us. Okay. , you're all right. You're all right. .

Yeah. So I think I think that was my, my first big case. And, you know, I think that's kind of important for every analyst to, to have that under their belt as a confidence booster, as you know, just as proving yourself that you can, you can be of value and here's how you do it.

Nice.

Jason: I'm curious about the victims of, of these. Stealing the rims, because to me, [00:19:00] if you got \$10,000 rims on your vehicle, then I would think that you would have on a car alarm or at least did an in somewhere that it couldn't, you know, be just left on blocks. You

Kris: would think you would, that should be a safe assumption.

But oftentimes, you know, the cars, you could tell that the, the rims were worth more than the car. Mm-hmm. . . So . So I think sometimes that was the issue. Other times I think it just was, you know, just so quick that it happened. Yeah, I think a couple times with the, like really a nicer high-end, , cars and rooms, they would sometimes even steal it and, and drive it to somewhere a little bit more remote and.

Do their thing, but, but you know, I mean, again, it was 2008, so I think alarms and technology is probably not as good. Yeah.

Jason: Hmm. Yeah. Awesome. Most of 'em makes me wonder, you know, I'm wondering how fast that they could do it. Right. Because [00:20:00] if you ever watched a car race, you see the pit crew how fast they can change tires out and, you know, it's makes me wonder, I was like, I, you know, it wouldn't ah, I mean if no alarm, it's probably you got the right equipment there.

It probably wouldn't take but a couple of minutes to get all four tires off the car. Especially if you're just leaving 'em on blocks. Right,

Kris: exactly. And they would have at least three, sometimes four people working at a time. So I think that they probably could do it pretty quick and got pretty good at it.

Because you're right, you, you don't actually care about the car, so you were just. If they were to do it quick, if you scratch it, if you whatever, who cares? It's, you know, not your concern. So they, I imagine they were able to do it pretty quick.

Jason: So how did you find out that they were first stealing trucks to then use to steal the rims?

Kris: Well we assumed that, that they were using trucks just based on the [00:21:00] size of vehicle they would need to, to load the rims and based on how many they were doing. And I noticed an, an increase in uptick in truck theft kind of around the same time. So it was a lot of assumption at the beginning. . And then, you know, once we kind of saw the, the truck recovery, we were like, okay, yeah, that's, that's what they're doing.

I think another, in one of the cases there was a witness who, you know, didn't see the whole thing but saw, like a truck fleeing down the street and then noticed the vehicle on blocks. So I think that we knew they were using trucks and that there were also a lot stolen at that time.

Jason: Yeah. Hmm. All right.

And, and you mentioned that you testified to the grand jury and it's interesting hyper. I've never been part of a, a grand jury. And so I guess, is it, did you find it to be different? I mean, obviously you've gone on to do other types of court stuff, but I mean, [00:22:00] is it, is the grand, was the grand jury different in your

Kris: mind?

I don't wanna say easy because it's, you know, it's important and official , but it's, it's not very stressful because you don't have defense there, you know? Mm-hmm. , it's pretty much just the prosecutor asking you to take the grand jury through the evidence that you have.

And I you know, I spoke a lot about the mapping that I did and how that works and what is crime mapping and, and things like that. And I actually looked up and there was a grandeur sleeping during my presentation , so I, I managed to lull at least one to sleep . So, yeah, I mean, it was a really cool process to be a part of because, you know, it's, it was at the time like very hush hush, top secret.

You have to be sworn in. You can only talk about the case with other others who are sworn in. And so that, that part of it was just neat to, to kind of be a part, you know, part of that mm-hmm. . But but yeah, as far as the actual testifying it is pretty low stress.

[00:23:00] Yeah.

Jason: Hmm. Now did they eventually found guilty?

Plead guilty?

Kris: How did it end up? Yes, they were. Yeah, they were. They did, they did plead guilty. . Yes. Grand jury. Came back and found them responsible and then they out.

Stacey: Hi, this is Stacey Belledin as an aspiring Crime analyst, I tried to find any training available to learn, learn from classes, workshops, conferences, networking. You named it. If I could give one piece of advice, it is to invest in your future. I see many analysts sit out of training not to go to important conferences because their agency won't pay for it.

And that happened to me too. But there's nothing that says you can't figure out how to get there on your own. Submit a presentation on your work and you may find that some conferences will waive your registration buddy up in a hotel room to cut costs. Find local opportunities on online training where you don't have travel costs.

Just like you budget for a vacation or a child's education, you should do the same [00:24:00] for your continuing education. It's worth.

Sam: So this is Sam and I wanna let you know that it's okay to talk to strangers, obviously not if you are four or if you're walking alone at night or in the woods, but in general, if you're just out in your day-to-day life or you're traveling or whatever, talk to somebody, talk to strangers.

It makes you a more interesting person because it gives you more perspective on life. Everyone is walking around with an interesting story. So many people will defy your expectations when you see someone and you make certain assumptions about them, whether they're conscious or unconscious. I love the moment when you realize you were wrong.

It's a great feeling and I think it makes your life richer in general. You know, if you're too shy, then maybe just read Humans of New York. That might help you to, to understand other people's experiences. But I'm just here to say don't not talk to strangers.[00:25:00]

Jason: So you're an associate, we're gonna kinda speed up through some of this Yes. Now and then. And so you stay an associate crime analyst until 2016. For

the police department, you become a statistical researcher. Is that something that was a promotion?

Was it something that you applied for? How did that come about?

Kris: Yeah, so I spent that, time, between the beginning and the, the move to the statistical researcher in two different patrol districts. So kind of the same, you know, just patrol district, crime analyst. But I kind of moved around the city to switch it up a little bit.

And then just kind of got to a point in my career where I needed something fresh, mm-hmm. and some change. And I think that that's the fact that Denver's been able to grow. our analytical unit and capabilities so much. We're up to 19 positions right now, I believe. 18 or [00:26:00] 18. Nice. Yeah. It's, it's really great because it's provided more opportunity to kind of move around and do different things and I just was ready for a change.

So , this position became open and I applied for it. And it is, it was out of headquarters and it is a position that. Does a lot more , administrative analysis and kind of looks at more long-term projects. And it's on the same, floor in headquarters as the chief's office.

So there's a lot of you know, brass just walking over and asking questions. , this unit, this smaller unit we call it four 12. That's just happens to be the number of the office that we're in. Hmm. But that's how we, you know, tell the difference between , the four 12, the four 12 nerds as they're affectionately called.

, and the other crime analysis people who are the other analysts who are working in districts or other specialized units. But this four 12 group is, you know, like I said, [00:27:00] headquarters and kind of serves a purpose to do more administrative analysis for the chiefs. The. The unit also handles public information requests and open records requests.

So it's just, it's, it's quite different actually . From a district crime analyst, the work they're doing. But I think what I benefited from the most was a, a better understanding of our data and how our data works and how it can be used, how complicated it is, how messy it is. I think at the time, you know, and the crime analyst and, and to some degree still in our department you almost have like kind of tunnel vision on what you're doing.

And it's like you've got a data set and it works and you use it, but you don't really know how much data exists out there until you're looking at all kinds of

different questions. And so that was kind of eye-opening for me for sure to look at the, all the, you know, projects and [00:28:00] questions we get was really interesting.

Yeah,

Jason: I think you, you hit the nail on the head. The point that I was gonna make is, you have various data, but, what question are you trying to answer? And that's certainly different for somebody that may be an investigator or a patrol officer versus someone that's on the executive staff or the police chief answer in various questions.

So those are obviously not only just two different levels, but you're asking different things of the same data.

Kris: Right, right. And and even using different, different data that I'd never used before, cuz I hadn't, I didn't have the, the occasion to use it. You know, for, for example, one of the first things I did when I switched to that unit is I, I worked on a couple of internal affairs investigation cases and I was plotting GPS data from.

Cars, AVL data. Mm-hmm. . And and, you know, I'm not like, oh wow. Like it didn't even occur to me that this existed if I stopped [00:29:00] to think about it. Sure it would, it makes sense that I knew it was there. Mm-hmm. , but I just never really considered how that would be used or why or what, in what context. So it was pretty eyeopening, I would say, for sure.

Jason: Yeah. Well, the union certainly doesn't like that .

Kris: No, no, definitely not. . .

Jason: So so, and you might have mentioned this, but I maybe I didn't hear it, was this also a new position, a new unit and you were one of the first to, to have it? No,

Kris: this was fairly established. Okay. By the time I got there and, and others had been in the position before me.

Okay. But I was trying to think, I don't wanna state wrong, but I believe I was the only person to go. internally from a crime analyst to this job. Okay. We had other people in, in that position who had been, I think we had one person who had been a crime analyst before in a different jurisdiction.

Mm-hmm. . But, and then, you know, she went back to crime analysis within our [00:30:00] department, but it was kind of the first time that someone had been doing crime analysis work in our department and gone to that four 12 work group. That was really interesting to see because there'd always been like a little bit of a disconnect between the two working groups mainly just because they were doing kind of different, different work, you know?

Mm-hmm. . So my, I kind of. Made it my prerogative to really try and bridge that gap and say, yeah, , there's a lot of data and a lot of cool stuff we could do that, that you just don't know about as a district prime analyst because you don't have the time or you don't have like the need to use it.

But you probably could find some really cool things if you knew this existed or knew how these tables connected or. You know, the list goes on and on. So I kind of, you know, eventually kind of made the, made it my goal to, to try and bridge that gap between the two. And, and I think it's it's gotten better for sure.

Hmm. Yeah,

Jason: and it's [00:31:00] I've always encouraged analysts to try to identify new data sets whenever they can within their department, in the city, wherever they can mm-hmm. , because you just never know when you, you might need that data set. Right. I agree. Yeah. . So you were there five years as iCal researcher?

Yes. Is there a, a case or project that sticks out or an accomplishment that you had while in those five years? You

Kris: know, I don't know that I could point to one specific project. , I will say that I was involved in the budget process mm-hmm. for probably three of those years, and I can safely say that I wish to never be a part of that again.

that is, that is not my calling. I did not not enjoy that at all. Yeah. But I think, I think my biggest takeaway really is that overarching just understanding our data in a different way.

Jason: No, it's, you're funny you mentioned budget. I just remembered that Cincinnati Police [00:32:00] Department, you know, I, I think I was part of a couple of meetings that talked about the budget and then I, it was during a time where , the city wanted the police department to cut their budget and then you, that the staff is 90% of the budget, so.

Right. It's, it's, when you're talking about cuts, it's really hard to cut the budget without cutting staff. Yeah,

Kris: yeah, yeah. Those can be some some tricky conversations and they're, you know, very political and I. Sure. As, as the analyst kind of trying to put some, some metrics together for that, you rarely always understand all the political implications.

Mm-hmm. or happenings around it. You know, you have an idea, but you might not know what conversations have been had with council or the mayor or, or, you know, it's just you, you find yourself kind of embedded in these high level, high stakes discussions. And it's just, it's a different, [00:33:00] it's different than what we usually do, right?

Mm-hmm. .

Jason: Yeah. Hmm. And just curious, why did they call the position statistical researcher and not an analyst title?

Kris: So, That is a great question, . And actually I think, you know, we are in the process of moving those title names under a, a different just data analyst category. For that reason. It just makes more sense, mm-hmm.

but others in the position or I think initially the position when they were created, I think the idea was that it would be a little more statistics heavy kind of building out some models and, and doing a little more stats work. Like I said, I was the first one that went from Crime Analyst to that position, so I think I was, I'm probably not a typical statistical researcher in the department.

I think you're looking at someone with more experience with r or programming even, and, and some of those other more technical skill sets that I don't have just as [00:34:00] a, a traditional prime crime analyst. But interestingly, you know, we've. We've had a couple of people who fit the, the title, the job title of statistical researcher really well, and the, and some of the job descriptions, but, but they actually.

Come in and, and don't end up staying that long because that's when you get, get down to it. You know, that's a very small part of what that job's doing. So I think, you know, the, the plan as of now is to kind of reclass those and rename them as under a data analyst category, just to kind of line it up with the work that's actually being

Jason: done.

Yeah. Hmm. All right. Well this as I mentioned in end of the December, 2021, you become a senior data analyst, and it's here where you're in more of a mentoring role and you get into more of the process

Kris: improvement. Right, right. Yes. And I am actually still in that four 12 work group hmm.

But in, just in a different position. And this was [00:35:00] a, a newly created position. And I think kind of mostly to kind of build on that, bridging the gap between the four 12, you know, resources and tools and, and kind of figuring out how we can use some of these in districts, in my case specifically. But I also work with special specialized units like, you know, all major crimes and special investigations, all those various analysts that we have so that we can all sort of just be aware of, of what the resources are and mm-hmm.

not only the resources, but frankly like the pitfalls of our data and the issues that might pop up and data integrity and, and those kinds of things. So we just overall are trying to improve our, the way we use our data. Hmm. And, and

Jason: how, how you, you've done that for a little over a year now, and so how is that process going with the, trying to improve the processes given that you have two separate

Kris: groups?

Yeah, I think we're I think it's going, I think we [00:36:00] have some, some room to do. Yeah. We've had like a little bit some staff changes and you know, the returning to work from half, you know, we're still half in the office. All the covid challenges. I don't, yeah. I don't need to like go down that rabbit hole, but yeah.

But you know, so I think it. , this past year has not quite been what will be a typical year in this position. Mm-hmm. . But I think we have a good start. I'm also still doing some of my previous, previous work so there's some overlap there. But I think, you know, I think it's good. We had in the past year we've hired four analysts.

We had over Covid, we had budget freezes, so we were quite understaffed for long period of time. And then, you know, we're able to hire those once the positions opened up. And three of those are, district analysts. Mm-hmm. . So

half of our district analysts are less than have been with the department for less than a year.

So there's been a lot of opportunity for onboarding and training. [00:37:00] And I really like that. I really like being a resource for new analysts to kind, Hey, how does this work? Or like, what's your take on this? Or Can I get your advice about this? I think I like that because I didn't have it, and so I see.

the value for a new analyst to have someone where you can have open dialogue and like no judgment, ask questions, whatever, you know, to build, start building their career. And and same for like our more seasoned analysts, you know, things come up all the time and, and I think what we've been working towards is just creating a work environment where it's you know, safe and comfortable to ask questions and, and our data's so big and so robust and so complicated and, and wrong and messy.

And you know that there is not one single person in our analytical unit who knows everything mm-hmm. and has all the answers. So I think that's really important that we've kind of created this [00:38:00] space where it's okay to be like, hey, , I don't understand how X, Y, Z works about our rest data. And I like, I actually use arrest data for a reason because that one is something that always trips me up even still, you know?

Yeah. So I think that that just kind of acknowledging that and talking about it and it being okay that I've been there for 16 years and I still like. , you know, things change and all the time and we have to kind of learn together. As far as process improvement, I think the main thing that we're working on is trying to free up some time for the district analysts.

What recurring reports are they doing where we could maybe automate a piece of it, you know? Mm-hmm. and and I think that's, that's the main, main goal with, with process improvement is just some time savings, some automation where it makes sense. Just, yeah. review. I, that's a big thing we've been working on is having someone get a second set of eyes on an important thing going [00:39:00] out.

Just overall, just improving how we do things and documentation, which is a big thing that we've kind of lacked.

Jason: Yeah. That's never fun. I don't know. I know, and I don't know anybody that likes to do

Kris: documentation, . No, no. But it's, we had a our long term supervisor of the unit, Chris Wykoff, retired.

in the middle of Covid. And she just did so much. She was, she did so much work. Mm-hmm. . And I realize I, I think a lot of us became this person, but I feel like I got a lot of it where it's like someone would email me like, Chris Woff used to do this for me. Can you give me the like, updated 2020 numbers?

And I spent a lot of my time trying to recreate what she did to figure. How she did it or why she left x, y, z off or, or like, can I even get that number again? Can I duplicate it? And I think that, you know, her leaving and, and us trying to [00:40:00] kind of redo some of the stuff she did or update it is, is what really prompted this that like, okay, we've gotta like, you know, create some data standards and create some process standards and some documentation so that we're not so heavily dependent on one person.

Jason: Hmm. So it's interesting cuz I think when you, we first started talking about process improvement, my head went to standardization and I, I'm not exactly sure that's the avenue that you're taking. I think

Kris: that it is part of it. Mm-hmm. . Um, I think that's a big part of it actually. And we're shortly in not only the police department, , but the overall department of safety.

So we've got, you know, some kind of more citywide safety analysts who are more focused on like social harms and fire and ems. So that entire department of safety, a few of us kind of from each section are pulling to start meeting to create some data standards and [00:41:00] disclaimers and, and kind of just try to be on the same page.

And, and standardization is actually, yeah, a big piece of that, you know, everything down from okay, what, what do I do when I find a burglary pattern? Like, You know, I'd like to get to a place where it's like a step one, you know, case list yeah. A recipe. So that, right, exactly. So that we just kind of have the initial piece to start with and everyone does it the same.

And here's how. And once you know, once that first piece is done, then the creativity can start. And by all means, take it whichever direction, you know? Makes sense. But that's, I think that's, yeah. A huge piece of it. Yeah.

Jason: It's a huge challenge too. Mm-hmm. , because to get people on the same page, especially if you're not part of the same unit and.

That just you literally forcing people to do it one way. Right, right. And it's, it, it amazes me when I talk [00:42:00] to folks in the UK or even in Canada or whatever, and they have like one police department and even at different departments, they are using the same forms. , they have the same process in place.

And I was like, man, we can't, we can't even decide what we wanna do within the same department, let alone trying to get all 17,000 police departments in the United States do things the same way. So it's just so daunting.

Kris: I mean, sometimes even answering a question that you know, it's at face value seems really simple, is hard even to do it the same way in the same department.

I mean, I use this example of traffic fatalities. We had a press conference. Coming up and the chief at the time asked how many traffic fatalities and you know, like in theory that should be fairly easy for any analyst in the department to just quickly pull that data. But I was talking to the traffic analyst [00:43:00] and he was explaining all the nuances, like what counted as a traffic fatality, and it's based on, okay.

This person was in the hospital for two months and eventually passed away, but after, I forget how many days after 60 days, it's no longer considered like the cause of death was traffic. Mm-hmm. and you know, like this person was a fatality because in the traffic unit, because they were hit by a light rail train.

But that doesn't count as a traffic fatality, you know? So it's just, yeah, like so complicated and so hard to get everyone on the same page. And that, and, and like I said, that you would think that would just be an answer that you could just, just have, right? I mean, just mm-hmm. , we would just know how many people died in traffic accidents, , but yeah.

So there's always more to

Jason: it. Yeah. , it's never straightforward. Hmm. As I mentioned in your introduction, you were the, [00:44:00] conference chair for how, how many times were you conference chair for the, for I c a, I

Kris: think twice.

Mm-hmm. . Yeah. I think I think I did it two years

Jason: in a row. And, and then how many times were you on the, the conference

Kris: committee? I think just one, one time on the conference committee? Not, not as the chair. Chair.

Jason: Okay. Right. And then had you gone, how many conference I c a conferences have you

Kris: gone to?

Ooh, I knew you were gonna ask that as soon as we started talking about it, and I didn't count them up, but but I don't know. Here, let me,

Jason: I'll say that. Let me ask you another question that I'd like to ask, like, do you have a favorite conference?

Kris: Oh, man. I think Pasadena was really good. That was a good one.

I think I'd be remiss if I didn't throw my first one in there. My first one was the year I started at D P D and that was New Orleans. And again, like with the luck and the Noah situation, I I kind of got to go last [00:45:00] minute because he was on the board at the time, maybe, I think he was president at the time.

I c a. Yeah. And he, you know, there was a scholarship kind of thing, situation last minute. So me and another Denver analyst who had just started Kevin Wong, the two of us got to go. And it was just really, really cool to see what other departments were doing. Yeah. And I think, you know, that. . I mean, it was only a matter of months, probably three months after I started.

Mm-hmm. . And so I think that, you know, like we spoke about earlier, that space I was in where it's just, it's also new mm-hmm. I think that it was really helpful for me to see like what can be, you know, what, what this can be and what directions we can go in. And it was also very eye-opening to be like what other police departments have data in their computers, not just like in a pile of police reports, on their desk.

That's a thing we can do. [00:46:00] What

Jason: sorcery is this?

Kris: Yeah. Like what's happening? That

Jason: Orleans, oh,

Kris: go ahead. Yeah, no, I was just gonna say like, and, and that's not even touching on all, all the networking that started, which I think is, I could go on for hours about, about that building. Professional contacts and, you know, best friends for life and just, yeah, I could go on and on.

Yeah. Oh,

Jason: and that New Orleans, that's right after Katrina, right? Hurricane Katrina. It was, yeah, it was. Right. So, so that was a time I did not go to that conference, but I've heard a couple people talk about that particular conference. So well, as chair of the, the conference committee, was there something you were particularly proud of that the conference achieved during , your two stints?

Kris: I think you know, I think the biggest the biggest goal for any conference chair is that attendees gain something from it. Mm-hmm. . And I think that both those years, I feel comfortable saying that, you know, that people [00:47:00] came and they learned mm-hmm. . I think that like, that's, that's the case for every conference I've ever been to.

There's. , there's great things to learn there, you know? So I think it's just that, and not blowing the budget and pulling it off, to be honest. The fact that it even happens and it runs smooth, like that's, that's a huge accomplishment. Knowing how many pieces there are to put together and, and how much planning and hard work it really takes for those volunteers to, to pull it off, you know?

So I think that I think that in itself is an accomplishment and everything else is a little bonus. Yeah.

Jason: And I What were the two that you were chair of?

Kris: The Revella Henderson is the first one I did, and then Denver the next year. Oh,

Jason: that Henderson, that was the one right outside of.

Kris: Yes. Right outside of, right outside

Jason: of Vegas. Yeah. I mean, I mean, not Nevada. Yeah. Vegas in Nevada in Henderson, Nevada. Yeah. Yeah. , that was the one that we weren't sure if the lights were gonna stay on the week we were there. Right. It looked like they were about ready to sell the [00:48:00] place

Kris: Exactly. And they were like there were, you know, the restaurants weren't open and cause Right, cuz the place was like, kind of deserted. It was strange, but it was you know, that's kind of the thing that you plan and you plan and you get there and there's gonna be some issue, but you work through it

Jason: and Yeah.

It is, it is funny when I think back about it because I remember like they were stressing, you know, make sure you put Henderson Nevada and not Las Vegas cuz some cities won't want you to go. To a conference in Las Vegas. Exactly. Right. Right. And then we've obviously, but I think most of 'em have gone there now.

I mean, I don't, it seems like such, it almost seems like a silly concept now that most Yeah. There's so many conferences that go in in Las Vegas. It just seems like silly to try to be trying to dodge

Kris: it. Yeah. And, and that was, I think, the reasoning at the time, you know, that I was like, oh, I can't do, can't do Vegas.

And and it was, you know, I became the chair after the [00:49:00] location was selected, obviously. Cause that's done. Yeah, pretty far in advance. Even more so now just kinda work with what you have.

Jason: Yeah. Now, was there something that, you wish you could have changed about the whole conference experience?

Kris: Hmm. That is a good question. I think I think as an attendee, it's always hit everything that I was hoping I would get out of it from a planning perspective.

Sure. You know, I mean mm-hmm. , in a perfect world, we could hire a professional event planner mm-hmm. Because that's what they, they do for a living. So I think it's interesting that, that we've been able to have so many successful conferences with amateur event planners. Mm-hmm. slash crime analysts who are.

Full-time working prime analysts and like doing this, you know as they have free time in their days and their nights and weekends. Yeah, it does kind of make me wonder what kind of event we could pull off if, if there was, you know, room in the I A C A for a paid professional [00:50:00] event planner. Yeah,

Jason: that would be interesting.

Yeah. Yeah, especially something like Vegas too, where it's, you know, there's just so many opportunities to get some really good deals on a variety of products and events and

Kris: services. Yeah, totally. And full confession, I had one of my good friends is an event planner in Denver, and I called her in a panic one day because I was like, they, this is what they're telling me.

the audio visual is gonna cost . And she's like, Nope, they're ripping you off here. That's bs. Like, like I'm gonna call them or you know, I forget if she called them or gave me the talking points. And, and those are the kinds of things where I'm like, well, yeah, like we just don't know that cuz it's not our industry and you know.

Yeah. And we're. We're crime analysts like volunteering to try to put this massive event on and it's hard. Yeah. It's a lot of work. Yeah.

Jason: Yeah. And it, it's it's interesting cuz it, it's just you don't know what to push back on. Right. [00:51:00] Exactly. Some of that stuff, they'll be like, well that's not negotiable.

Well real. Is it really? Or are you just, you know? Right. It's

just

Kris: one of those things like, am I not using the right, like buzzword? Yeah.

Jason: Yeah. Hmm. Yeah. And you also brought up a good point too that I didn't think to add to this conversation, but you talked about networking and friends for life. , there's a group of, of you that, you met at these I A C A conferences and you actually vacationed.

Yeah.

Kris: Yeah. We , like there is a group of us and we're, I mean, I've called, I've called them family at this point, you know, just mm-hmm. beyond best friends. Yeah. Just family that, and we see each other several times a year despite living kind of all across the country. A quick funny story, but I I don't know if Stacy Belledin will love this, that I'm about to tell it, but , she's at

Jason: least cringing right now.

Yeah.

Kris: Yeah. So she came out to visit when I, on maternity leave after I [00:52:00] had my daughter. And so she was really little. And I, we were at a store, you know, and she was in the stroller and Stacy was pushing the stroller and some guy came up to her and asked if that was her granddaughter to which . We both just like cringed and then started laughing and.

later on, you know, we ta like an hour later we were talking about it and , she had just moved to Georgia from Denver. Mm-hmm. and and she said, you know, where I'm from now, they call those Mimas . And so that has become her name. My kids to this day, just call her Mima and know her as Meemaw .

Jason: Oh, you know what?

I saw a reference to that on Facebook, but did not understand the backstory. Yeah. So now I got the backstory. Now, you know. Oh man. So, yeah. So, so just to, to fill in the blanks there, who are some of the other folks that you met at the conference and is in that group ?

Kris: Sam Gwinn.

She's a staple there. [00:53:00] Allison, formally known as Allison Mayer. Allison Sullivan. Mm-hmm. . Mm-hmm. . I got a, I got a throwback for you, Amanda Carr Clarke. She is, she's been out the game for a while. Yeah. . Yeah. Carolyn Cassidy, of course. And Albert Mesa. Yeah, Ericka Jackson. You know, I mean, they're, they followed through

Jason: there.

Well, let's talk about personal interest then as we wrap up this episode. And so you mentioned the young children. And not keeping you busy, but you're also a fan of live.

Kris: I am. Yeah. Yeah. I go see any live music I get a chance for, and I'm kind of spoiled at Red Rocks Amphitheater is like less than 15 minutes from my house.

So that's just kind of my, like, home singer concert venue, you know?

Jason: All right. Do, do you have a favorite that you saw

Kris: there? Oh, maybe. Let's see. I mean, I'm a big Brandy Carlisle fan, and I mm-hmm. , she plays there every summer, so I, I've gotta say that, like, it's just, [00:54:00] yeah. Yeah. Blows your socks off.

Jason: So, yeah.

Is there somebody on your bucket list that you haven't seen yet?

Kris: Ooh, mm. I don't think so. I, I know if I sit around and think about it, it'll come back to me and this will probably be what keeps me up tonight thinking about it. But yeah, they're out there for sure. Yeah. Yeah. Hmm.

Jason: It's interesting. I don't know if I just underestimate the number of people that are live music fans, but it seems like there are an awful lot of analysts.

That I talked to and interview that tell me live music , is their personal interest and really, so I don't know if there's a correlation there or it just, maybe I'm underestimating the number of fans out there of live music.

Kris: Hmm. That's it. That would be interesting to dig into deeper.

Mm-hmm. .

Jason: So. All right. And then also, I just wanted to get your take , I had Jonathan softly on the show , and I guess we're back in December. He lives in works in Texas, and he was talking, he was talking about his husband, and, and I was, wanted to get his take [00:55:00] on, you know, being in Texas, being in law enforcement and obviously being part of the L B Q plus community mm-hmm.

It was nice to hear that , he was supported in his current role. And he, I mean, he did have a, bad story about when him and his husband went to go get their

marriage license. But, but other than that, it was, it was good to hear that the police departments that he had worked for had, had been fully supported of him.

And so I just wanted to ask you kind of the similar types of questions, like what's your experience been for Denver

Kris: pd? Yeah, sure. Well, I'm, first of all, I'm glad to hear that he's had good supportive experiences and, and I can say the same, you know, I mean, obviously things have changed over my 16 plus years there, and I'm you know, far more comfortable to, to talk about my family and have pictures up of my wife and my kids and, and than I was yeah.

When I started. But I think that [00:56:00] like, I, I really feel supported. I, I'll tell a quick story. So obviously the the club Q shooting in Colorado Springs, those recent happened at the end of last year really recent and mm-hmm. You know, like touched, touched a nerve for everyone being so geographically close, but then, , also the LGBT plus community it really hits home.

And so our chief of police within a few days, you know, sent an email, department wide just acknowledging it, like saying out loud that hey, you know, if you. if you're feeling impacted by this. And here's some resources and, and we're all in this together. And, and just some really kind great words.

And another thing he did that I thought was super cool was he authorized officers to wear a pride badge for the rest of the year. And, and then, and he wore it. And the deputy chief, she wore one as well for the rest of the year. They had had the, the normal DER police department badge, but then there's a special pride [00:57:00] edition with the rainbow kind of circling the, the badge.

So it was just like really, really cool to see how support has evolved from, you know, kind of just being like, just okay, or, or tolerating even you know, members of that community to actively like department wide just talking about it and, and visibly supporting, you know, this community. So I think that's, it's been great.

Yeah. And of course, you know, there's, there's always gonna be those Like awkward stories. I have like a funny, awkward story if you have a minute. Yeah, go it. Yeah, please. So there was an officer who worked in my office, but like different unit, but we all knew each other and we all, you know, Talk amongst ourselves.

And he was fairly new up in that unit. And so when I was pregnant with my, with my daughter it was fairly early on and no, no one knew. I think one person at work knew. And so I was like, I don't know. How do you do this? Like, how do you tell people like that? [00:58:00] So , so I. I was like, I'll get some breakfast burritos and just say, Hey guys, like I dunno, here's some breakfast burritos.

I got some good news . So so I do that. I tell everyone, and this officer Brian is his name, he goes, oh great. Congratulations. Were you planning on it? And I just kind of paused for a minute and I was like, I was like, actually you have no idea how much my wife and I had to plan this. Like, yes, very, a lot of planning.

And he just, like, his face kind of turns red and you know, it's like we just start laughing about it. And I was like, also like just. You should never ask anyone that question because what are you gonna do if they say no, ? Yeah. Yeah. Just not, maybe just not a safe question for anyone, but yeah. You know, so, so there's like, I think just always gonna be those little coming out moments, I guess.

But but that was hilarious. Yeah. Yeah. It,

Jason: [00:59:00] it is. It is funny that you mentioned that cuz it is kind of a question like there used to be like, you know, like it was an accident, right? ? Like the first Yeah, yeah. Like the conception was an accident kind of thing. And I guess that, that does seem kind of like an old way of, of thinking.

Like, I remember like they, they had to declare that. Like that's, I remember my, my family sometimes it's like, you know, you almost had to declare it as if it was, it was not, you know? Okay. Or something like that. Unless you knew the exact reason why this conception happened. .

Kris: Yeah. Like, later on I asked him, I was like, what were you gonna do if I said no and started crying?

Yeah.

Jason: Man. So I, I

Kris: teased him about it

Jason: for . For a good while. So then, , in terms of the planning, Portion of that. I mean, there obviously as you're doing there, lots of decisions to , make in

terms of this whole process. But then, you both decide who's gonna get pregnant, [01:00:00] right?

Kris: Mm-hmm. . Yeah. Which somehow managed to be me twice and how, dunno how I felt for that. But here we go. No, I,

Jason: yeah. Well I was just wondering how that, all came about .

Kris: Yeah. I think for me, I was just like, oh, I don't, yeah, I can be pregnant.

I, I don't mind. And my wife Aspen was like, oh, I don't want to do that at all. , she had like pretty strong feelings about it and yeah. Okay. And then, and then she saw me go through it and she was like, well, I would love to have another kid, but. Now I definitely never wanna do that . And so I was like, alright, like here, we're

Jason: Yep. All right. Don't take one for the team on the second one too, so. Yep. Exactly. Yeah. Kind thing. Well, I guess it, well, at least it was one of those situations where, you know, one was a hard no and the one was open to it because if you were both hard now, then it gets a, that's a, that's kind of all, yeah.

It gets a little bit more planning, not that it's a [01:01:00] Sure. More planning road stop. It just takes more planning. Right. So, wow. Exactly. . All right. Well, very good.

, , our last segment to the show is Words to the World. and this is where you can promote any idea that you wish. Chris, what are your words

Kris: to the world? So I think my words to the world are related to our field. And that I would just say get out from behind your desk, from behind your computer and go on Ridealongs.

Go on Warrens, sit with a call taker. Sit with a dispatcher. Connect and network with people in your department. And that, that's just take ev every opportunity you can to learn more about your department and your data and how things work and why things are the way they are, and that it's going to be not only interesting, but really helpful to your job.

Jason: Very good. Why leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later. Oh, yeah, yeah. . But I do appreciate you being on the show, Chris. Thank you so much. And you be

safe.

Kris: Yeah. [01:02:00] Thanks Jason. This was great to catch up. This was a lot of fun.

Mindy: Thank you for making it to the end of another episode of Analysts Talk with Jason Elder.

You can show your support by sharing this in other episodes found on our website@www.lpodcasts.com. If you have a topic you would like us to cover or have a suggestion for our next guest, please send us an email@elliotpodcastgmail.com. Till next time, analysts, keep talking.