

# AshleyHood – Analysts and the Hood

**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 have many aspects of your life for progressing. My name is Jason Elder, and today our guest has almost 10 years of law enforcement analysis experience. She started out as an investigation secretary in Placenta Police Department in California, and is now the analyst supervisor for Anaheim pd.

She's an instructor for Cal State University, long Beach Center for Criminal Justice, representing the state of California. Please welcome Ashley Hood. Ashley, how we doing?

**Ashley:** Hi . It's so weird to have somebody like read your resume basically.

**Jason:** Yeah. And some [00:01:00] of that is not easy to say. So I, think I did Okay.

But . Anyway, it is great to have you on the show. How are things

**Ashley:** in California? Things are good. Actually, it's so funny, it's been like cold here, right? My little snowflake on my car came on this morning , and so I was like, oh my God, it's cold. But then I just, it's supposed to be 80 degrees this weekend, which is insane.

**Jason:** Yeah, that is crazy. For December. See, I am a PA boy from Pennsylvania. So the fact that there are. Warm weather in December still is a little odd to me. Yes it is. . So, yes. But all right, well we got plenty to talk about today. And let's first ask the the question how you discovered the law enforcement analysis profession.

**Ashley:** Okay, so when I was first born, no, I'm just kidding, . No, it was, it's actually kind of interesting because I was an interior design [00:02:00] major in college. That's what I thought I wanted to do, and I was smitten about a boy.

And so my boyfriend at the time wanted to be a corrections officer. And so totally different tracks, right?

And I'm like, okay, I'll take some electives, some criminal justice electives. I have no desire to do this, but, you know, and I took them with him and I actually really liked the classes. And so then I took another one, and then I took another one, and then I'm like, Hey, I think I'm a CJ major now, . And I knew I didn't wanna be a corrections officer, but I wanted to do something in law enforcement.

And so the guy I was with and I broke up. But I stuck with criminal justice and I thought I wanted to do CSI mm-hmm. because all those shows were out. And I thought this was really cool. And so I'm like, Hey, I wanna do CSI. This sounds amazing. And when I graduated, I like applied to every local [00:03:00] agency around me, and Placenta actually hired me as their lease cadet in records.

Oh, okay. So, yeah, so I did that for about six months and then I'm like, oh my gosh, I'm graduating. I have I'm working part-time. I need a full-time job. I lived like two hours away from my parents and they hired me on full-time as the investigation secretary. So I was like, oh, thank God. Nice.

**Jason:** All right.

Yeah. So I, I do want to get into that investigation Secretary gig, but I first want to ask, what did you want to do with interior design when you first picked that

**Ashley:** major? What did I wanna do? I don't even know that I knew what I wanted to do. Okay. I just really liked decorating and so, . I thought that that was, I don't know, that made the most sense for me to get a major in interior design because I enjoyed decorating, I liked looking at different colors, color palettes.

And I [00:04:00] actually, so it was kind of the perfect storm in that I had a really bad professor, and . So I was like I don't know that I wanna do this. And then I really found, I don't even remember the first CJ class that I took, probably like Intro to Criminal Justice or something. Hmm. And I had a really great professor, so I was like, oh, this is really interesting.

And interior design is, For me .

**Jason:** Hmm. Yeah. Well, I can see having an eye for color definitely can help you with some finished products and analysis. I, I am colorblind, so I always

make sure that I not only have people check all my spelling, but check all my color palettes as well.

**Ashley:** Oh my gosh. Yeah. Yeah.

So I still really enjoy decorating and things like that. And several years ago, I don't do this anymore, but I was working as a wedding planner on the side. Okay. Yeah. So I kind [00:05:00] of still did aspects of that. Right. But I didn't actually, you know, I didn't continue that.

It was just like a hobby of mine that I did for a few years.

**Jason:** Well see. You need to be on the conference committee if you're a wedding planner, because I would can imagine that there would be a lots of overlap between conference committee and wedding planner.

**Ashley:** Oh my gosh. I could only imagine. So I've never planned a conference, but yes, weddings are very, very, very interesting.

planning a wedding.

**Jason:** Oh, lots of moving parts and dealing with so many people. No, thank you. .

**Ashley:** Yes. And the vendors and yeah, it's, you have to like be so nice to everybody all the time, but a actually get things done too. And sometimes you're like, oh, come on people. Yeah. Have a conversation with each other.

That's what you end up being, you're like the person to have the conversation with multiple different [00:06:00] vendors, you know, obviously the bride and groom the families. So it's, it's really actually similar to analysis in that you're like, we're having the conversation sometimes we're having like detectives speak to each other that sit right next to each other, you know?

So you're kind of like that conduit, the glue .

**Jason:** , let's get back to you starting your career. So what exactly did you do as a investigation secretary?

**Ashley:** So I did case assignment. . So it was a small agency mm-hmm. , so it's like you get a title as investigation secretary, but you really do like 10 different things.

And I was really able to finish my work, you know, like my, my assigned work by like 10:00 AM . So the rest of it was kinda doing. Things for other people. So I would, I would assign the cases, so I would read the reports that came in. Again, smaller [00:07:00] agencies, so there wasn't that many reports to read.

And then I would assign them out to different types of I think there was like four investigators at the time. So I would assign them and say like, Hey, you get this type of case, and we would call them a, B, or C cases. So A cases were arrests, B cases were that there was leads and C cases were inactive.

There was nothing to do. So it was kind of like closed out. There's no leads, nothing. So I did that and I. , I really brought them more to like the technical phase of things. I, I put everything in Excel, did a lot of data entry. I actually created my own access database to manage all the cases. And as I was doing that, I was like, oh, this is kind of interesting.

I enjoyed doing that kind of stuff. I found it really interesting and I liked streamlining processes and stuff because everything they did was, at the time, like handwritten a lot of paperwork and things like that. And I, that was just not my cup of tea. So I kind of made a lot of [00:08:00] changes. But then I was able to help out in traffic.

So I s I actually was the investigation secretary, but I sat in traffic, so I didn't sit in investigations, , . And so I am like hearing everything that traffic needed. So I was working D u I checkpoints for them. I was talking with the, the traffic. Sergeant in C sso and finding out about like the traffic processes.

And then I sat, the desk was closest to the jail. They had a, just like a, a temporary jail that they would house people in before they would take 'em to county. And so they asked me if I would get trained to do searches on people that they brought in, you know, like female searches. And so, oh, okay.

Yeah. And so at that time I was like, sure, that sounds great. Like I'll just do whatever, because I'm trying to learn what I wanna do in law enforcement. Mm-hmm. . And and that was probably one of the worst decisions ever.[00:09:00]

**Jason:** So. So tell me more . Oh my

**Ashley:** gosh. So, I mean, I, again, during training I went to like a training and I thought it was cool. I thought it was kind of interesting. But when they actually called me for my first. Like to do my first search. Mm-hmm. , I went into the jail and I remember this girl, oh my gosh, she was like a total, so she was hardly wearing anything, but she was on meth or something, some kind of drug, and she was just like a hot mess.

And she was so rude and they had, you know, I had to check everything and I'm like, I do not want to deal with like this end of people . This is not what I wanna do ever again. So luckily it wasn't like anything crazy, but I just remember thinking like, this is not what I wanna do at all. Which was great because again, I had the experience and I realized.

This is not for me, .

**Jason:** Oh, well see, [00:10:00] that's kind of serendipitous as well because had you had somebody that was easygoing you and got a couple more under your belt, you might've continued down that path.

**Ashley:** Yeah, I would've, I maybe, maybe I would've been a jailer or something. Yep, .

**Jason:** All right. , so then you.

Move on from there to Anaheim.

**Ashley:** Yeah, so I actually so I was the secretary for a little bit. And then I did get a job in property and evidence, and I did CSI also, so small agency, multiple jobs. I did that for four years and I was on call 24 7. And so I was the one going out to the scenes. It was just myself and the supervisor.

And I promise you, every single time I wanted to see a movie, I got called in.

Every single [00:11:00] time, like the, it would be like the beginning credits or it would be 10 minutes into the movie. And then I would get called in and I'm like, are you kidding me? ?

**Jason:** Yeah. You're starting to have me believe in time travel. Maybe somebody is rigging your whole life to make sure that you don't do certain things and only do other things

**Ashley:** seriously.

Yeah. So I realized again, this isn't for me, . Mm-hmm. . I can't do this for career. And I actually, I graduated from Cal State Fullerton and they have a certificate program in crime and Intel analysis. And so I decided like, Hey, why not? This sounds awesome because you are behind a desk and you're not doing searches on inmates and arrestees and I went back to school and I got my certificate and everything I was learning, I was bringing back to the department.

So again, because the department was small, they were really open to anything. And so as I was learning different types of analysis [00:12:00] techniques, I would do that. And I think since I already had a great relationship with all the detectives, a lot of the work that I was doing, I would I was learning cellphone analysis, like I think it was called telephone toll analysis at the time.

Mm-hmm. . So I was like, Hey, instead of you printing out all of these numbers and highlighting it, let me put it into this. System that I, I had access to different while I was a student. I had access to things since I still worked in law enforcement. And I was really able to prove to them that this was cool and that it's something that they would want.

And then I did the same thing with administration and started looking at the stats and percent change and, you know, it was basic analytical techniques, but it was something completely new for the agency mm-hmm. that they never had. And so luckily the, the chief was really excited and I marketed it really well.

And he [00:13:00] actually created the, the first analyst position there, and I applied for it and I got it. And of course it was investigation secretary slash. Analyst, .

**Jason:** Mm-hmm. , you got that added. That's an accomplishment, right? . Yeah. I I do find it fascinating that, a lot of these positions in police departments where they're just developing the crime analysis position or the intel analyst position for that matter.

, so some people may argue that, hey, there should be more stringent guidelines on what the analyst is to do. Right. And it should be part of the standard operating procedure. You know, Dr. Rachel Bobo will talks a lot about that as like how the, the position of analysis should be ingrained in the standard operating procedure and, and mm-hmm.

therefore the analyst knows exactly what he or she is supposed to do. Yeah. But in, in talking with so many [00:14:00] analysts now for the last couple of years, I do find it just really awesome. That some people are just able to grow and

blossom the position because there wasn't these rules or set up of what the position was they were able to do like what you did, where you took this position of investigation secretary and just took it in various directions, whether it's technology or just bringing in analysis or working from investigations to traffic and just carving out the position.

Is a little bit more of a like, it's like it's a, your own frontier type of thing, establishing the

**Ashley:** position. Yeah. Yeah. I don't disagree. Like in a perfect world, we do want it to be in, you know, an s o p so that it's very clear. But a lot of agencies, especially smaller agencies, they still don't have a good understanding of [00:15:00] the position and what an analyst can actually do.

So when you work for the agency for a while and you can identify where the issues are, you know, or where the needs are for that department, because not every type of analysis is gonna be needed. You know, when you're a solo analyst, it's not gonna be needed for every agency. , it might be unrealistic.

And when you can identify that and really market to the, decision makers what is going to be beneficial, then I think that speaks volumes, you know? Mm-hmm. .

**Jason:** All right. And then, so, so what were things that you were able to establish once you got analysts at the end of your title?

**Ashley:** No . So I was actually a management analyst, but I did crime analysis.

But I actually, so I used I A C A because the resources on that website are insane. And so as a member I was able to watch. Past videos from [00:16:00] conferences and things, and I basically said like, Hey, nobody buddy bother me for like a month. Let me watch all this and create some things and then I'll come back.

So I created a, you know, I O d BBC connection to the r m s, you know, I was on phone calls with the vendor. The mapping system I used free mapping a lot, like Batch Geo. But we had an RGIS license, but nobody understood the layers. And you know, it was kind of like a student using the Arc g i s system mm-hmm.

At the time mm-hmm. . And so I was calling other agencies to see what they were doing. I called Lori Vilardi and I'm like, Hey she's the GI S expert, you

know? Mm-hmm. . And I'm like, what do you do if you're starting from scratch? You know, what do you do when you don't have somebody at the city to call to help you out?

And so she's like, call the fire department. You know, so I was, all of that took a lot of time, but I was having these conversations with a [00:17:00] lot of different agencies and entities outside of the police department. And I was really learning from scratch everything, you know, which I think made me a better analyst because I was able to understand the process, mm-hmm.

And so it, it, a lot of it was, like I said, setting up, I mean, bulletin, even the bulletins that were sent, sent out were not the best. And so I was kind of creating a new standard for bulletins. I was identifying mos, I was pushing out this information to patrol at the bre, you know, briefings that they had things like that, that they just never had this before.

It was more like word of mouth, right? Mm-hmm. . So, but to actually have a document or have somebody that's looking at all of the cases to share this information was, was huge for them. Hmm. As you

**Jason:** look back and have the nice view of 20. Type thing. And so the, the [00:18:00] order in which you developed all these things is, is there something you that you wish like, oh, I wish I would've developed that first and maybe waited on some other tasks to develop later?

Would would you have done the, done them in a different order is basically what I'm asking? Yeah.

**Ashley:** I think so. I was still a very new analyst. Mm-hmm. . And there are things that I've learned since then that I wi, of course, I wish I knew then as a solo analyst, you know? Mm-hmm. , because I think that things could have been even.

like more accurate. And I remember thinking like, oh wow, this is amazing what I did. And then when I came to Anaheim and they, you know, already had a unit here, I was like, oh, I wish I would've did it this way. You know, just mm-hmm. Better ways to streamline things even. Because I was, I had nobody to talk to at my agency, you know, and you have the resources at other agencies, but ultimately they don't work [00:19:00] there, you know, so it's like people are very helpful, but they don't actually know what is going on.

And I didn't always know the right questions to ask. Mm-hmm. . So as far as like, I mean, I was there for a year in that position, and so there wasn't. Ton that I did. I think I did a lot of basic stuff, you know? Mm-hmm. Creating the O D, BBC Connection, things like that. Oh, like even some of the formulas and stuff in Excel, I did things like the longer Way because, and it was okay because I had like a small amount of data there, you know?

Yeah. So I guess it was kind of like, oh, oh, well I'm gonna hand count it. But I was like, when I found out, I'm like, wow. Way better ways to do things. . Yeah,

**Jason:** definitely. So, cuz it can be daunting when you're starting with a blank sheet of paper. Like, yes. What should you create first as you're creating all these different products for [00:20:00] this police department?

So that's where my head was going is like, oh, is the, you know, kinda lessons learned. If there's somebody who's in a similar position that would you recommend them starting out with? With a task, a a different task over another

**Ashley:** task? Yeah. I think for me, the hardest, since I had worked at that agency for so long prior, I was there for like six years prior.

Mm-hmm. um, I had a lot of the relationships, but people had a difficult time like understanding this new role mm-hmm. . So I had a lot of people that were still asking for, you know, can you make copies? Can you do this? And I was like, trying to go to the next phase. . . And I was like, really? Really? Yeah. So I definitely had struggles because of that, not necessarily the products.

I more had struggles with people understanding crime analysis in general and the different role that I was trying to, [00:21:00] to have within the agency. So, . Yeah. So that was for me. But definitely I say the first thing you do is create an O D B C connection to your rms, so you don't have to like, manually look up that stuff.

**Jason:** . Well, let's then get to Anaheim so let's talk about the decision to go to Anaheim, because to me, I would, just trying to put myself in your shoes at the moment, you talked about, you know, how small this department is. I mean, Anaheim is obviously a big city. So stepping up to this big police department and that's quite a transition that you're about to take.

**Ashley:** Yes. It was a really scary jump. So placenta's seven square miles in Anaheim's 26. square miles. Mm-hmm. so much, much bigger. Yes. And I

always joked about, so placenta actually bordered Anaheim or Borders Anaheim.

And when a crime would happen in Placenta, I was like, oh, they thought they were in [00:22:00] Anaheim.

They accidentally came here. . Yeah. So so really, I mean, that was a big thing is I wanted, I wanted to be part of an agency that was dealing with those series, you know? Mm-hmm. I wanted to have a bigger volume of crime. I wanted to have more violent crime, more gangs, you know, the, the more interesting stuff, right?

Like, I was like, this is definitely what I wanna do. Now I wanna go to an agency that. Has the data for me to really hone in on my analysis skills. And I wanted to be part of a unit. It was really hard as a solo analyst, you know especially at a new an agency that had a new position. Like I said, some of the struggles were definitely I didn't have anybody to talk to at that agency.

You know, what I was doing and kind of the best practices that would work well in the department. And for me, I'm a very big collaborator and so that was really important that I, I was part of an unit that I [00:23:00] could basically say like, Hey, so what do you think ? Yeah,

**Jason:** there's definitely something to being in a unit and I felt the difference, even when I had worked analyst jobs where there was one, maybe two other analysts there, it didn't seem like we were a unit necessarily.

It wasn't until I got to Vanderbilt as an analyst. that I felt like, oh, this is what it's like. Yeah. To have coworkers and a manager of analysis and how a team meetings and, and the collaboration and the different viewpoints and talking data and it was just, it's way different. If you've only been an analyst at a police department either you're the sole or you got one or two other analysts.

It's, it's, to me it is, it is different and, and very exciting

**Ashley:** though. Yeah. Yeah. And we definitely, when I came to [00:24:00] Anaheim, I mean, it was the supervisor and myself and Eva was hired a couple months after me. So it was still a small unit, but it was bigger than just myself. And now our unit has even more people.

So it's the idea of an actual unit is there and the future is there. And I knew that it wasn't realistic at a small agency.

**Jason:** Yeah. Hmm. So then how was it leaving the placenta? Because I mean, you, it seems like you grew up there, and so I'm just in imagining that it might have been difficult , to tell people that you're leaving.

**Ashley:** That was really, really hard. It was very, very, very difficult decision for me. Like I said, they're bordering cities, so it wasn't like mm-hmm. physically. know, a huge change for me, but mm-hmm. . Yeah. I did. I got that job straight outta college, you know? Right. And I was there basically in all my twenties.

I got my [00:25:00] job at Anaheim in my a month before I turned 30. Mm-hmm. . So it was hard. The relationships I developed were all, you know, I had some great mentors professionally and personally. They were like, Hey, if you're gonna live out here, put money in your 401k, you know, or your 4 57 . You know, I had people like that, that going to a new agency, I, I, I was very, very nervous.

But I also had people that told me that If I wanted to continue to grow that I pro that I would need to go to a bigger agency, I wouldn't be able my full potential. It wasn't at that agency, you know? Mm-hmm. . So I, I really listened to those people. I had somebody her name's Karine Lumis, and she actually was on my oral board as a cadet, and I'm still friends with her now,

She's retired now. And she's like, I remember when you came in as a cadet, like for that oral board. And I was like, we need to hire this girl because she's gonna be [00:26:00] awesome. And so when she tells me those things, I'm like, this is so, that's so nice for you to say, you know, . And so she was one of the big routers for me to go to another agency and, and go to a bigger agency that I could do more at.

**Adrienne:** Hi, this is Adrienne Galbrecht. Have you ever received an email on a giant listserv and started to hit reply all? Instead of just reply. If so, you're not the only one. And just always pause and double check before you hit send.

**Michele:** This is Michele Snow. I just want you to remember to build trust with integrity.

**Jason:** So let's talk about the transition then, because again, you're going from this small pond to this

**Ashley:** big lake. Yeah. So . Yeah. So like I said, I, I was lucky enough that I was hired and then Eva Maio was hired just a couple months [00:27:00] after

me, so we both were new at the same time. You know, it wasn't like the supervisor Danielle Martel, she had been there for a while.

She's been in law enforcement and then she was at Anaheim for a while. So we had her, you know, to ask questions too and to kind of teach us the lay of the land, right? Because it's a whole new culture that you have to learn. But at least I felt like I'm not completely alone because, you know, Eva came from a small agency too.

She worked at like the University police, . Okay. So I was like, that's even smaller than me where placenta was. And it's funny because we both actually had this struggle where we were trying to do very similar things to our prior agencies, you know? So I was like, I can read every report, . That will happen again,

It's unrealistic.

**Jason:** Yeah. And no, and I've, I've talked about this a couple times on the show. When, when you get to these bigger agencies, it's, I [00:28:00] think it gets, there's so much data and there's not a lot of documentation and. Even, even if there was documentation, there's, there's might be something that one analyst might find important that another doesn't and vice versa and but to actually be able to take the temperature of the police department's.

Crime I, I feel is really difficult at larger agencies, whereas these smaller agencies, you're reading almost every report. You know exactly what activity is happening. You are gonna be the one that's most likely to remember like, oh, I remember reading about some, something like that similar last month or last winter, or whatever it is, and be able to connect those dots, whereas that, that might definitely get lost in the shuffle.

in a larger agency?

**Ashley:** Yes. Oh my goodness. 100%. That was one of my biggest struggles is because I'm like, how do I become that person? [00:29:00] Like, I don't have the best memory anyway. Mm-hmm. . But I'm like, how do I become that person that's like, oh, I read this report. You know, like there's so many reports that I, I couldn't.

So I actually, we developed, oh my God, I'm such a fan of OneNote . If nobody has used OneNote before, I don't know if, have you ever used OneNote? I, I

**Jason:** currently do use OneNote

**Ashley:** as well. Oh my goodness. Okay. So I wish I knew about it when I was in college because I was like, wow, I could have organized all of my notes for all of my classes and everything, but we developed a OneNote and we wrote like notable cases.

Mm-hmm. so we could easily search that information. Because. , it was just too much. And then with multiple people, you know, that was the problem is I worked Monday through Thursday. Eva worked Tuesday through Friday. And so, you know, people came in on Friday, then she's like, what were you working on? And it worked out really well.

And that we put all of our notes in here, all [00:30:00] of our requests the, our methodology of how we did like certain searches, and we were able to easily see what the other person did or recreate the same thing again. Hmm. Yeah. So that helped us identify, like I said, any notable cases, any mo that we're noticing specific case numbers so we could look 'em up really quickly.

And, and have that information for people. Yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. My one note file is really large now. I'm surprised it doesn't crash.  
. ,

**Ashley:** I know we had a problem several years ago because it has blossomed into like, I. We have like meeting notes in there. We mm-hmm.

We do our weekly updates in there. We have every detail and the type of work that we do for them. And years ago there was like a crash in our OneNote wasn't working, and so I'm like telling it I'm all, we have to get this back. , . There has to be some way to get this back . [00:31:00] So yeah, luckily there was, don't worry it all, it all came back.

But it was like a different version, you know, like an older version. So there was a couple of things missing. Yeah. But

**Jason:** yeah. So then does the position live up to what you expected? And what I mean by that? You wanted to get into a lot more of these crime series and a lot more action, so to speak, does, does that what the position brings to you?

**Ashley:** So definitely, mm-hmm. compared to what I was doing before. Yes. Yeah. I mean, Anaheim is still a, it's an Orange county, so it's still a fairly safe

county. Mm-hmm. compared to, you know, LA County or something. But it borders LA and we get a lot of, you know, people that wanna drive in Anaheim because, I don't know, maybe cuz it is in Orange County so we still, we don't have like huge violent crime rate, but we still have violent crime, . We still have those robbery [00:32:00] series and, and things that are like, I can actually make a difference with, you know mm-hmm. . But overall there, it's a lot of property crimes still. Which is good because I'm able to implement some of the ideas, things that you learn at conferences, you know, things that you hear other people doing that you're like, oh, that'd be really cool to see if I could try here.

We're able to, to implement it here, but just because of the volume. , you know, I didn't have the volume at placenta and so I wasn't able to do any of those things. Seasonal analysis, threshold analysis, like it was just hard when you don't have a lot of crime, like the ideas behind it. Mm-hmm. didn't work well.

**Jason:** A nice follow up to that would be like, oh, so your analyst badge story is this crime series, but actually we're gonna go in a different direction with your analyst badge story now. So for those that may be new to the show, the analyst badge story is the crew defining case or project that analyst works.

And for you, it's during this time around 2015 that you're working as an.  
[00:33:00] And Anaheim and you are working on an internship

**Ashley:** program? Yes. I am so proud of our internship program. And I say ours because really even I developed it together. But it has blossomed into this like amazing program. So we knew that we wanted to do a lot more at Anaheim.

But again, the volume was difficult for the two of us to manage. And so we just started visiting agencies that we heard had good internship programs. You know, we went to Irvine, we went to Ventura, sheriff. We, we went to a bunch of different places and we took notes with our OneNote Mobile. . Nice. I swear I don't get money from them.

**Jason:** you'll ask in this

**Ashley:** interview, . Yeah. Right. So we took we took notes and we basically took a combination of things and identified what would be useful [00:34:00] at Anaheim, you know, what would work here. And so we, we originally, we marketed to the, the local crime and Intel analysis program. You have to have a 400 hour internship.

Mm-hmm. . So originally we required that we only took PE students in that program. And it was to help them with their 400 hours, you know, so we didn't have to, to market too much. . Mm-hmm. . And we had our first intern was in, like, they finished their background in 2016 like February of 2016. And they, we, we got, you know, just like anything, right?

Like lessons learned, . Mm-hmm. , we, blanketly were just taking anybody. And we, we quickly identified why that didn't make sense for us because we still had our own work. You know, it's a lot of work to train somebody up and we [00:35:00] found certain things that we wanted to make sure that there was requirements, you know, certain amount of hours certain am that they could be as an intern.

Certain amount of Really how the process worked because we wanted to give these people an experience where it wasn't just like, Hey, you're an intern and you just do the grunt work. Like, Hey, you're an intern and we're actually developing you and we're trying to, the, the goal of the program is to get people a job.

So, you know, we don't pair our interns. And the idea is if we're gonna have you do all this stuff for free, we're gonna teach you how to actually be an analyst. We're gonna teach you law enforcement culture, we're gonna do mock interviews and we're gonna get you a job. Mm-hmm. . And we have luckily done that.

We've had 26 interns since 2016. Five of them are current interns and Anaheim has actually hired three of them. Nice. But I think there's only like, maybe a handful that haven't gotten a job somewhere. [00:36:00] Alright. So. Yeah, so I'm really, really proud of it. Like we Oh, the growing pains though in the beginning.

Well, yeah.

**Jason:** Well let's talk about that a little bit cuz I am intrigued about that. Like, again, looking back, if you could do it all over again, what were, what would be some things that you would change? So a

**Ashley:** lot of them, A lot of things we've implemented now, mm-hmm. . So we actually don't hold it only to the certificate students.

You know, we after that first batch of interns that we only allowed these program, these 400 hours certificate program students, we realized, hey, we

need to broaden it. And so we contacted all of the local universities, all the local colleges, and we marketed to them, but we just blanketly like contacted the criminal justice department.

So I'm pretty sure what they did is they sent out an email to all of their CJ students, , mm-hmm. . So we went from [00:37:00] like, you know, six interested people to like 50 interested people. and I'm like, oh my God, what are we gonna do with this ? Yeah. It's way too many people. So what we did as a q and A and we really explained what crime analysis was and what they would be doing, and we invited everybody.

So it was, again, first a smaller group of people that we did kind of at the department. We had a conference room at the department, and then we had to go to the community center, , because we had all these people. So we had this huge presentation, talked about crime analysis, you know, what they, what we needed, that it's a give and take kind of thing, right?

It's not just we're gonna, cuz it's exhausting in the beginning, you know, you're just. Training and training and training and teaching them all these things, but it's like, Hey, you have to show up on time. You have to come, when you say you're gonna come, you have to, you know? So we realized that we needed [00:38:00] to develop these rules, almost mm-hmm.

and let people, and be really firm about those things because some people are like, Hey, I'm just gonna show up and, you know, show up for a couple hours and then leave . And we're like, what? ? You can't do that. . That's insane. Yeah. So yeah, so it, it, it went from like extremes. So we learned pretty quickly don't blanketly let emails go out to all the CJ students.

Instead, we'll go back to specific people. There's like crime analysis courses at some of the local colleges. So we of course marketed to those students and then certificate program students and then word of mouth really, because it was just, otherwise it was way too many people. There's a lot of people that want internships out there.

**Jason:** As you're going through and you're, you've developed the selection process over the years, is there attributes that you've [00:39:00] found lead to more successful candidates over maybe some other a attributes?

**Ashley:** Definitely. So we people that show up, so we now we know, we do the q and a then we do a, we tell people like, if you're interested, send us an email by this date.

you know, like we make clear expectations that we have and we make them communicate with us even prior to getting the interview. And those types of things show if they're actually, if it's worth it to them. You know, there's a lot of people that just, you never hear from 'em again. And so we have made really ways to identify the personality of people.

You know, like, and, and we have some of those at the q and a. You know, we have some people that ask those questions, you know, what are you looking for in an intern? You know, what would be a good quality? And so we tell people, like, for us the most important is that you are really you wanna learn and that [00:40:00] you are tenacious that show that you're interested and mm-hmm.

, we're gonna have the grunt work. Mm-hmm. , like that's gonna be part of it. Right. But that's not all of it. And you have to be okay with that part of it. I guess it's kind of like you have to pay your dues, right? So to get to do the fun stuff, that's kind of like what we do. We do a basic computer skill assessment now because we had some people that were like, never send an email before.

Mm-hmm. . And so we're like, Hey, you need to know how to turn on the computer, like candidates. , you need to know how to send an email. Wow. So with, we had some students that what are the different, like Cortana and the different assistants that they have on computers? I don't know all the names of that.

Well, obviously Siri for, for Mac and Apple stuff, but there's Cortana, I think for, for HP or something like that. Lalo, I think it is, yeah. Oh, okay. Okay. So so we have them [00:41:00] open up a folder and then open up a file. Mm-hmm. . And so when we get people that say like, what do you mean open up a file?

And we're like, what do you mean ? I'm confused.

**Jason:** Are you messing with me? ?

**Ashley:** Yeah. And so it's like, no, I just ask so-and-so to open up whatever. And we're like, oh no, this is not good. , you're, well, this is government, so you're gonna have to use your mouse and open up a file. . Yeah. So it's just, it was, it's really been eye-opening, you know, the type of like, and I think it has to do with younger students too that have this capability, you know, that have these, these options out there.

And so at, at one moment we kind of like, well, is it us? Like, should, are we the archaic ones because we have to use a mouse and click on a file? Mm-hmm. ,

should we find a better way to do it? Yeah, that's, but then we're like, yeah, it's, it is a different way to look at it, you know? Mm-hmm. . Yeah. But also I, [00:42:00] I'm pretty sure if I asked my boss for all of us to have virtual assistants, he would laugh at my face, ,

**Jason:** well, hey, you know, maybe one note will be a virtual assistant one day.

There you go. Yeah. There you

**Ashley:** go. Oh, so yeah, we have an intern OneNote. So we actually developed a like a training manual. Mm-hmm. for in OneNote though for the interns. And so some of the basic stuff like, you know, create a signature for yourself, add this drive to the computer save this, you know, it's all in one.

and it's step by step. So for the beginning, you know, when an intern starts, they go through OneNote and then we put our exercises in there. So we explain it, but then say, okay go to OneNote, go to this location, and you'll have like four different exercises. And we have them practice that skill. Hmm. So

**Jason:** how did you come about developing the threshold of activities?

And what I mean by that is you [00:43:00] obviously have the grunt work, which is, , the classic shredding documents or making copies or, and the, the very mundane activities. But then you get something that, the, what you called the really cool stuff, but there's o obviously has to be a point in time. Okay.

That's the, the, the maximum and that we would let an intern do. Right. There's gotta be that ceiling there. Mm-hmm. . So how did, how have you guys developed that from the, the, the low end to the very high end of an analyst task?

**Ashley:** So of course it's all mimicked after, like what we do here at Anim mm-hmm.

So we, have them, you know, go through a police report, identify mos, you know, write that information, data entry and then the cool stuff. So cell phone analysis, we teach them about it, but we don't have them do it because we're not gonna have them go to court ever. Mm-hmm. or [00:44:00] anything like that. So specialty software like that, they don't actually do live requests.

But we at least show them. And, and we identify each intern's like capabilities and interests, you know? Mm-hmm. . So we have constant check-ins with them

and we identify like, Hey, these, this is what we need to do. So you're gonna have to learn to do like, in the department. Requests like intradepartment requests and then outside agency requests, we have our interns, do we have them?

We, same thing. Link analysis. So we don't have them do any live requests for link analysis using I two, but we have them do practice requests or we'll take one of our prior requests and we'll have them then do it themselves, you know, and see if they can create something. And some interns that are really amazing and their skillset is just like off the chains, you know, we will consult with them on projects that [00:45:00] we have to do.

Some interns that are just like their skill level isn't really. Understanding, you know, mapping so much then we don't have them do any of those. But we have our interns do live mapping requests too. Mm-hmm. . So we, there really isn't usually ours, honestly, like, cuz I'm trying to think like ceiling wise we really teach them to be full analysts if they want certain people, certain skillsets.

We teach them to be full analysts. And so usually it's, they got a job somewhere or. Or we've been lucky enough to hire them, you know, then it's, that's when I go to my bosses and I was like, Hey, like with Karina, you know she was an amazing intern. She was the first intern that we had sit in a detective unit.

So she sat in robbery for part of her time and she would act as an extension of the crime analysis unit. And yeah, so it was really cool and she developed relationships with them. If there was ever any kind of [00:46:00] request that she didn't understand, she of course would come back to us and ask us. But we didn't send her over there until we felt comfortable with her skillset that she could actually provide accurate inform.

And that she would be able to sit in robbery, you know, and deal with yeah, with it's a different type of personality, right? Yeah. Was sitting in a detective unit, so we wanted to make sure that she was okay in that environment too. And. Once we get somebody that is that amazing, then that's when I really try to fight for like, can we get another position?

Can we get a part-time position? Can we do something mm-hmm. Because we're gonna lose this person. They're gonna go somewhere else. Yeah.

**Jason:** Hmm. And, and you might have just answered this question or, or this next question that I'm about to ask least partially, but I still want to get a, maybe make sure I get the complete answer from you.

So with this program, the internship program, you obviously get the aspect of the, the service aspect of it [00:47:00] where you are helping out this, this students with the internship program and the community building that goes on with there. But in terms of the analyst unit itself, what are they getting out of?

these interns,

**Ashley:** work. Really? Mm-hmm. , you know like I said, because it's, so we try to have four interns at all times. Mm-hmm. . So we'll have two senior interns and two junior interns. So really we have the senior interns train the junior interns on some of the basic things like reading reports, data entry, identifying what's important in a, you know, mo, things like that.

Mm-hmm. . So we're not really having to train them up in, in some of that. Initial stuff that's really mundane and kind of hard for us. Right. It takes a lot of time. Mm-hmm. . But ultimately it's like an a bigger unit, you know, because then we are getting these requests and sometimes it's like, Hey, we can have an intern handle that, you know?

We get outside re outside [00:48:00] agency requests a lot. We just, we have one intern right now. She's, she's really great. And we actually haven't had anybody since Karina that's been able to go into a unit. And so we just have one that is good enough to go now where like, she's trained up, she's really accurate with everything.

So she's gonna be sitting with another, our it's kind of, they're called C I D, but it's like our burglary unit. Mm. , she's gonna sit with them part of the time. So it's amazing to have that and to have an extension of our unit kind of eyes and ears out there too, , because we want to hear what would help the department, because we're ultimately in a.

A customer service role. We're providing a service to the department and we wanna know, like, are there things that we can improve upon to become better analysts? Right. If, to provide better information to our customers. And so to have her sitting there, cuz we can't all do that, you know, we don't have the time to sit there and, [00:49:00] and, and just chit chat.

You know, we, we are able to do that sometimes, but we can't sit in units. We're, so, we're centralized, we're all in one location and we touch base with kind of our respective areas. But we don't actually sit anywhere else for a, a, you know, a chunk of time. Yeah.

**Jason:** All right. Well, good, because I, I've said several times on this show I.

The internship program is important. It gives an opportunity for college students to get their foot in the door. And I, I really wish that some of these law enforcement analysis associations would spend more time at energy developing the helping police departments bridge the gap, whatever it is between the police department and the universities to try to make sure that it [00:50:00] really, every police department that has analysts ha also has an internship program.

Let's move on then. So you eventually become the analyst supervisor? Yes. And I, I find it fascinating when. Talking to folks where they're the, they're an analyst one day and they're looking across the office at their coworkers, and then the next day they are promoted and now are supervising those same coworkers.

So how is that transition for you?

**Ashley:** So I would be interested to hear if you ever hear that it is easy. .

**Jason:** No, I don't think anybody ever said it was easy and it's definitely weird and there's definitely an adjustment.

**Ashley:** Yeah. Yeah, it's definitely, definitely weird. And then when I was promoted it was, Just Eva and myself.

So I was a supervisor of [00:51:00] one . Yeah. So that was also weird. . Yeah. And yeah, it definitely, you know, going from, I think at first because we worked so closely together it did, it was like nothing was different, right? Mm-hmm. . . And then at one point it became different because there was more things being asked than it was like, oh, Eva can't answer these questions.

She has to direct them to me. Right? Mm-hmm. . And so that was weird. . Yeah. So I'm sure that was very weird for her. And it was very weird for me. And I actually was pregnant when I was promoted, so I pretty quickly went on to maternity leave and Eva was the acting supervisor of herself. . .

**Jason:** Man. Man. I bet you those were annual reviews went well,

Yeah. Right. .

**Ashley:** So yeah, I went on leave and then I came back and then it was Covid . Oh boy. I think I was back for a few, for a few months. And [00:52:00] then we

were all, you know, we were working from home and so it was kind of like everyone was surviving, you know, there wasn't really anything different happening.

And then I got pregnant again, went back on maternity leave, and now I've been back, I guess the longest amount of time, .

**Jason:** Oh man. So, , the unit's grown since then, right?

**Ashley:** Yes, yes, it definitely has. So Karina, like I mentioned, our prior intern, Karina Gomez got, was hired during my first maternity leave.

We got her hired on and then since I have been back this most recent time, we were able to hire another full-time analyst. Leticia Martinez, and then we got a part-time analyst, Chris Waller. So my new goal is to make him a full-time analyst. .

**Jason:** So another thing that folks tell me that when they become a supervisor is that becomes [00:53:00] less about doing the analysis and more about administration that it's more about hopping from one meeting to the other and organizing and leading that way as opposed to actually doing analysis.

Have you found that to be the case now that , the unit's gotten bigger?

**Ashley:** Yeah, I would so I definitely was a working analyst before, you know mm-hmm. , or a working supervisor before. So, you know, because our unit was so small, I was still doing a lot of analysis. And now that it's grown a little bit , I'm not really doing any analysis.

However, our unit is really tight-knit. We have team meetings, every other week. I have my own meetings with each individual employee every two weeks as well. So I'm more like on a consultant basis, helping mm-hmm. on things. So they let me know, like if there's a project they're working on, they need assistance with it, who they should talk to, you know, then I'm able to help in that [00:54:00] way.

But yeah, I mean, when I had to give up my, I, I talk about cell phone analysis cuz I really enjoy doing that. Mm-hmm. . And when I had to give up my license and give it to one of the other analysts, I was like, oh, this is so hard. I'm uninstalling it from my computer.

**Jason:** seems final then doesn. Yes. It was so

**Ashley:** sad.

Oh,

**Jason:** man. . And so, let's talk about you teaching. Yeah. Because I mentioned that during your intro that you are instructor, so how did you. get involved into teaching, and then we'll get into some of the aspects of teaching.

**Ashley:** Like I said, there's, there was one local certificate program and I think there was a lot of students that we weren't getting to, mm-hmm.

because of that. You know, there's a lot, there was definitely a need for, there's an amazing need for crime analysis. Like, people want to learn about it, it's just they [00:55:00] don't have the resources or the options at. School. Mm-hmm. . And so I actually met Ron Mark, who's over at the Center of Criminal Justice at Long Beach, and kind of let him know, you know, the current situation with crime analysis, the climate and everything.

And we started, I think it was originally we were, we were probably marketing the internship program, . Mm-hmm. . And he wanted to meet actually meet and everything. And so we ended up chatting with him and he, it, it kind of blossomed from there. Like he really wanted to create a certificate program at Long Beach.

And then also wanted to create a law enforcement like. It's called a core course. It's developed now a weeklong course for law enforcement. And he was like, Hey, I see the need. I have students always asking me about crime analysis. So I think that's great that, you know, even I had met with him and we really [00:56:00] marketed the, job to him and he was like, this is amazing.

I have so many people that would wanna do this. And that relationship really blossomed. And he he employed both myself and Eva, but I started teaching with him in that law enforcement COR course. So that was the first time I ever taught, which I thought was so weird. Like, I thought it was helping like share some information , but I never thought he was gonna actually have me teach

Yeah. And then he was like, okay, so do you think that you can teach some of this? And I was like, wait, what? ? Yeah.

**Jason:** Go.

**Ashley:** You want me to tell other people about this ? Yeah, so yeah, so I, I still teach in that core course and from there, it's one of those things like what, once you're in law enforcement, it's easier to, you know, meet other people in law enforcement.

So same thing, once you're teaching, once you're in that education field, it's easier to meet other people in that field. And so when they developed an intro to crime analysis course [00:57:00] at Cal State Long Beach I interviewed for that and, and now I teach that class as well. Yeah. But

**Jason:** that was going from like teaching all semester now, right?

**Ashley:** Yes, yes. So that's very different than. one day, twice a year, you know? Yeah. Yes, that's an entire semester. I actually teach the, the courses only offered in the spring, so it's a January to May semester, and it's really cool because. You know, there's some, it's an elective, so it's mm-hmm. , it's to undergrads and to graduates.

So, for graduates that are in a certain it's like their, it's really a crime analysis major. They have to take the courses, one of their first courses in their program. For the other students, it's an elective, so you're gonna have some people that are like, and I, I gauge in the beginning, I do a survey to kind of see like, Hey, why'd you sign up for this course?

And. , overwhelming meaningly. There's a lot of people that are like, oh, it worked out for my schedule . [00:58:00] You know, like, I don't know anything about crime analysis. It just worked with my schedule. Yeah. But those are the people that I'm trying to like convince, you know? And I definitely, there's people that come outta that class that are like, I had no idea that this was a professional law enforcement.

You know? Yeah. I knew I didn't wanna be an officer. I knew I didn't wanna be a dispatcher, but I had no idea what I wanted to do. And now I know that this is an option. And so clearly, you know, I feel like we're marketing the profession a lot better than in the past, but we're clearly still not doing that great of a job, you know?

**Jason:** Yeah. There's definitely room for

**Ashley:** improvement. Hmm. Yeah. And your podcast is actually an assignment that I have in the class.

**Jason:** How about that man? Yes. So that is that got me a little red in the face, I sure hope, , it's just not what not to do.

**Ashley:** Yeah. No, I actually, I have [00:59:00] them have to listen to two podcasts of their choosing and they have to write about like, you know, how did the, the analyst get into the profession because everybody, you know, has kind of a different story and they have to write about their badge story and yeah. So it's pretty, it's pretty cool to read some of those papers,

**Jason:** Oh, very good. Yeah, I would be interested in some feedback from the, future. The Analyst of Tomorrow type thing. Yeah. So, yeah, so always let me know how I can improve the show. So, no, thank you for doing that. That is quite an honor to have the podcast be part of , your

**Ashley:** teaching.

Yeah, definitely. Of course. Thanks for doing something like this. I thought it was such, I'm trying to find different ways to get to students, you know, and mm-hmm. and I went to a course when I first started teaching, that was about facilitating instead of lecturing mm-hmm. . So it was more about students teaching their peers, you know, and other [01:00:00] ways to teach curriculum to students.

And so I'm like, Hey, what do people listen to? And for a brief moment, because I know that people are into TikTok right now, I was like, should I make a TikTok? And then I thought, no, I'm not gonna do that . So I went the podcaster route instead. . All

**Jason:** right. Well, hey, so hey, you can always get there. You eventually, you can just postpone it for now.

But yeah, I appreciate the support, so, yeah, definitely. . So let's finish up with some advice for the analysts. And what advice do you have for our listeners?

**Ashley:** So I would say I went back and I got my master's degree in business and in marketing was kind of the emphasis of it, and I think it's really important.

I think throughout my whole career has really been important to market your skillsets, you know, because people don't know what you can do and they don't even know what they want, [01:01:00] always, you know, so you have to market what you can do and how you can help them. I think you have to be really patient because.

As we all know, there's definitely those people that are not, you know, pro mm-hmm. What we're trying to teach and what we're trying to do but that the tide's gonna change, right? Mm-hmm. They're not gonna be the supervisors, the chiefs, the, the deputy chiefs forever. You know, you're not gonna be at that agency or in that job forever.

Kind of be patient for changes and and it will happen. It gets better, you know, like mm-hmm. , I had an agency that was not about crime analysis at first because it was so new to, hey, we're gonna create a position to, hey, now I'm the supervisor of a unit and we have like, really great support in our department.

And I know that it won't be this way forever either, you know, like the good isn't gonna last forever. But it's important to kind of have [01:02:00] ideas and be ready for when it does change. Hmm.

**Jason:** And then how about return on investment? What would you suggest an analyst study today? Because in five years it's gonna be important.

**Ashley:** Ooh. So I remember years ago being told that, you know, queering languages is kind of like you. , you have, you have analysts that understand, that understand SQL understand different querying languages, but not everyone had to understand that. I think in order, like we're all technology based, right? And in order to be a better analyst, it's kind of like necessary to at least be aware of those things.

Like no py you don't have to necessarily know how to write Python, but know that Python exists. , yeah. There, we use a business intelligence software here and I think the idea behind it is, Kind of the wave of the future, you know, like these live dashboards, live data. Nobody wants the static reports anymore, which is great because I don't wanna give [01:03:00] static information either, like static numbers.

But definitely need to be aware of that. And, and that it's a thing and how to implement it. Excel always, I don't know, , there's, it's amazing that there's so many people that don't know what they think. They know Excel and they don't know Excel at all. And the people that I know that have taken Excel courses are all business majors.

Yeah. Yeah. So I think that's interesting. .

**Jason:** No, that's a whole different series of questions you're asking Xcel to do in the business world as opposed to the law enforcement analyst world, I'm

**Ashley:** sure. Yeah. Yeah. So, yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. Well, you mentioned trying to get the one part-time analyst, a full-time position.

But it's 2023 now. So what do you hope for 2023? What are your goals?

**Ashley:** So we actually have a, a yearly meeting and we talk about our goals for the year as a unit. So we have that meeting soon. We haven't had it yet. Mm-hmm. . But yes, definitely the [01:04:00] part-time position. So I think with anything it's, I just did a marketing PowerPoint to Our command staff.

And I know it went well because I walked out of there with the chief asking, so how many positions do you need? ? . So I wanna see some of that happen. I don't just want one full-time, I want, let's be ambitious. I want two full times. . Nice. Nice. Yeah. Very good. And personally so I have two small kids. I have a one-year-old and a three-year-old.

And they are sick all the time, so I really wanna make it like a month without them being sick. .

**Jason:** Well I really do hope that one happens. Most definitely. Aww. So and here here's a suggestion for you. Not that you don't have enough on your plate already, but you mentioned OneNote a couple of times.

That is something I have never seen. OneNote taught at an analyst conference. Really? Yeah. You could teach. OneNote [01:05:00] and why analysts should use OneNote. Yeah. Because most of 'em are gonna have it if they ha almost everybody has the Microsoft Yeah. Microsoft Office products. They, they're gonna have OneNote and they probably have no idea how to

**Ashley:** use it.

Yeah. You know what, that's a really, really good idea. So, but you

**Jason:** have to gimme full credit for it though. I

**Ashley:** will definitely credit slash blame . Yeah. Well,

**Jason:** if it goes wrong, then no, I don't, you know, you just keep that one. You can keep that one. So, all right, Ashley, so our last segment to the show is Words to the World.

and this is where you can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world?

**Ashley:** I think it is very important to be friendly to everyone that you meet because you never know when they're gonna come back into your life, because especially as a professor now some of my students end up being like analysts that I work with.

So people that are attending classes, they're like, oh, hey, I saw you at this. You know, [01:06:00] or, or like you said at conferences, I saw you speak. You just never know when you're gonna need to, to talk to those people again and when they're gonna come back in your life. So it's, it's just good to always be friendly to

**Jason:** people.

Very good. Well, I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later, . But I do appreciate you being on the show. Ashley, thank you so much. And you be safe. Thank

**Ashley:** you. You.

**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 at [www.leapodcasts.com](http://www.leapodcasts.com).

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