

# Nicholas Butler – Laughing at the Defense

[00:00:00] **Mindy:** Welcome to Analyst 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 be that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession, one episode at a time.

[00:00:17] **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 over five years of law enforcement analysis experience. He's a certified analyst with the IACA. He holds a master's degree in applied terminology from Northern Arizona University.

[00:00:36] **Jason:** He was the 2023 AACA member of the year. Here to talk about among other things, cellular forensics, please. Welcome Nicholas Butler, Nick. How are we doing? Good. How are you? I am doing very well. How is Arizona these days? It's pretty good. We're still in the monsoon season. So it's a little rainy here, which is nice.

[00:00:57] **Jason:** Yeah, it's so funny. It's so funny. I've only [00:01:00] been to Arizona once. And to me, I only think of Arizona as a desert. And like never gets rain. So it's funny that you say it's monsoon season. Oh, it's the tail end of right before it gets to 120. So it is mostly desert most of the

[00:01:14] **Nick:** time

[00:01:15] **Jason:** It's a dry heat, right?

[00:01:16] **Jason:** That's what they always say.

[00:01:17] **Nick:** Yeah, but it can still melt you

[00:01:20] **Jason:** All right, very good before we get started a programming note for our audience We are going to take some calls today favorite first jobs as a call in segment So if you have a favorite first job Bye Give us a call and we'll get you on the air.

[00:01:34] **Jason:** So, all right, Nick, how'd you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

[00:01:38] **Nick:** Well, I kind of got lucky and just fell into it. I went to school for psychology to start and my, my parents are military, so I'm not super unfamiliar with military law enforcement intelligence kind of spheres, but I went for psychology to start and then realized, well, if I get a criminology major as well, I'll get two bachelors for the price of one.

[00:01:57] **Nick:** And I don't really have to do a whole lot more work. So that was [00:02:00] nice. And then finished up my, my two bachelors and then decided that I wanted to do criminology instead and went for my master's in applied criminology, started to fall in love with data statistics and took basically every statistics course I could, including the informatics ones from.

[00:02:15] **Nick:** the PhD side of things, which was really fun to do data mining, machine learning, learn a little bit about AI. And then I graduated, started looking for positions as like a data analyst, some Intel positions, some programming positions, and eventually found the crime analyst position down here in Pinal County and applied for that.

[00:02:31] **Nick:** And pretty much the rest is history in terms of my, my entry into the profession. So they hired me right out of school. Excellent.

[00:02:37] **Jason:** Excellent. . It's applied criminology is your master's degree. So, and it does sound like that's more technical in nature. Is that how you would describe it?

[00:02:48] **Nick:** Yeah, it was a lot of theory. It was a lot of statistics and research methods and methodologies and that sort of stuff. And then you had the option to kind of go down a, a more technological route and learn to practice. [00:03:00] Program in R and Python and do some of the more data mining stuff. If you wanted to, it wasn't necessarily required to get the master's degree, but it was something that I was interested in.

[00:03:08] **Nick:** So it was just another opportunity to do that.

[00:03:10] **Jason:** Yeah. And you said you enjoyed the statistics. So I'm wondering what's wrong with you.

[00:03:14] **Nick:** I know everybody says that it makes sense. I hate all the type of math. Other than maybe finance math, but finance math is basically statistics. So,

[00:03:23] **Jason:** I've talked about this on the show from time to time is one of the things I'm surprised about since when I began my career over 20 years ago, when I first started as an analyst, I would have thought by now, More stats would be mainstream in terms of law enforcement analysis, but it seems like we're still doing just the district descriptive stats in terms of statistics, and we're not really getting into too much applied stats to the profession.

[00:03:55] **Jason:** Do you do you feel the same?

[00:03:56] **Nick:** Yeah, it's. It's a couple of different reasons. I think [00:04:00] one, if you start doing predictive stuff, it kind of starts to look bad in some situations where you're, you're like, not necessarily abusing rights, but kind of the precog situation where it's like, it hasn't happened yet.

[00:04:11] **Nick:** So can you actually action on it kind of deal? So depending on what you're doing in that aspect, it can be kind of dicey, but honestly, it's just, it's tough to get that level of data quality currently to, to be comfortable using a model like that. It's just, I don't think we've acquired that level of specificity in a lot of RMSs and stuff like that yet, so it's kind of tough to do it that way.

[00:04:30] **Jason:** Yeah, to me, it's a question, it's data, so it, there should be some level of predictability to it, but there's also a lot of, Data points. And as you mentioned that if you are missing a big chunk of data there, it's definitely going to be hard to tell any kind of story, let alone a predictive one.

[00:04:54] **Nick:** Yeah, exactly. And you just need so many different variables to do some of those. Those models that, and you need a [00:05:00] lot of data over a long period of time. And if you have some of it shift or like, for example, for us in 2016 is when we kind of did a shift in terms of some of our reporting. So anything prior to that, I wouldn't feel comfortable loading into a model.

[00:05:11] **Nick:** So now you're only looking at about nine years worth of data. All

[00:05:14] **Jason:** right. So then let's, let's talk about you joining. The department, because as you said, it's Pinal County Sheriff's office. And as you mentioned, you got hired right out of school. So what was the transition like going from the university setting to the sheriff's office?

[00:05:34] **Nick:** It was very nice. It's nice to have like for masters is fun. But one of the issues that I had with it when I was going through is I feel like I'm doing so much work and it's just do the work to prove that I can do it. It's kind

of nice to get paid to do it. But I was also their first analyst. They've had a military, they had had a military analyst there for narcotics only for like, I don't know, two, three months or so, but for all intents and purposes, I was the very first analyst they've ever [00:06:00] had in the department.

[00:06:00] **Nick:** So it definitely took a little bit of time to, to get up and running and get all the different programs we want, that kind of stuff, and just to get the buy in from detectives. So

[00:06:08] **Jason:** it took a little while. I've interviewed a lot of folks now that they're, they're the first timers and the agency or department is.

[00:06:17] **Jason:** Is first timers as similar to what you just described. So, it takes a certain person to be comfortable with that. I was just talking with Liz Bacola and. We just had the similar topic, whereas it's like some people are good with that blank slate and they say, go, I don't really know what to ask of you.

[00:06:38] **Jason:** Just go and you end up building a house or whatnot. And it's it's good either way. And then I'm more comfortable. It's like, all right, I'm going to need a little bit more feedback because I don't want to be too off target and want to make sure that I get you what you're after. So I guess for you, from your perspective.

[00:06:59] **Jason:** It's new to [00:07:00] the, the sheriff's office. How was it for you just to getting this ball rolling?

[00:07:06] **Nick:** It wasn't, it wasn't too terrible. Actually. The biggest issue I saw at the start was I was 23 at the time and everybody looked at me kind of like I was the kid early. But we also like, because they hadn't had an analyst before the leadership.

[00:07:20] **Nick:** Rightly so decided not to advertise it to everybody all at once right away, especially because I was coming right out of school. So it did, I did, I was able to get a couple months under my of like training and talking and just getting acquainted with their systems and processes and stuff like that.

[00:07:35] **Nick:** Cause I'd never been in law enforcement period. Like I'd never been in dispatch or records or any other, any other way to kind of get familiar with some of the policies and processes. So that gave me some time to do that. And then it was just You really had to find the one person you had to find the one detective that was willing to work with you.

[00:07:50] **Nick:** And then once you worked with them and showed them what you could do, it kind of started the, the ball rolling. So that's, that's how I kind of went about it. And during that time we did the traditional [00:08:00] comp stat type stuff for command and showed them what you can do in terms of tracking metrics and that sort of stuff.

[00:08:05] **Nick:** So it was, it wasn't a terrible start. It just took some time, you know?

[00:08:08] **Jason:** Yeah. I like the concept of letting you get your feet wet and not just bombard you with Multiple tasks was there a particular issue or set of issues that they were trying to solve and the reason why they created the analyst position?

[00:08:24] **Jason:** I

[00:08:24] **Nick:** don't think there was necessarily a specific reason that they created the decision. They had just gone to. I don't remember what training they went to where they had like the command staff had met a couple analysts and experienced like what what it was like to have an analyst working with you and helping you on a case and something like stuff like that.

[00:08:41] **Nick:** So they went and they're like we need this now so we're gonna do this now and then they tried to find somebody and then they were like When I was hired, the plan was kind of going more towards tactical to start, we didn't necessarily need the long term command type statistics right away, no, no, the strategic side of the things or strategic side of house wasn't [00:09:00] necessarily important at that time.

[00:09:01] **Nick:** So they just wanted somebody to. Kind of come in and help anywhere and everywhere that they could.

[00:09:06] **Jason:** Yeah. So how was it getting acclimated to the data and all the different resources?

[00:09:12] **Nick:** It took some time. We have Spillman currently, and I'm not the biggest fan of the way that our RMS is set up. It's the, the language is Pretty old.

[00:09:23] **Nick:** It's an old C tree, so I didn't know anything about trying to interface with that, so it took quite a bit of time to learn how to run the reports and build the custom reports and queries and find the right tables and marry

them and a lot of love pulling main like giant tables out and marry them, marrying them in my own kind of database and interfacing with it that way, depending on what their request was.

[00:09:42] **Jason:** So it sounds like you have an RMSE instead of an RMS.

[00:09:46] **Nick:** Yes, it

[00:09:46] **Jason:** was

[00:09:47] **Nick:** better now. It's a lot, lot better now.

[00:09:49] **Jason:** All right. No, that's good. I mean, I think it does take time.

And as you go through this and it acclimated to the data, I think unless

[00:10:00] you have a customized system and it local in house system built, it's going to be really Yeah.

[00:10:08] **Jason:** Yeah. Tough for an off the shelf product to give an analyst everything he or she needs to do their job. Oh, yeah, definitely. All right. So, so then you're getting acclimated to the data and where are you assigned in terms of the sheriff's office? Where do they, what,

[00:10:27] **Nick:** Not really assigned to a specific department.

[00:10:29] **Nick:** In terms of the org chart, I report directly to my deputy chief who then reports to chief deputy and the sheriff. So I kind of am not really in any department's chain of command, which is what they wanted to do to start. They put me outside of like behind, like CIB has its own lock and key kind of stuff because all the fun stuff, but.

[00:10:48] **Nick:** I was outside of that. So anyone that had access to the sheriff's office had access to be able to come up to my office.

[00:10:53] **Jason:** Okay. So you're kind of on the, on the way to C. I. B. but not in C. I. B.

[00:10:58] **Nick:** Yeah, I was down the hall [00:11:00] from them and they wanted to make it so that patrol finance, anybody I. T.

[00:11:04] **Nick:** anybody that needed to Interface with me could do so without needing to be patched in or whatever.

[00:11:10] **Jason:** Yeah, give us a sense on how big the county is, because I think one of the things I find that talking with analysts in terms of those that are part of Sheriff's Office is that it's, it can be a very large area that is under the responsibility of the Sheriff's Office, so it can be quite difficult to analyze.

[00:11:36] **Jason:** Massive area.

[00:11:37] **Nick:** Yeah, it's, it's a, it's a pretty big county. I don't know what the, the square mileage is, but if you were to take just a slice of Arizona towards the south, right above Pima, we cover pretty much everything across from the west to the east. We're about 500 I don't know, maybe 550, depending on what the current census says in terms of population, and we are responsible for a pretty substantial [00:12:00] chunk of that because we have Santan to the east, which is an unincorporated area.

[00:12:04] **Nick:** And that's it's our biggest area that we have to worry about because we don't have a local PD there. Casa Grande, Eloy, Coolidge, Maricopa, all the other cities in the area have their own PDs, but Santan doesn't, so. And all of them that

[00:12:16] **Jason:** you just listed are part of Pinal County? Yeah. Okay, all right, so you've got multiple cities, because usually, I shouldn't say usually, but it seems to me that you have, when you talk about counties, you have one major city, and then you have the county that, Is, is the umbrella, if you will, over top of the city.

[00:12:37] **Jason:** And so usually it's about one major jurisdiction that you have. And then you have the county, which is sometimes more rural area. That's not as dense in terms of population. But it sounds like here that there is got widespread and you got multiple smaller jurisdictions with their own Own departments.

[00:12:56] **Nick:** Yeah, exactly. And we help, we work with them a lot. We'll deal with [00:13:00] anything involving the county or if a certain police agency doesn't have the resources needed for like a major homicide or something, we will help them and sometimes take jurisdiction over it as well. All

[00:13:09] **Jason:** right. You get past this idea of getting acclimated, you get your feet wet, get, get, get to where you know the data are comfortable, but then how do you get. cases assigned to you?

[00:13:20] **Nick:** I don't really necessarily get them assigned to me. It's more of a, hey, this detective needs help on this, and he's heard that you can do X, Y, and Z.

[00:13:30] **Nick:** He's going to come talk to you, help him, kind of deal. And then that's kind of how it started. Word of mouth from various detectives who I've helped. prior telling, Hey, go see, go see Nick, he'll fix this problem for you. And it'll make your life so much easier. And then it just kind of spiraled to there.

[00:13:44] **Nick:** Whereas we're now, unless they catch the guy within like 30 seconds, I'm generally involved in every homicide. And most of the child exploitation cases, all armed robberies, that kind of stuff. It's just, just, you, you don't necessarily get assigned cases. You're just. Told, Hey, help. I [00:14:00] got you.

[00:14:00] **Jason:** All right, let's get a better idea, then of the cases that you worked on.

[00:14:03] **Jason:** So this brings us to the analyst badge story. And for those that may be new to the show, the analysts badge story is the career defining case or project that analysts work. So here we're at 2019 and you're dealing with some, ICAC screenshots. So first let's talk about ICAC and then kind of get into the case.

[00:14:23] **Nick:** So then 2019, I was still relatively fresh. And one of the detectives that used to be the most was our internet crimes against children detective. He's a, he's an absolute beast. He's like since retired and written a couple of books and he's put away so many, so many offenders. It's crazy. What's his name?

[00:14:40] **Nick:** But Randall Snyder. Yeah, he's, he's, he's awesome. So he first came to me, he's probably the first detective that ever even walked into my office and gave me the time of day and was like, Hey, I have this issue, please help. I've heard that you can do something with spreadsheets and whatever.

[00:14:56] **Nick:** So he hands me some, some data on one of the cases he's working on. Then I help him. [00:15:00] Get information on the suspect and prep it all for them. And they hit the house on whatever. We did that a couple of times. And then we come across one case where it was, it was a pretty, pretty notable international child exploitation ring run by this one guy.



[00:15:13] **Nick:** And he had somehow decided that he was going to exploit someone in our county. So it came across our desk. And for the longest time, we couldn't figure out anything. Nothing. He was using VPNs. He had multiple like layers of protection to keep. Everything away from him. Mm-Hmm. . But one day he decided to mess up and take a screen recording of his computer, which happened to have the name of his pc, which happened to have his last name.

[00:15:38] **Nick:** Oh. So little bit of, little bit of luck, little bit of perseverance. Was able to use that to kind of unravel the rest of the, the case. We were able to give figure out he was in Mexico. Get them identified, send it down there. His door got kicked in. He spent a couple of years in Mexican prison and then got extradited here.

[00:15:54] **Nick:** And he just got sentenced federally, I think for a long time, but it doesn't really matter how much you get sentenced federally [00:16:00] because he has at least six other jurisdictions that are chomping at the bit to get him in their systems after. So you, yeah, he won't. He won't go anywhere.

[00:16:08] **Jason:** Yeah. So you mentioned it, it came across your desk.

[00:16:11] **Jason:** So how did this get on your desk in terms of like the screenshot or the screen cap? Well, the ca well, the case Yeah, the case, like how does, did, did, was it a complaint that that was got put to the sheriff's office or how did, how did that. particular case get on the radar of the sheriff's office?

[00:16:32] **Nick:** I believe it was a case that the detectives took where the girl was being remotely abused in our jurisdiction and then it kind of just spiraled from there.

[00:16:42] **Nick:** In terms of how it comes to me, it's detective says, Hey, I need help with this. Here's the information that I can provide for you to help me with this and then go. So,

[00:16:50] **Jason:** yeah. So, when you said that he Made a mistake and I, I get the idea of the screen capture and using his last [00:17:00] name and giving you just enough to be able to pull a thread.

[00:17:03] **Jason:** But then how did you obtain, that particular screenshot? It

[00:17:07] **Nick:** was provided to me by the detective who was provided to it via cyber tip from a different. I guess, because the Facebook, Google, all of those kind of tech giants have iCac related technology that will let them give us

notifications and say, Hey, this person has a contraband image that's been uploaded doing.

[00:17:23] **Nick:** We know this because of the the hash value of the photo, and then that will give you all the information there. So he received information that way. And then it also could have been, I don't remember, it could have been from her device from one of the videos that she recorded, like he, he had her record and then he was recording it on his end and was like using it as blackmail, but I don't, I don't remember the specifics of the specific video and how it got across, got across our desks.

[00:17:46] **Jason:** So that's one of your first times getting into , this realm dealing with this technology and getting into like the digital forensics of, cell phones.

[00:17:56] **Nick:** Yeah. That was not only that, but my, one of my first, like.

[00:17:59] **Nick:** [00:18:00] Cases that have actually truly worked because he was one of the first people that actually came to me. So Yeah, that's kind of where I was talking about it spiraling from there You know once he saw what I could do Then he would tell the detectives and then they would come to me for various things and then It ended up being homicide needing help the next day, you know,

[00:18:15] **Jason:** yeah.

[00:18:15] **Jason:** Yeah. Yeah you had he championed you so that's That's always a good feeling. So and I guess from your vantage point is you should get into this and start looking at this. Do you, do you consider yourself a techie or did this seem, it was still pretty straightforward that you didn't really need to get too much in the technical weeds to really understand it?

[00:18:40] **Nick:** Depending on the case you kind of needed to get into the technical weeds. I'm a, I am a bit of a techie I've been building computers since I was able to hold a screwdriver basically Nice, and I would use to put them up put them together tear them apart refragment them You know do all that kind of stuff and I was familiar with a couple programming languages before I even got into to law enforcement So [00:19:00] the tech side of the things is pretty pretty or pretty familiar to me

[00:19:03] **Jason:** All right, so that that oh, you know that always helps having that knowledge having that ability to Tinker and do work around,

[00:19:12] **Jason:** Extracting data from these devices isn't always the same way each and every time. So there's times where I'm sure you have to tinker and try to figure out and do work arounds and to get everything that you need.

[00:19:27] **Nick:** Yeah, it's fun to be able to break some stuff and pull stuff out that's always, that's always a good time when you actually defeat the machine that's been messing with you for the last two weeks.

[00:19:36] **Jason:** Yeah,

[00:19:36] **Nick:** yeah, yeah.

[00:19:37] **Jason:** So then this kind of takes you down the road of being the cellular. Forensics guy at the sheriff's office, right?

[00:19:47] **Nick:** Yeah. I started in the, the geolocations expertise area. They had me trained in like called detail records and timing, advanced data and using GPS and mappings and stuff like that and presenting that for, for evidence [00:20:00] and tracking people, that kind of stuff.

[00:20:01] **Nick:** And then once I got really good at that, they started sending me to the, to the fun forensics course, like Cellbrite. And I got through that and got my Certified mobile examiner certification certification for that. Yeah,

[00:20:12] **Jason:** no, that's really great. That's an area of expertise that you bring to the table.

[00:20:19] **Jason:** I think not only do you get the buy in you can. Provide information expertise to cases that detectives and investigators can't get on their own or may not have the knowledge to get on their own. So you're that key cog in the machine, you get your little slice of the pie, as what I usually refer it to as.

[00:20:43] **Jason:** And, and so that's it's an interesting. Point of view that, that you have, that you've gotten here in very quick order.

[00:20:50] **Nick:** Yeah. And it's whether or not the detectives can do it. And I work with some fantastic detectives who can do everything I can do. Even if you can just take some stuff off of [00:21:00] their plate so that they can go do the other things that they need to do.

[00:21:04] **Nick:** And it also looks good in a trial. If, if the case detective is the one testifying to 17 different things that happened in the case. And there's no

one else doesn't look as good as if you have this detective testify and say, I don't know, the phone did this. And then you have the second detective come up and say, Hey, this is what happened here, all the facts phone did this, and then you have the expert come in and then testify as an expert and go, here's more information.

[00:21:25] **Nick:** Here's how it all works. The phone said this, and it's building that nice little nice little layer upon layer upon layer. That makes it really difficult to, to lose a case.

[00:21:33] **Jason:** Yeah, that's a good point. And both relieving the investigator of the duty and just another set of eyes on a piece of evidence and that and also if there's a some kind of breakdown in terms of how information was gathered or if there's one particular thing that you got to cut out.

[00:21:57] **Jason:** an investigator's testimony. You [00:22:00] have other ways to tell the story to the jury.

[00:22:03] **Kristen:** Hi, this is Kristen Lottman. My public service announcement is to say, get your face out of your phone and your fingers off your keyboard and make that face to face contact because that's how you'll connect with other people.

[00:22:20] **Jennifer:** This is Jennifer Loper. Good friends don't care if your house is clean. They care if you have wine.

[00:22:26] **Sean:** Hey, this is Sean Bear and I would like to suggest that everybody go learn programming. I think that's the one thing that has carried me through all the different aspects of my life. And if you learn some programming, you'll better understand the applications that you use. And who knows, you might even be able to write your own application.

[00:22:44] **Sean:** Good luck.

[00:22:50] **Nick:** Yeah, and we had a particularly tricky case in like 2021 where a kid was killed on his doorstep in broad daylight, middle of the day on like a Saturday or something. [00:23:00] I can't remember the specific day and we had no witness description other than he was all clad in black, couldn't see his face, his hair was black.

[00:23:07] **Nick:** We had some surveillance footage that showed. The guy were riding a scooter completely clad in black, no face, nothing. And ultimately that

case came down to the phones. So having, having multiple sets of eyes on the records before we arrested the, the, the kid that we ended up arresting was, was super important.

[00:23:24] **Jason:** Yeah. And that's your other badge story, right? This is the 15 year old, correct?

[00:23:29] **Nick:** Yeah,

[00:23:30] **Jason:** yeah. So let's go into a little bit more detail on on that. So you set the table . But how in particular did you do what you did?

[00:23:39] **Nick:** Well, that was fun. We basically for the first 2 days, we're working almost 24 7 because obviously when a kid gets shot.

[00:23:46] **Nick:** In the middle of the day in broad daylight, something is seriously wrong and we had no suspects. So we worked for probably 2 days straight doing reviewing surveillance footage and I probably went through maybe 36 hours worth of it in a couple of days [00:24:00] and then we started to kind of get tips that came in saying, hey, this person's.

[00:24:03] **Nick:** Saying that they did it and we finally got into the kid's phone and started to get piece by piece, we were able to pull out, Oh, who, this was the person he last talked to. This is what they were talking about. Here's them kind of starting to set up the meat and then Warren started to come back from like Snapchat and cell phones and all that stuff.

[00:24:19] **Nick:** And we first got the timing advance back from T Mobile and they absolutely messed up. And. Told us that, Hey, you guys aren't mountain standard time in Arizona. You guys do do that savings time. So here's your data. And it was an hour off and put the person that we thought did it on the scene an hour after.

[00:24:37] **Jason:** Oh, bummer.

[00:24:38] **Nick:** Yeah, not so great. So we've kind of, we still, we were comfortable enacting an arrest on, on that alone, but we still had the Snapchat coming back. So we just kind of pumped the brakes a little bit. And then we got the Snapchat back. I mapped it for him. We adjusted the timing advance one hour back and the Snapchat and timing advance put the suspect, I guess now defendant or the killer spoiler alert.[00:25:00]

[00:25:03] **Nick:** So we ended up going and arresting him and doing the whole case. We got the, we got everything that was on surveillance from his house and it was a really good case. And then due to it being a 15 year old, That was going away for a first degree murder. They decided to take it to trial. So we actually had to go through a two week trial on the case.

[00:25:17] **Jason:** Yeah. So, so before we get to that, you mentioned getting his phone. So at that point, when you got his phone, was he already arrested or how did you go through to get his phone? Oh, sorry. The victim's phone. The victim was the victim's phone. Okay. I'm sorry. Misunderstood that. Okay. So then that's that's what you're going through in terms of recreating the final moments of the victim.

[00:25:44] **Jason:** Okay. I'm on. Exactly. I'm on board then. So you so then you go to trial. And you, you're testifying at the trial. Yes. All right. So how, so then yeah, just take us through that.

[00:25:57] **Nick:** It was position. I never really thought I was going [00:26:00] to be in as an analyst when you kind of the first few years don't really want to go to testify.

[00:26:05] **Nick:** I kept telling my detectives don't don't mention my name necessarily. It's just from a department asset for you. This is how we're going. And then once I became the expert, it's like, nah, you have to, Kind of have to step up now you have you have the certification so it was it was interesting. It was about two and a half hours including a break between Direct and cross and then redirect I had to testify to The timing advance being an hour off.

[00:26:29] **Nick:** I had to explain to the jury how cell phones work in terms of how they're Connecting to a cell site and now it might not necessarily be the closest or it's just the strongest signal, how timing advance works and how light speed is what they use. So it's a constant. So it is mathematical engineering data.

[00:26:45] **Nick:** It's kind of hard to do anything but interpret it as such. And showed him a PowerPoint that took me, I don't know, 30 hours to make going step by step through the last moments of the victim, how the suspect passed a camera at a certain time. [00:27:00] And the, the record showed that and how. Snapchat showed him exactly where he was entering the neighborhood, and the amount of time it took for him to enter the neighborhood was perfect between the two hits, and it was a very methodical experience, only to have the defense attorney come back and tell you that you don't know what you're talking about, and everything that you did is false.

[00:27:18] **Jason:** Yeah, so before we get to that, so you're, again, you're corroborating with other Pieces of information you mentioned the camera and you mentioned snapchat and so by this point in time when you're testifying had you got an opportunity to seize the suspects phone or are you just testifying you just. On the victim's phone.

[00:27:42] **Nick:** No, he sees the suspect's phone. His geolocation data on the physical phone itself wasn't particularly useful. But his texts and stuff we were able to marry with the victim's device and say, hey, the the device that we seized from this guy is the same device that is associated with this Snapchat [00:28:00] because it's using the same phone number, email, IMEI.

[00:28:03] **Nick:** That kind of stuff just to build brick by brick to say, Hey, this is the phone that did that. And this is his phone.

[00:28:08] **Jason:** Okay. All right. So let's get into the defense cross now because i'm always fascinated By this point when analysts are testifying And the biggest fear In testifying is really being run through the ringer in terms of cross.

[00:28:26] **Jason:** So let's, let's talk about this in terms of what types of questions, what did they come after you on?

[00:28:32] **Nick:** It was interesting because during the defense interview, he had some really interesting questions about like how cell phone networks work and all these different technical high. high knowledge questions that he was going to throw at me.

[00:28:42] **Nick:** And I some of those, I wasn't able to even able to answer in the defense interview, but when it came to cross, he was only allowed to use some of it. So he really tried to get me on the timing, advance being incorrect saying, Hey, He was here an hour later. It can't be him trying to get me on that.

[00:28:59] **Nick:** And [00:29:00] Snapchat has this weird quirk where when you get it from them their geolocation data, they cut off the last three parts of the lat long. So even though they're telling you, Hey, this is a four meter ping at this exact location. Whether or not they truncated or just round it, I don't know, but you get a weird kind of grid looking pattern that makes it so you have to explain why The grid, it's like, it's not at the house, it's right next to the house on the lat long grid.

[00:29:24] **Nick:** It should be because it's only able to be so specific.

[00:29:28] **Jason:** Just

[00:29:29] **Nick:** enough there to raise reasonable doubt, right? He tried. Some of the, some of the visuals I prepared for them kind of stopped that in his tracks because I had two visuals, one of the suspects phone and a Snapchat and one of the victims phone and Snapchat.

[00:29:41] **Nick:** And not only did I have them at the same place at the same time on the same pit I had videos for each of them showing the. The Snapchat hits bouncing around their respective houses rather than being in the house specifically. So that kind of helped them see that I'm not messing with them or messing with data.

[00:29:57] **Nick:** He also tried to get me on [00:30:00] Snapchat has this very specific verbiage in their privacy policy involving GPS and their location data saying they use cell towers and they used gyroscopes and all these different types of, of measurement devices for, for phones. And saying, hey, it uses all of these, so you can't necessarily believe the T Mobile stuff, because it's an hour off.

[00:30:18] **Nick:** And now Snapchat's using these same systems, so you can't believe Snapchat either. Yeah. So, so, I guess, how did you counter that? To start, I kind of chuckled at him, which I probably shouldn't have done. Because he was, he was reading this off from the privacy policy word for word, and he's just throwing out things that They just don't matter in the grand scheme of GPS stuff.

[00:30:39] **Nick:** Like if I needed to tell you what angle the phone was held at, then sure, some of these matter or how high off of the ground or how fast it's moving in a very small period of time. Sure. But ultimately I just, I laughed at them twice because he, he said the whole thing and then. The stenographer had him repeat it and it was funny the second time, but I do not recommend laughing at a defense attorney twice.

[00:30:59] **Nick:** [00:31:00] They don't like it. And then it just explained like none of that matters if he's able to, like, if he wants me to say what I really want to say, which is this phone was at the house, then all of that comes into play. But I'm not. I'm not able to necessarily say that based on the data that I had, I was able to say, Hey, here's the timeline.

[00:31:15] **Nick:** Here's the, here's the speed of travel that he was using, which is like coincides with this bike. I can tell you he's in the area of the cul de sac



within this general amount of meters. I can't tell you that he walked up to the doorstep with that phone. We all know he did. But you're not letting me tell you that.

[00:31:33] **Nick:** So none of that matters.

[00:31:34] **Jason:** Yeah. So there is, unfortunately in this case, just enough, a little bit of air, but again, a reasonable person would conclude that, yeah, this is, this is the suspect. The phone was in the vicinity during the time and just enough to, again, I could understand why he was trying to create the idea of reasonable [00:32:00] doubt.

[00:32:00] **Nick:** Yeah. And the interesting part is he didn't really attack me as much in cross as I thought he would cross ended up being like 45 minutes. And then we had a little bit of redirect and direct or redirect on the prosecutor. And then he had some follow up stuff about radiuses versus. Diameters and stuff like that, that the jury asked about.

[00:32:20] **Nick:** But where he really came in at me was in closing. He, he accused me of fabricating data because I had to change the time zone. He accused me of manipulating data and using false. Conclusions based off of the data and all, all of that. So it was, it was really interesting. And the whole court the whole court case is recorded.

[00:32:38] **Nick:** So I've presented it before and I have like snippets that I can show in the PowerPoint. And I have that in my PowerPoint of him just absolutely raking over the coals.

[00:32:48] **Jason:** Well, since, since you got the verdict you wanted, it's easy to laugh at that now, right?

[00:32:52] **Nick:** Oh, yeah. At the time I was just quaking because I was like, wow, he's saying some really mean things.

[00:32:57] **Nick:** And if the, if the jury believes them, then [00:33:00] we're in trouble. But yeah, ultimately the jury They didn't believe a single second of anything he said and they came back within like two hours. Yeah, yeah.

[00:33:07] **Jason:** So then he wasn't necessarily coming after you in terms of the phone wasn't on the suspect or his client all the time, right?

[00:33:18] **Jason:** There was nothing there that, because that's one of the things you usually have to establish is like, okay, this is, is this your phone? And was it ever not in your possession type of thing? Those are some series of questions that investigators usually ask folks in terms of once they're talking about cell phone and cell phone evidence.

[00:33:38] **Nick:** Yeah, we didn't, that never really, at least. Not from the parts of the trial that I was able to see because he didn't I can't remember what the rule is called, but if he invoked something that I can't listen or come to the trial until my time to testify, so I don't, I haven't gone back yet because it was less than a year ago, but I don't know if that played in the start, but given the fact that he [00:34:00] gave us the passcode, he gave us the phone, all of his stuff was on his phone and he's a 15 year old kid with like a Snapchat and everything on his phone.

[00:34:06] **Nick:** I, and. It's definitely, it's definitely his phone. Like, I don't think that ever was really in question.

[00:34:12] **Jason:** So, so what, what was this all about? Yeah, it's, it's teenagers. So what, what did the, what was the reason for this homicide?

[00:34:20] **Nick:** We're not quite sure the reason for it. We think it was because the victim was the local kind of like the like the THC vape carts, he was, he was selling that at the school and he might've given like, The suspect a bad cart.

[00:34:33] **Nick:** So we're not, we're not sure about that. And then he was going to give them like, they were, they were, they were meeting to sell a giant, or I guess the rest of the suspect's cart stock for the day, so maybe he wanted to get it for free. We're not, but we don't, we don't really know. That was one of the things in the trial that was interesting as we didn't, we didn't really have a motive and we never had, like, we never reported it.

[00:34:52] **Nick:** Recovered the gun. So it really came down to the phone or phone as a

[00:34:57] **Jason:** I seem so senseless Oh,

[00:34:59] **Nick:** it it [00:35:00] was definitely very senseless. Yeah.

[00:35:01] **Jason:** Oh, all right. So then what was the sense ascendant thing?

[00:35:04] **Nick:** He got 30 Five and a half. Three, three and a half. Something around there. Mm-Hmm. 'cause the judge decided to run the aggravated burglary and the first degree homicide consecutively.

[00:35:17] **Nick:** So he got the 25 max. So yeah, it would be 35 and a half. He got the 25 max and then the 10 years for the aggravated burglary. So he'll get out of prison in his fifties. Something around there, man. Again, all over a vape cart.

[00:35:31] **Jason:** Geez. Yeah. The middle of the day. . Yeah. All right. Let's talk a little bit about snapchat because you, you mentioned it in this case and in the prep call, you, you mentioned the importance of, of snapchat.

[00:35:45] **Jason:** So this is kind of go over your experience with snapchat and maybe how it's different from other social media programs.

[00:35:54] **Nick:** Yeah, sure. Basically from. I guess maybe not this case, but there was one prior that we worked on that I [00:36:00] never ended up going to trial. But from the first time I got a, like a geolocation return from Snapchat, from now on, I tell detectives, if you have a Snapchat, you are writing for that Snapchat.

[00:36:08] **Nick:** I don't care. Please listen to me. Because the stuff that you get back from Snapchat is absolutely insane. Like you'll get geolocation data, you'll get images, you'll get videos, you'll get memories, you'll get conversations, you'll get group chats, like The, the, the data that you can get back on, on some of these accounts is, is absolutely wild.

[00:36:26] **Nick:** The only thing that's different is their retention policy is relatively fluid in the sense that stuff can disappear or I guess, time out and be actually deleted on varied timeframes. So definitely get a preservation in as soon as you possibly can. But once you know how to work with their geolocation data, I've, I've had hit like for the case for the homicide, like, He had a five meter ping hit right outside the front door of the victim.

[00:36:51] **Nick:** Oh,

[00:36:51] **Jason:** jeez.

[00:36:52] **Nick:** Yeah.

[00:36:52] **Jason:** What was he doing there? Like, why was he taking, why was he taking photos like right outside the door? [00:37:00] You don't need to take photos.

[00:37:01] **Nick:** Oh, okay. Snapchat will collect geolocation data anytime you're accessing the place. Oh, okay. All right. Yeah. That makes sense. You don't have to necessarily be taking a photo.

[00:37:09] **Nick:** You could be sending a snap, receiving a snap, receiving a text. But there's also like the the find my friends thing where you can see all your friends on geolocation. So Snapchat's recording all of that.

[00:37:20] **Jason:** Oh, okay. Well, that, that, that makes me. That makes more sense. I can't imagine. I was like, Oh, I'm just going to take a selfie right here before I kill this guy.

[00:37:28] **Jason:** So that makes sense. Or after. Yeah, you're right. Or after kind of thing. So yeah, so that it's all these nice programs are, can rat you out, so to speak. They definitely can. All right. And then to work with Snapchat in terms of law enforcement, is it similar to, other social media or is there anything in particular working with Snapchat that's, again, it may be a little bit different than what analysts might expect?

[00:37:58] **Nick:** Not necessarily. [00:38:00] The, the serving preservation is very similar to Google or some of the other ones where you have a portal. And for the most part, I'll do a lot of the preservations because it's not technically illegally I can't serve the warrants, obviously, but I can, I can help with preservations on that.

[00:38:11] **Nick:** And so it's, it's in terms of working with them. It's super easy. The stuff you get back, you get in spreadsheets. So any analyst will know how to kind of organize the spreadsheets and get all this chats in the same way that they want them and go through all the photos and everything like that and commercial tools like cell brighter.

[00:38:26] **Nick:** Or axiom or other forensics tools will kind of parse that for you and make a nice little reader if you want to. So yeah, they're not, they're not super difficult to work with and they're just getting better. They just had a law enforcement summit where they kind of told us, Hey, here's everything you need to do.

[00:38:41] **Nick:** Here's everything we can do. And they're actually working to combat the fentanyl crisis right now. So anything involving fentanyl is now an exigent. case and does not require you to provide them a warrant at the time to try and combat some of the the dealing and the overdose deaths which is really cool.

[00:38:57] **Jason:** Yeah and that's helpful and again [00:39:00] because of some of the short lived time spans that you have on some of this data that that I can imagine that that's helpful. Yeah absolutely. All right and well very good case I and I mentioned in your intro that you were awarded the Arizona Association of Crime Analysts member of the year award for 2023 and it was for this case.

[00:39:22] **Jason:** So kudos to you. Very well done. Thank you. All right. So let's talk a little bit about Cellbrite and as we transition to different topics and You've established yourself as a subject matter expert. You've now testified you have the technical expertise and and now I just couldn't just go over , your thoughts on working with so bright and your perspective on using the software.

[00:39:50] **Jason:** Yeah,

[00:39:50] **Nick:** So we have. We've been so bright specific for since before I was even there, but we recently got premium, which is the one that lets you kind of get through passcodes and [00:40:00] potentially brute force certain phones and stuff like that. So that's, that's been really cool. I definitely recommend any agency have some form of cell phone extraction tool.

[00:40:08] **Nick:** It could be great key. It could be so bright. There's a couple other ones that you can use that are not quite as expensive, but. Then they're not quite as good. But if you're not, if you're not dumping a phone for any any sizable case, you're missing a lot of data that you can use. So it's, it's been critical in a lot of our cases just to be able to access the phone.

[00:40:26] **Nick:** So to me, analysts have the right experience needed to be able to do these cellular forensics courses and blow through them and be ready to go through the data. And depending on your agency, your Probably already going through the reader on your own anyways for the detective so might as well you might as well get the technical expertise badge I guess to to back it up

[00:40:46] **Jason:** yeah and I mean I guess from you point of view you mentioned building computers since you were we won I but.

[00:40:56] **Jason:** You don't have to have a high degree of, [00:41:00] of technical skills to be able to use a program like Cellbrite, correct?

[00:41:04] **Nick:** No, you don't. You might need a little bit more of a understanding of like databases and some programming skills, maybe in some SQL or Python. If you really want to get into some of the apps that are not there.

[00:41:15] **Nick:** Supported by the program, or you want to break into key chains or for like key chains for and our iPhone devices or some other stuff for androids that you can see some some niche, but. Valuable data, you might need a little bit more training and proficiency there, but for in general, going through the phones for the most of the stuff you need, you don't, you don't really necessarily need that that level of technical expertise.

[00:41:37] **Jason:** So just in case they're listening, then you can give them some suggestions. Is there something you wish? So bright would do that doesn't currently,

[00:41:46] **Nick:** Work faster. Phones are getting too big. It's just, it's tough. They're working on it though. So no, I don't, I don't really have any, any notable things.

[00:41:54] **Nick:** It's just sometimes the, some of the software to load the extractions and takes he loaded in at 4. [00:42:00] PM because you know that you're going to go home and it'll be there the next day around noon when it opens it's. These phones are just getting absolutely massive. We dumped one that's had 512 gigs on it.

[00:42:09] **Nick:** So it just, it becomes crazy.

[00:42:11] **Jason:** Yeah, no, it's so much information. It's a, it's a lot. It's not just linking the, the phone up to your computer and hoping to download everything. And with with you definitely need special software nowadays. It's too complex. So very good. All right, I see on your resume here, though, too, you had a special assignment during COVID, being part of the outbreak response team.

[00:42:40] **Jason:** So, obviously, we're going on four years of, since, Since the COVID outbreak. So this is 2020. , what kind of things are you doing as part of the response team?

[00:42:52] **Nick:** Yeah. So at the time public health was five feet away from us in a different building and they didn't have an analyst on [00:43:00] staff or they didn't have one that could focus specifically on tracking metrics and people and stuff like that for the, for the response.

[00:43:08] **Nick:** So they. Asked my leadership if they were, they could borrow me, quote unquote, and I would go over there during all of the meetings and we would run the numbers and I would do all the spreadsheets and Google sheets and stuff like that for them, build the, the R program or the R scripts to access their database and spit out all the new cases and all that kind of stuff.

[00:43:26] **Nick:** So I did that for a couple months until they, so they finished their response and then they ended up hiring on a data analyst after me because they needed that kind of that kind of work and they saw the value out of it. So they were able to get a new position for it, which is cool.

[00:43:41] **Jason:** Nice help where you can.

[00:43:43] **Jason:** So was this in in in lieu of your. Analyst duties or was this something extra you did on the side?

[00:43:50] **Nick:** It was something extra I did on this side. It was about, I don't know, 10, 10 to 12 hours a week, depending on the, the week. So I was working about 50, 50 to 55 hour weeks for the, [00:44:00] for COVID, just to make sure that everything was running smoothly.

[00:44:02] **Jason:** All right. No, no. Good job on that. So, all right. Very good. A couple other items here I, I picked on you earlier that seems like everybody I talked to in Arizona has worked the Super Bowl. So you were a part of Super Bowl 2023 doing the OSINT and threat monitoring. So what's your take on that experience?

[00:44:23] **Jason:** I

[00:44:24] **Nick:** would heavily recommend any analyst that wants to do it. Absolutely do. TLO type stuff, threat monitoring, open source, intelligence monitoring for events like that. Just be careful what you're getting yourself into. It will be a lot of work. I did about 12 hours on the Saturday before doing monitoring and making sure everything was up and running.

[00:44:41] **Nick:** And then I spent about 12 hours in the Arctic up in Phoenix with all of the other analysts from various jurisdictions, FBI, that kind of stuff.

And we, we were watching everything to make sure everything. Was good to go there, but that's 24 hours of work on a weekend. So know what you're getting yourself into, but I recommend it's very, very fun.

[00:44:58] **Jason:** Yeah, and it [00:45:00] seems to me from what I've heard from other analysts is it's a lot of security and surveillance. And people are maybe drinking and whatnot and venture to maybe where they're not supposed to be, or maybe they're doing something that they're breaking a minor role type of thing. And that's mostly the types of stuff that you're dealing with.

[00:45:23] **Jason:** Fortunately, right? I'm not I'm like, I'm glad that you weren't part of one that was like a huge terrorist threat. But for the most part, it's, it's not as sexy as maybe it sounds, as I guess was the point I'm trying to make.

[00:45:35] **Nick:** No, it's a lot. It's a lot of prep work and it's on it. If it's not supposed to be sexy, right?

[00:45:40] **Nick:** If you do a good job and you do what you're supposed to do, nobody knows you exist and that's what you're supposed to do. So we do the same thing for country thunder every year. We deploy some unmarks into the, into the crowd to make sure that That we have a response that's, that's not just guns blazing kind of deal.

[00:45:55] **Nick:** And I'm responsible for making sure that they're in there and safe and monitoring stuff like that. So as long [00:46:00] as nothing happens, nobody knows you exist. You did a good job. Yeah. So,

[00:46:03] **Jason:** And as I mentioned in your intro, you are certified with IACA. And I imagine when you testify, these certifications come in handy when they're introducing you to the jury and you have these various certifications.

[00:46:17] **Jason:** So what other benefit do you feel that you got from the ICA certification?

[00:46:22] **Nick:** Yeah, definitely. On the testifying side, it's. It looks so good. And you can say, Hey, I'm a certified analyst. They don't necessarily even know what you go through, which is a lot, but just hearing that you can defend that is really nice.

[00:46:33] **Nick:** Being able to put it on your resume for other jobs, if that's something you want to do is really good. Cause then they know that you know what you're doing. And it's honestly just a good experience to test yourself as



well. It's, it's a pretty rigorous process and it should definitely not be taken lightly.

[00:46:46] **Nick:** I'm glad I didn't.

[00:46:48] **Jason:** Yeah. And you were part of, we had this discussion too. You were part of, when you got certified, you were part of, the revision that ICA recently went through the last couple [00:47:00] of years, where they revamped, the main certification, but also created the entry level, the leaf certification.

[00:47:09] **Nick:** Yeah. So I took it in 2021, I wanna say in Mm-Hmm. in Vegas. Yeah. So it was just, just changed. It was still a four hour test of a lot of questions though.

[00:47:20] **Jason:** Yeah, no, it, it is pretty rigorous. I mean, I, I took it and of course I am. Part of the the older system for testing, but it's it's it's not something that you can just show up and take.

[00:47:32] **Jason:** You do. You have to study. . There's going to be parts of the test that you're don't work with every day and that you're might not be as familiar with. So it's definitely something that you're going to have to study and read up on each each topic.

[00:47:49] **Nick:** Yeah, and some of the advanced statistics.

[00:47:51] **Nick:** Thanks. Parts are, I mean, you need to know what you're doing in terms of some of those models and data and all that fun stuff. You need to know your calculations for [00:48:00] percent change off the top of your head, stuff like that.

[00:48:01] **Jason:** Yeah. And that's, and that's coming from someone that likes stats.

[00:48:05] **Nick:** I do like stats.

[00:48:06] **Nick:** I still, it was a lot of, it was a lot of preparation for just that module has someone who has done master's level statistics. It's, it's still quite, quite a bit. So you got to know what you're talking about.

[00:48:15] **Jason:** All right, good. Let's get some advice for our listeners and just want to get your take need I usually like to ask about return on investment

something that an analyst can study now that might be important five years from now, but I'll leave it open as well.

[00:48:30] **Jason:** Just any kind of general advice that you have for our listeners.

[00:48:33] **Nick:** I definitely make sure you are keeping up with all the updates and like AI, all the updates in the open source world, all the updates and phones and computers and crypto, cause they're not, they're not going away. And we're probably going to see some crazy things happen with AI voice cloning and image cloning and such that will be crimes that we'll have to figure out how to handle.

[00:48:52] **Nick:** And if you keep up with it, then you might not be as blindsided. I'm sure everybody's going to be blindsided by some [00:49:00] random AI thing that we'll never think of. But. It's definitely worth keeping up on the technological side of things because it's not going away and it's only going to get more ingrained.

[00:49:09] **Nick:** We're only going to have more computers in our house, more computers in our cars, more computers in our pockets. So,

[00:49:15] **Jason:** yes, it is fascinating. Concept though, because you're studying up on something that's not quite here yet and so I know for me, it's, it's really abstract and and I can read up on it and I can do my best to understand multiple aspects of it, but I, And unfortunately, I think it's, it's not going to be real and fully studied until there's a major case and then then people have a have a more concrete ideas like, oh, this is it, this is the threat.

[00:49:56] **Jason:** Now I can go through and study and [00:50:00] get a better idea of, , what analysts need to know in order to either prevent that. Incident or to what to do. Once that incident has occurred for their department.

[00:50:13] **Nick:** Yeah. And I mean, some of it's already here just based off of maybe this, this podcast, there's enough data here to do a voice clone.

[00:50:21] **Nick:** And then if they wanted to do something malicious with that voice going, they could, it's not particularly difficult yet. You just need some money and the access to the, to the models and the data that you need to train. So,

[00:50:33] **Jason:** yeah, that would be quite a surprise if I wake up one day and there's some kind of threat going worldwide and it happens to be my voice.

[00:50:42] **Nick:** Exactly. It's scary. It's, it's don't need much. You don't need the hundreds and hundreds of hours like you used to. Yeah, no, that would be, that

[00:50:49] **Jason:** would be a shock. That's for sure. So I was like, Oh, do I really sound like that? All right. So let's take some calls. As I mentioned in the beginning of the [00:51:00] show, we're doing a call in segment and we've got some callers on the line.

[00:51:03] **Jason:** We're doing favorite first jobs. And I always mentioned this with favorite first jobs. I got this idea from Steve Gottlieb and when he was a guest on this show, he talked about Being a DJ for his local radio show at the age of 17, he hosted the Sunday morning program. So I always like to ask have this call on segment from time to time to ask analysts what their favorite jobs are.

[00:51:30] **Jason:** . All right, so first on the line is Annette. Annette, what's, what are your favorite first jobs?

[00:51:36] **Annette:** My favorite first job is when I was in high school, I worked for Eckerd Drug. I moved up to their corporate location and started working in their sample room, so I got to make all the planograms and design how the shells were laid out. But I will tell you, I will not eat candy anymore because of how long it's But once the season was over, the stuff would get thrown away.

[00:51:53] **Annette:** So I have a whole house full of Christmas decorations, but I never had to pay for

[00:51:56] **Jason:** it. That's a nice first [00:52:00] job. So there's science behind everything, right? And marketing's in another example of that. So she was talking about the developing the displays and. Developing the store cutouts and whatnot.

[00:52:14] **Jason:** And so there's, there's a whole science to all of that. So for somebody to do that as their first job is that that's a pretty high up there. I mean, I always say my, my first job was flipping burgers at a local amusement park for 3 an hour. So to be doing this at, at, at such a young age is quite impressive.

[00:52:34] **Nick:** Yeah. It always surprises me what jobs. People did prior to getting into law enforcement because I've heard some just an entire gamut of things from from stuff like that So, you know being working in like design

[00:52:45] **Jason:** So yeah now eckert drugs. Are you familiar with that?

[00:52:49] **Nick:** I have no idea what that is.

[00:52:51] **Jason:** Yeah So i'm familiar with that.

[00:52:53] **Jason:** It probably was a regional thing. I can't remember how widespread eckert drugs [00:53:00] was And I think that they got bought out by one of the big pharmacies. Now, whether that's Walgreens or CVS, I can't remember, but it would be just like your normal drug store. So not only kind of a convenience store, too, so they would have beyond pharmacy stuff, they would have odds and ends.

[00:53:24] **Jason:** So when she's talking about the candy there, yeah, what well past any shelf life, I can, I can imagine some of that, candy being, but yeah, so . It brings back a distinct memory because I remember as a child , going to Eckert drugs and checking out, they had a toy section and the candy section, obviously.

[00:53:43] **Jason:** So that. To me, it brings up particular memories. All right, next on the line is Austin. Austin, what's one of your favorite first jobs?

[00:53:52] **Austin:** Hey Jason, my favorite first job was in high school. I actually was a youth baseball umpire and [00:54:00] Did that for about three years, but as a teenager it was incredibly fun and baseball fan to be able to call the game and Have adult coaches yell at you

[00:54:13] **Jason:** What age group was it?

[00:54:14] **Austin:** It was everywhere from t ball all the way up to Ninth grade, like freshman high school travel baseball league.

[00:54:20] **Jason:** I would not find that fun to be honest with you. I don't know about you, but to me, I, I enjoyed baseball. I enjoyed playing baseball, but getting yelled out by parents is not my cup of tea.

[00:54:33] **Jason:** That's for sure.

[00:54:34] **Nick:** Yeah. I liked coaching. I did a lot of soccer coaching. I grew up in Germany, so baseball's not really, a lot more, a lot more of the soccer, but yeah, it's kind of crazy that. Parents and coaches like the level of rage that they will yell at the referee just for the smallest of calls.

[00:54:53] **Jason:** Yeah.

[00:54:54] **Jason:** Well, that's some of this stuff is just, it's so much time and money and energy spent [00:55:00] on it. Right. I mean, I talked to parents and they're like, Oh yeah, my kids in travel league. And I'm like, where did you go over the weekend? And you're going all over the country for this travel league, or you're spending your entire Saturday at a field, whether that's baseball or soccer and whatnot.

[00:55:18] **Jason:** And so they've obviously are well invested in whatever this activity is that their child is doing. And then when the, that. All concludes with a questionable call that is bound to happen. While I'm not excusing them losing their mind, I can put myself in their shoes enough to empathize with their frustration that that why they're so angry.

[00:55:40] **Nick:** That makes sense.

[00:55:41] **Jason:** Yeah. All right. So next on the line is Michelle. Michelle, what's one of your favorite first jobs?

[00:55:47] **Michelle:** My favorite first job was working at. Bath and body works at the mall during Christmas. You would think that that would be stressful to people, but it was an opportunity to take my sort of introverted [00:56:00] self and be able to meet people and quickly talk to them and strike up conversation.

[00:56:05] **Michelle:** And it was fun. And I got to meet others and take home lots of candles and scented soap. For Christmas gifts to people,

[00:56:15] **Jason:** it's funny, I think in the high school and even in college, we used to go in there and we would have like perfume wars with one another. Like, we would just spray the free samples on each other when no one did not pay for.

[00:56:30] **Jason:** Paying attention. So we would get leave that place smelling all literally Rosie, because of all the different scents that we were spraying all

over each other. But so yeah, as I I, the mall there is certainly something that's probably going away, but I , I do remember , that store.

[00:56:49] **Jason:** And so I can understand that, that being a fond memory for her.

[00:56:52] **Nick:** Yeah, that does not sound fun to me. I am, I am definitely very introverted in the thought of doing something like that. It's just like, [00:57:00] no, I like my computer. Yeah.

[00:57:01] **Jason:** Yeah. Not enough tech there for you, you know? So too much too much, like opinion based stuff.

[00:57:08] **Jason:** Like, okay, how, how does this smell? Does this, does this smell good on me? I kind of think. All right. Last but not least is Ashley. Ashley, which one of your favorite first jobs?

[00:57:18] **Ashley:** My first job was at McDonald's. And I really, really liked that job because I worked with my best friend. And so the two of us worked the drive thru together and she would take the orders and I would give out the food.

[00:57:32] **Ashley:** And since we both wore headsets, we could talk to each other in between. So it was kind of like I was talking to her on the phone and also working and getting paid. And I got a free meal every time I worked.

[00:57:44] **Jason:** Nice. How often did your ice cream machine break down?

[00:57:48] **Ashley:** All the time. Okay.

[00:57:49] **Jason:** So I didn't realize that.

[00:57:51] **Jason:** Yeah, it is a thing. There's a whole like YouTube special dedicated to it. I had no idea for the longest time that it was a thing. [00:58:00]

[00:58:00] **Ashley:** No, it was, I'm pretty sure that they buy them like already broken.

[00:58:04] **Jason:** Yeah, it is. See, I think that would be. First stressful as I think it would be to work at McDonald's. I mean, I could understand that there would be some upside to it especially how she described it where it was just her

and her best friend working light through the drive through and just getting paid to hang out with one another.

[00:58:25] **Nick:** Yeah, it's definitely whoever you work with is just as important as the job itself. And also none of none of my generation even tries to order ice cream anymore because we all know the machine's broken.

[00:58:34] **Jason:** Oh, yeah. No, I always tell the story when my wife was pregnant with our first child. Our son, she said, and it was around this time he was born at the end of April and she said she wanted a shamrock shake and I drove to three different McDonald's in the area and all three of them were broken on that particular night.

[00:58:56] **Jason:** The best thing that I could come up with. I believe I got her something [00:59:00] like some chocolate mint thing at the grocery store. I think that was the closest that I think I could come up with in that particular situation, but I was amazed that that all three of them were broken.

[00:59:11] **Jason:** Alright, so that is favorite first jobs. If you have a favorite first job and you want to share, email us at leappodcasts at gmail. com. Alright, Nick, let's finish up with personal interest then. And for you. You're a gamer so what is your game of choice? Yeah,

[00:59:33] **Nick:** I've pretty much played the same game for the past 20 years.

[00:59:36] **Nick:** I've played World of Warcraft since it basically came out. So that's kind of been a staple for then, but I played everything from Fortnite with my wife and nephew and I played Baldur's Gate and recently that how world game, which was really fun. So it just depends on what's out. Then how much time i have

[00:59:51] **Jason:** yeah now i remember when war of warcraft was popular at least from my perspective i'm talking about [01:00:00] maybe 2004 ish i mean it's probably about 20 20 years ago now is that there was actually a online website dedicated to widows.

[01:00:12] **Jason:** Of War of Warcraft, basically that the wives had lost their husbands to this game because it was such a time suck and they never saw them once the game came out or a particular updates came out for the game. So there was a whole thing of widows they would get together and chat while their husbands played War of Warcraft.

[01:00:35] **Jason:** Yeah,

[01:00:35] **Nick:** that sounds about right.

[01:00:36] **Jason:** It is pretty time intensive, right? I think I, I was curious to when the Harry Potter game came out last year and I thought my son might be interested in it, but then I was written like looking at the reviews and saw how much time it was.

[01:00:54] **Jason:** I'm like, Oh, I'm kind of glad he didn't get into it. Cause that's a lot of time and effort to get that. To get [01:01:00] yourself established in that game.

[01:01:01] **Nick:** Oh yeah. Depending on what you do in certain games, like even in wow. If, if you want to do some of the more competitive stuff, you're pretty close to an analyst for the game.

[01:01:12] **Nick:** Cause you have to be doing spreadsheets and you have to be doing analysis and you have to be doing like tactical response to stuff it's, it can get kind of crazy. So it's definitely, definitely a hobby that you. Don't get to spend a lot of time on

[01:01:26] **Jason:** it takes some time it's funny cuz some people might hear that and like oh you take the fun out of it or oh you you're taking it too seriously but for you i'm imagining.

[01:01:38] **Jason:** It's fun and even going to that degree of like, okay, how do I better myself? How do I strategically put myself in a better position for this game and using spreadsheets or using stuff that you use at work to then better yourself in this game? I imagine for you. It's fun.

[01:01:57] **Nick:** Yeah, it's fun. And it's it's almost Learn Like [01:02:00] cyclical some of the stuff that I've learned in some of the games that I've played has been super impactful on my ability to work for the sheriff's office and some games require you to be able to wake up at three in the morning to handle something and I've had to do that for the sheriff's office a couple times so you just need some programming that you have to learn you know it's it's Depending on what you do, it can, it can be cool to hone your skills in two different areas and see, see the benefit for both.

[01:02:26] **Jason:** All right. And so, and then you mentioned your wife plays with you. Does she keep up with you? She kick your butt pretty good. I



[01:02:33] **Nick:** wouldn't say she necessarily kicks my butt. Cause we'd like to do a lot of like. Co op stuff. We'll play some stuff like Played Up or Overcooked or games where it's like a team based kind of survive against the onslaught of people asking for food kind of deal.

[01:02:46] **Nick:** Okay. If we don't compete against each other that often. Keeps you married, right? I don't know. Some games like Overcooked are supposed to break marriages, but we seem to be doing okay. Yeah. [01:03:00]

[01:03:00] **Jason:** Keep it up. Get it. Spend that quality time together, right? Yeah. All right. So Nick, our last segment of the show is Words to the World.

[01:03:07] **Jason:** This is where you can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world?

[01:03:12] **Nick:** Kind of along what I just said. Look for the applicability of your skills and everywhere can be whatever your hobby is. But the work that we do as analysts is so broad and so much on problem solving and analyzing and figuring out what we need to do and where we need to find this information or all those different things.

[01:03:29] **Nick:** You can apply those to a lot of your hobbies or your day to day lives. So don't don't discount that.

[01:03:35] **Jason:** Very good. Well, I leave every guest with you. You've given me just enough to talk bad about your writer, but I do appreciate you being on the show, Nick, thank you so much, and you'd be set. Yeah. for inviting me.

[01:03:52] **Mindy:** for making it to the end of another episode of Analysts Talk with Jason Elder. You can show your support by sharing this and other episodes found on our [01:04:00] website at [www.leapodcasts.com](http://www.leapodcasts.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 at [leapodcasts@gmail.com](mailto:leapodcasts@gmail.com).

[01:04:11] **Mindy:** com till next time, analysts keep talking.