

# Pamela Miller - More Than Just a Degree

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

**Jason:** Thank you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason Elder, and today our guest has 11 years of law enforcement analysis experience. She spent time in Denton PD in Texas and the Kansas City Bureau of Investigation, also known as K B I. She holds a master's degree in digital forensic science.

She's here to talk about, among other things, analyzing violent crime. Please welcome Pamela Miller. Pamela, how are you doing? I'm doing

**Pamela:** well. And yourself?

**Jason:** I am hanging in there. It's been a busy, busy morning. I, I don't know what is in the air, but I feel like I've been on the phone now for about five [00:01:00] hours straight.

But we're here. I am excited to talk to you. There's so much to go over. Just a little housekeeping for our listeners. We are going to have a call in segment later. Favorite first job, so get your calls in now. Pam, just like I ask everybody, how did you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

**Pamela:** Yeah, so I started right outta kind of college and at the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and the incident based reporting section, and then promoted to a case manager. And when I was a case manager, basically I would take all of the narratives and the incident reports and I'd package them up to send a prosecution and reading some of the cases, I was reviewing what the intelligence analysts were doing for this case support and I went and spoke to a couple of 'em.

And it was a position where once you got in that role, like you retired there, it was all the people that had been there had been an analyst for years and [00:02:00] years. And then I spoke to them about what makes a good analyst, you know, what they were looking for. And then when a position. Position open in 2012.

I applied and I got that opportunity to be an Intel analyst.

**Jason:** You started out as in an admin role,

**Pamela:** right? Yeah, so incident based reporting in Kansas. If a law enforcement agency does not have the means to enter their reports in, to submit to the fbi, they would submit all of their offense and arrest reports to the incident based reporting section, and we would key those into the program and then submit those.

So I started off fat fingering in data. Mm-hmm. For years. I did it for like two years. And that I really understood the statutes by the time I got up to being an Intel analyst. So that, that was helpful, but

**Jason:** yeah. Yeah, and that's what I usually ask folks is like, , these jobs that led you to becoming an analyst to how did they influence.

When you got there, cuz [00:03:00] I think a lot of folks that wanna get in the profession have a tough time getting in it. It can, certain positions can be highly competitive, but anything that you can do at the government level, especially when it's close to the police department, , whether it's an admin staff, whether it's just doing records or, or anything that helps you learn different aspects of the jobs that can pay dividends later.

**Pamela:** Absolutely. I always tell people, get your foot in the door. And even the so analyst that we have here working with us now, she didn't start off in an analyst role. She started off, I think it was actually records as well, and the department and as supervisory staff got to know the work and they promoted up when that opportunity was there.

So, Yeah, don't be defeated if you don't get that role. Just find a way to get in.

**Jason:** And did you say soc? What does SOC stand

**Pamela:** for? [00:04:00] The Saki, the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative.

**Jason:** And I know on the federal side, like, man, that is really true.

Like once you get into the federal system, there is a lot of opportunity to transfer across the country. Once you're in the federal system, and I don't know if you felt that same way, being in a state system that okay, once you got into a

state position there in Kansas, there was plenty of opportunity to transfer if you wanted to.

**Pamela:** Yeah. So we didn't have opportunity. We didn't have those different field offices like the feds do. Mm-hmm. But we had three different field offices. We had one in Wichita great Bend and, and then in Topeka, and you could be put out to one of those. That's where analysts were at, were located at. And I think that there were quite a few of us at the K B I that actually did come from a position where we promoted up to that role.

**Jason:** When you think back now, when you first started in [00:05:00] 2012, what story comes to mind? What were some of the things that maybe you laugh at now as you're looking back and you were just brand new to the field? Oh,

**Pamela:** yeah. I was pretty green coming out and I, I remembered I was supposed to be the first strategic analyst that the Bureau had hired, and I was like, I don't, like, what am I supposed to do?

Like, I, I, I didn't even know what that word meant. I was like, I guess I'm gonna have to research. I was really good at research, and I remember when I interviewed I was so nervous that I was just like, I guess my role would be to, even if I was talking about squirrels, I need to, I need to make sure that everybody understands the migration pattern or like anything that they could about squirrels in that particular moment.

And I, I remember them looking at each other like, where did this go? So, yeah, I, I, I guess the other thing is so many of the analysts that were there had been there for years, so I could absorb a lot of their knowledge. They were very skilled in different things and that allowed me kind of [00:06:00] room to grow to.

**Jason:** So then was it strategic products that you were looking for? Was it threat assessments that you were tasked

**Pamela:** to do? Yes. So they wanted me to work on threat assessments. And initially with that kind of, I, I realized like very shortly that we didn't have like a gang database in Kansas.

So I realized that a lot of the gangs were like the, the street level gangs at that time were maybe within each city, but the outlaw motorcycle gangs, like nobody was tracking them statewide and because they crossed so many jurisdictions, like that was something that I really dug into. And so I, I would go

out and I would talk to the OMG experts and Kansas City and then the Midwest Cycle Investigators Association.

I, I was like the lone member from Kansas that would go to these meetings in Jefferson City, Missouri. Mm-hmm. And I did that for you know, by basically the six to seven years that I was an analyst at the [00:07:00] bureau. And then I would do threat assessments on that. And then when. Colorado legalized marijuana.

They wanted me to do a threat analysis on the impact of legalization of marijuana on Kansas. And that was pretty difficult because at the time, if, if you got arrested for D W I, they didn't like, there wasn't like a D W I and then a a separate statute for if you were driving under the influence of marijuana.

Mm-hmm. And so, like, I remember contacting Nebraska cuz I was like, are you doing this as well? And he's like, yes. And I was like, are you having trouble finding? He's like, yes, I'm having trouble finding data. And then I guess after I did that for a few years my supervisor at that time had left and then when we got a new supervisor, they they changed the kind of focus of the unit a little bit more.

And so they've repurposed my position back to like an investigative

**Jason:** support. What was your final conclusion with the, marijuana?

**Pamela:** Yeah. [00:08:00] Okay. So I didn't have, I couldn't get the quantitative data, right? Mm-hmm. And so they were like, we'll get the qualitative data. So then they just went out and interviewed people, and I was like, who supported the, the, yeah.

I, I, yeah. So that's, that's, you know, sometimes you, you can only, and that's, I learned very early on. I was like, I, I'll, I can show you the facts. These are what we have, these are the hard numbers, or this is what I'm able to get with that request. But I'm can't make, you can't make a story to fit a narrative with the data.

Like it's, it's, you shouldn't do that. It's, it'll skew it. So that's what I did.

**Jason:** . I, I remember writing some of those threat assessment and, and , I found it really difficult just because it just sounded like your conclusions were never very Solid. It's like, you know this, here's the data and you know, heroin's gonna continue to be a problem in this area.

It sounds like it wasn't, it was very like basic and you didn't really step out or stick your [00:09:00] neck out at all, and your conclusions. It was just basically very, like anybody can conclude that by looking at the data.

**Pamela:** Yes, I, yes, and that's completely how it was. And I also, I don't even know how many drafts I had, but every time I had to make a draft, I'd send it up the chain and then it would come back down.

I'm like, I'm pretty sure that this was like what we fixed on, on like draft version four, like, and now we're on draft version 37 and you're having me revert back to the it was, it was just painful

**Jason:** times. Yeah. So, so then as you mentioned, you go back or you, you head to investigations and so that's, that's a real.

Big shift, right? Going from this research aspect of writing threat assessments to now doing case support.

**Pamela:** Yeah, it was a, and it was almost like overnight, so I really had to catch up with the program. And I think the first case set was assigned to me as a solo analyst was you know, we, we [00:10:00] only worked certain cases if we were at the bureau and it, it was, you know, a homicide case.

And I'm like, Hey, I guess, here we go.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. Hmm. All right. Well let's get into a case then, because this brings us to your analyst badge story. And for those that may be new to the show the analyst badge story is the cr defining case or project that an analyst works. And so you are dealing with a homicide that starts in Kansas, but quickly goes transcontinental.

**Pamela:** Yes. I, I don't think I will ever work a case like this ever again. And it's, it was kind of started off and the Buck Center of Kansas with north of Salina, Kansas there was a murder I think Matthew Skoki was murdered inside of his house. And it was really a, like a, who done it We, we didn't have anything to go off of.

It was very remote, isolated where this gentleman lived. And it, it was kind of a wild ride for sure. The [00:11:00] victim was shot inside of his home. He had just gotten home from visiting his parents and was still in his FedEx employee uniform. And he died. He was shot in the bathroom and his truck, his dog and some of his clothing items were missing.

And we tracked that truck from license plate reader pings all the way from Kansas to California. Where the truck was discovered outside of LA in Los Angeles. And once we got the truck, we started processing it. And it ended up that the suspect that we were after he tied the dog up to a pole after, like the dog he just got sick of traveling with, I don't know.

So we tied this dog up to a pole. Somebody else found the dog and took it to the Maine Society. And when they were processing the dog for intake, they saw the name Shaki on the back of it on his collar. So they googled it cuz he had the address and found this recent homicide and they contacted the family and the [00:12:00] family over the phone was able to give like German commands to the Australian Shepherd because that's how Matthew had trained this dog.

And that's how they confirmed it. And then that those people drove that dog all the way back to be with the family. And I remember like when we heard about this in the office, like. One of the analysts was like, really emotional about it. And I'm like, Taylor, like it's a, it's a dog. Like we're dealing with lives, like human lives here.

And she's like, that is the most precious story I've ever heard. I was like, oh, sweet mercy.

**Jason:** So what city was the dog tied to the pole?

**Pamela:** Los

**Jason:** Angeles. Okay. So the, the suspect had traveled quite a long time with this

**Pamela:** dog. Yes. And they had him on video of where he tied this dog up.

And then the suspect wasn't done yet. He gets, he boards an Amtrak train, and while they're traveling on that train, he gets in a fight with a passenger on the train and ends up stabbing a passenger. And then he jumps [00:13:00] off of the train. He gets hit by another Amtrak train going the opposite direction and it almost.

Completely lacerated his foot. So he's in the hospital and the county sheriffs are like, over there, are like, we don't wanna, like, who's gonna take up this hospital bill? Because, you know, we've got a stabbing here. And we show up and we're like, we want him, like, he's our suspect in our homicide case outta Kansas.

And they're like, have that. So when Agent Bundy goes into the hospital room, this kid's like, you know, hi how are you? And, and Steve's like, well, I'm. You know, I'm Steve Bundy. I'm a special agent with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. He is like, well, what do you have to do with this? Like, kind of stabbing.

And he is like, I'm not here for a stabbing, I'm here for the homicide that happened. And he is like, I want a lawyer. So yeah, it was, it was, it was the wildest story. But so the

**Jason:** person, did the person die that was stabbed on the train?

**Pamela:** No. And he ended up, [00:14:00] I believe he was visiting stateside. He was from Australia.

He's, he's a resident. He's in Australia. Guy that was over here on vacation. And he didn't wanna prosecute because he didn't wanna have to fly back. For, for like court and stuff like that. So that, I don't think they per, they didn't pursue those other charges, but yeah, we extradited 'em back to Kansas and that was the first homicide trial that I actually testified in as well.

So there are a lot of, first with this particular case. Mm-hmm. And then what, what my role on it was, was he had originally boarded a Greyhound bus that left a town in Maine. And we, I basically had to track him all the way from Maine taking Greyhounds to Junction City, Kansas, where he had gotten off of the Greyhound bus to use the restroom cause he, and then didn't.

Board it he missed it when the bus left. So he started walking along. I 70 and a Kansas Highway [00:15:00] patrolman pulled up, pulled over and said, you know, you can't walk along the interstate. It's illegal, but I can take you to a highway and you can walk the rest of the way on this highway. It'll connect you to Salina and where another great hound terminal is.

And so the trooper gets him into his patrol car and then drives him. To an intersection at this highway, and he seen leaving and walking down. And that, that was important because we had like dash cam and obviously the Trooper's video of pulling him over and him being in Kansas near the, near the location of Hawke's House.

And then cell phone called the detail records, put 'em on towers around the house. And then and then the, I guess the rest is history.



**Jason:** Hmm. So what is his connection to

**Pamela:** Shaki? Nothing. He had, oh. They, yeah. It, it's absolutely terrible. He had just broken in the house and then Shawki got home and he just shot and killed him.

And then stole his [00:16:00] property and drove out. The craziest thing was, and when the truck was recovered in Los Angeles and they had, they were processing it, a cos light can was found in the truck that had Colson, who is the suspect's d n a on it. And during trial we had a cos light representative come in to testify that the manufacturing time date and st.

Timestamp and stuff on that can. Matched it would've been processed about the same time that the beer and Hawke's fridge had been processed. So that's because there was no d n a of Colson inside the residence. The only thing that we had, that he had went inside the residence was that beer can And then the gun the gun that was found, that was the murder weapon.

That was Hawke's. Oh, okay. And where was that found at? In the truck as well with oh, okay. I believe it had Colson's d n A on that. So there, there was like a lot of stuff that the [00:17:00] res that we found in the truck that was recovered. W but I mean, I remember the assistant Attorney general.

I called her after I had testified cuz I was very, very nervous afterwards. Like, did I do everything? Did I answer all the questions right, yada, yada, yada. And she called me, she was like, Pam, the jury gasped when we brought up the coolers. I can, I, I'm pretty sure it's okay. So yeah, he was convicted of, of those charges and he was cons, he was sentenced to life in prison and he won't be eligible for parole for 25 years.

**Jason:** And then I guess back to you testifying, did you get much pushback from the defense cross examine wise?

**Pamela:** Yes. So I, another analyst did the call detail records cuz there was so much to be done on this case. And I, I focused on, like I'd said the, the travel itinerary of the Greyhound and then the financial the credit cards that were used and then some of the C [00:18:00] C T cameras.

So the defense wanted to know, like he was asking questions about the Greyhound stuff because Greyhound basically will say yes. A ticket was purchased with this credit card, but they don't know who boards . Once it's purchased, like they don't really keep track of whoever's boarding it after that.



And then he was asking about who actually used the credit cards. Could I testify that so-and-so was using the credit cards and stuff like that. And I remember saying something like, granted, this has been, I don't know, six, seven years ago, but the, I got reexamined by the Assistant Attorney General because she's like, you shouldn't, like, just, just don't elaborate, just.

Stick to like, yes, no, I don't know. And I was like, okay, all right, I'll do that. Because the other thing was, is that what I realized very shortly is some of the questions that even she asked me on the stand, like I didn't, we didn't even talk. She just said, did you make this map? And I was like, yes. And she's like, great, you're testifying in this state.

And I was like, super. And then when I get up [00:19:00] there, I'm thinking it's gonna be short and sweet. And I think I was on the stand for like two hours. I'm like, I Oh, wow. Yeah. I was like, I didn't, I, I was very, very nervous. And then I had to use all of my notes because there were some things on the map that she was like manually writing down.

I told her afterwards, I was like, I could have add those, like I could add labels. I just didn't know that that was what you were going to ask me when you were on the stands. So there was a lot of learning that way. It was the first time that she had ever had an analyst testify. So I, like I said, there was, there was growth.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I. You're one of the few people that I've interviewed for this show that there was actually some pushback, cuz normally when I've talked to people, number one, analysts don't testify all that often. And number two, when they do it's usually just about the facts of like toll records or.

Or, the data and, and there's usually not much pushback from the defense.  
[00:20:00] So the fact that you were up there two hours is, is

**Pamela:** rare. Well, I, I, well, I testified in a homicide trial earlier this year down here in Denton, and it was about call detail records. And basically , my testimony was to kind of, Be the alibi of somebody that the defense was pinning it on, right?

And I was up there for like an hour and then the judge was like, well, let's dismiss for lunch. And I'm like, oh no. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no. So I'm like, you can tell like the defense attorney, like, I was like, he's gonna do all this research, and sure enough we come back from lunch. And he's like, he's trying to read notes that you can tell he got from Google.

I was like that's not, that's not what that means. And then I was like, oh goodness. Like if he doesn't understand the call detail records, like, does the jury, but mm-hmm. That all went well too. So I've gotten pushed back all times. I've testified.

**Jason:** Oh, was that the judge that was asking a bunch of questions or that was the defense attorney?

No,

that

**Pamela:** was the defense attorney. Oh, [00:21:00] okay.

**Jason:** Yeah. All right. So back to your backstory, so why was this guy going from Maine to California?

**Pamela:** He had a friend out in California and he was looking for yeah, he just was looking for a new opportunity, I guess. So, and he just made that Trans America trip?

**Jason:** Did you ever hear why he took

**Pamela:** the dog? No. I, his mom, I think when she testified, she said that he like was an animal lover. I, but no, there was nothing that made sense about this. And then also when they brought that dog back, I remember telling them, I was like, what happens when that dog dies?

Like they're gonna like mourn the loss of like everything all over. I was like, this is, this is terrible. And like I said, I was, I was not, I didn't have dogs at the time, but now maybe I understand.

**Jason:** Yeah. Now that is a bizarre, bizarre story.

**Pamela:** Yes. So, and the agent and I we actually presented this as a, a case debrief at the Kansas Intelligence [00:22:00] Association.

This was cuz what they tried to do and, and those conferences was to bring in how the analysts. Does a supportive role for whatever it it was. And this was one that really relied hard on the intelligence analysts to assist with the agents in

this case because we had to put a lot of data together to build this picture of what

**Jason:** happened.

Yeah. Hmm. Good. All right. Well, let's move on to Denton then. How do you get from Kansas to Denton? Oh,

**Pamela:** I know, right? I, I guess I wanted a new opportunity and honestly the pay down here was quite a bit better in the D F W area than what I was making at the state level. And I remember on my interview board The deputy chief at the time when I was talking about like, all of my experience and what I'd been working on the past yeah.

At the, at the bureau that he goes, you're gonna come down here and you're gonna be bored. And cuz Denton only at the time had like two homicides a year. [00:23:00] And I, I feel like I came here and then that just exploded. Like we've had more than two every year since I've been here, but I have, I have not been bored.

And it, it has been, sometimes you find the place that you need to be and that's been the place with Denton. Like I, I love this agency so much and the people that work here and I don't think I would have appreciated them as much had not coming from where I did at the Bureau. So it's been a wonderful past four years.

I

**Jason:** gotcha. So is it a similar role in that you're supporting investigations?

**Pamela:** So initially I was hired to be a patrol analyst to assist with like tactical analysis with patrol. And as, I don't know, I, within five months of me being here there was a homicide that happened and they were working on some stuff trying to identify, and I was like, what are you doing?

And they're like, well, do you, what, what could you do to help? And I was like, well, let me, let me call my [00:24:00] friends at the bureau. Like I, I was like, I know that there are tools out there that, that can assist with that. They had never had anybody here that was able to assist them. The detectives were just doing everything on their own.

So initially, no, I was not hired to be an investigative support analyst, but it's kind of blended into that because of my training and experience from my past

**Jason:** job. Yeah. And I guess where is Denton in relation to, Texas

**Pamela:** overall? Yeah, so Denton is about, I don't know, 40 miles north of Dallas.

Okay. It's literally where I 35 splits, one goes to Fort Worth and I 35 goes down to Dallas and we're, we're at that like kind of wishbone along. 35.

**Jason:** I think it's interesting you go from the, the state level to the local level. Just talk a little bit about that, you.

Might expect there to be a lot of similarities, but there might be some big differences between working at the state level and then working at the local [00:25:00] department.

**Pamela:** Yeah, what was a big adjustment for me when I transitioned down to this crime analyst was, I, we weren't really first respon, like we weren't first on scene or first to respond to a call.

Most of the cases that I worked at the bureau, we were it was a outside agency request. Hey, we had a quadruple homicide. Can you come help us? And, and then we would go report. Working with patrol officers was a whole new ballgame for me. And I really had to I had to go along on ride alongs or I, I mainly would just go to patrol briefings and then try to figure out like, how do you do your job?

And then how I can't support that. Like I wasn't used to like a city with districts and beats. We had the, I was used to working in a whole state and we kind of just floated wherever we were needed. So that, that was a huge transition. Yeah. Cause I,

**Jason:** I do often wonder. Why the state doesn't get more involved.

And I, I, I say that out loud and realize why, but it, it does seem like [00:26:00] the state is there to fill in the gaps where the city or county is not basically right. . And it does make me wonder, like why the state doesn't offer more tools to the cities and counties. Like for instance, if, if there was a statewide licenses for some of these vendor tools, And to give, to give everybody in the state access to that as opposed to each city or county purchasing them separately.

**Pamela:** That actually brings up a good point. So, because why, because I worked at the state level. I knew, I, I was aware about a lot of fusion centers. So

we had one fusion center up there, well, I should say two. We had the Kansas State Fusion Center and then Kansas City Metropolitan Area has their own kind of fusion center.

But coming down to the Dallas Fort Worth area, there are, you know, Fort Worth, fusion Center Dallas, Dallas area's got one. We have the North Texas Fusion Center, we've got fusion [00:27:00] centers all over the place. And I was like, it when, when stuff would come in and officers would ask me for stuff, I'm like, I'm kicking this to the Fusion Center.

Cuz they, they need those requests and they have the funding to federal funding to support that. And the other thing With regards to like the state helping with vendor tools. I think a lot of that is awareness. So the North Texas Antiga Center, the, we call it the tag.

We are a partner agency now with them. So we were able to get access to Clearview AI through tag. So now we can do this facial recognition software stuff because that state agency's paying for it and we're a partner agency to that, so we have access. Oh,

**Jason:** all right. So I think that would be something, I'm always encouraging Alice to identify new sources.

Of information, even if it's something that you don't have direct access to, just know that it's there. So when you need it, you know where to get it, [00:28:00] type thing. And there seems to, I bet you there's a good presentation in there of state resources there for local analysts.

**Pamela:** Yeah, absolutely.

The even Texas Department of Public Safety, like if we have a request for certain things, we push it there and they're, they're very responsive. So I think some of it is just having those contacts and not being afraid to reach out and see what they say.

**Carolyn:** Hi, this is Carolyn Cassidy and I'd like to give some information to you. We've all watched shows on TV where someone comes home and there's been a break-in, their house is disrupted and possibly items have been stolen. Someone gets on the phone and calls nine one one Help. Please come. I've been robbed.

**Pamela:** Okay, let's clarify this. You have not been robbed. You have been burgled. A robbery is a person to person crime. A burglary is a property crime. If you are not home, when someone comes in and takes [00:29:00] something from you, you have been burgled. There has not been a robbery. Hashtag. You were burgled. Not robbed

**Jason:** podcast recently just had their third year anniversary and. In thinking about that, I realize that I haven't done enough to thank those that have helped me over the years. Kyle McMullen, who's a longtime friend, has designed most of the logos for the podcast and his website. Modern type.com sells planners, business forms, signs and calendars.

All profits from the website go to U P M C, children's Hospital Foundation in Pittsburgh. So if you could shop on his site and help him out, that would be greatly appreciated. And then the song that's playing now, the Rough and Tumble. [00:30:00] Mallory and Scott, my sister-in-law and brother-in-law the Music and Sound Bites for the podcast they created.

They have a new album only this far. They are touring between Michigan and Colorado this summer. Find their album and their tour dates@theandtumble.com.

**Steve:** This is Steve Gottlieb saying, never let failure get to your heart and never let success go to your head. Always stay humble because humility wears well.

**Jason:** Let's have a general talk about analyst working on investigations. And so you've gotten into working some pretty big cases now, what's some advice that you might have for our listeners as folks are supporting investigations?

**Pamela:** Yeah. I, I have really learned that over time it's, I'm, I'm helping with the case. [00:31:00] Like it's, it's that detective or that special agent or senior special agent's case, but how can I help? We're all this part of this team and we're working this wheel together to get the maximum time that we can on the whatever offender.

So I initially, especially down here in Denton's, probably a better example since it wasn't initially why I was hired here, but. Working with the detectives and getting that rapport with them so that they trust the work that I'm doing for that case has helped. And I also am very clear with them about where my skills are.

If they start asking me to do like other things, I'm like, that's not, this is my lane because I don't wanna get in a situation where I'm. Up there testifying to something that when they're like, where, what is your training and experience on that? And I'd be like, well, I Googled it and that's, that's where I got my training.

Like, I don't wanna do that. So as I've gotten requests to do certain things with investigative support [00:32:00] and I've not done that before, I typically will say, that's an articulable reason why I need to go to that training.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. , especially if you're gonna go, you have the history of consistently being called in to testify.

That is definitely something that, to keep in mind that, it's. Yes, I could learn real quick and, and get some information for you. But in terms of being a subject matter expert on, on this, you, you can't Google your way there.

**Pamela:** Yeah, a hundred percent. And it's, it's important. I, we actually had this conversation with an analyst up in Maryland.

Last week. We were talking about with call detail records, like we need, we wanted more training and getting training in addition to like, outside of just a vendor training. Cuz you need to know more than What that, so how that software analyzes the data, you really need to be able to articulate what you know about these records when they come back.

Yeah, and that's

**Jason:** [00:33:00] always my worry too, you know, some of these tools that analysts use, you know, you're just clicking a couple of buttons and it's producing something and to really have an understanding of the calculations that go on behind the curtain I'm not, I'm not sure that's really being taught.

That's something that somebody, an analyst is gonna have to prepare for themselves if they, , if they are testifying about the product that they produce using a certain tool. It can get a little dicey cuz really you, analysts are taught how to use the tool, but may, may not be taught the calculation that goes on in the

**Pamela:** background.

Yeah. That's a hundred percent accurate. Yeah.



**Jason:** And I think too, with the. Supporting investigations. I mean, that's, that's where networking becomes such a plus, right? You were talking when you first got in there and like, oh, well I know this can be done. Let me call some people that I know that can do this or have done this before.

And [00:34:00] that's really what, what you want to do is expand your knowledge of resources. So again, you never know when a particular resource may become useful in an investigation, but you want to know that, that you who to contact when the need arises.

**Pamela:** Yeah. And not only does that go for like investigative support, but it, transcends everything that you do.

Like I can, I can Google it to get kind of a little bit of an understanding, but who's my subject matter expert, whether it be in domestic terrorism a specific game. Click or who, who can I call in my Rolodex of contacts?

**Jason:** . How about some advice for people looking to get into the profession?

I,

**Pamela:** I mean, my trademark again, was I got into an agency that I, I really could see like long term potential with, like, I, I wanted to stay where I was at and it kind of like promoted up was my experience. The, the, the other thing I would caution [00:35:00] people is like, I, I worked with a lot of people at, at the state level or a local level that necessarily didn't have a master's degree or didn't have the typical criminal justice degree.

I mean, some of the analysts that worked at the bureau, one was a journalism major. Another majored in something else completely different. So take take the tools and the skills of what you know how to do and sell that. Like make it, make it marketable, make, make, point your skills and say like, this is why, what I know how to do with this will be useful to your agency.

And I, I think that that is speaks volumes. Yeah. And

**Jason:** I, I think there's certain basic skills that I think folks can always hone in on that, , writing, presenting, problem solving, reasoning, , those are the, some of the basics that, , analysts get taught in some of these training.

And so, and it's, it's, it's interesting. It's always interesting to me that it almost feels [00:36:00] like it's better to have a degree in something other than criminal

justice for our field. Like it, you've mentioned journalism or even I've, you know, people with business backgrounds, people with computer science backgrounds.

It, it does, accounting is another good one. It just seems like criminal justice by itself is, is not the best course to get you to be in the criminal justice field. Yeah,

**Pamela:** I, I agree with that.

**Jason:** Well well, speaking of master's degree, as I mentioned in your intro, you have a master's degree that you just received in digital forensic science.

So, why did you decide to get that degree first off? Well,

**Pamela:** well, I, and I, maybe I should have stopped you. Like I, so I was working on a digital forensic science degree through Champlain. So I don't actually have a full master's yet. Oh, okay. So I, I apologize [00:37:00] for that. But why I took the classes to, for di Digital Forensic Science was because I was working on investigative case support with child sexual assault material.

And again, I had asked to go to some training and it was and not in the budget, like with local agencies, I guess that I've noticed more than state agencies is like, the budget is real and with civilian staff, like it's, it's very difficult to get to. To training that I'm, I was used to the bureau. We were spoiled.

Like if I wanted to go to IALEIA, I could go to, I, I went to Eylea every single year. I went to I Omega, which is the International Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Investigators Association. I went to that conference like every year I was an analyst. I, I was used to that. And so when I would put in for these trainings, they're like, yeah, no.

I was like, what do you mean? No, like, like it, it was a fall hard. So as I was working on this investigative case report, I'm like, I need to know what I'm talking about when it comes to hash values and, and [00:38:00] SQL databases. So I, I'd gotten into that program to help build my or establish my credentials to go testify for those cases.

**Jason:** Okay. Good, good, good. And then I guess as, I guess also speaking or training Is there a particular training that you highly recommend? I mean, obviously you can get into like very specific, if you're working a specific case, you wanna get trained in that specific, the specific tool or education. But is like,

I guess in general, is there a, is there one particular training that you would highly recommend?

**Pamela:** If, if you love open source stuff? Michael, basil and Some open source. He also has a website. He's taught a lot at L E I U. Mm-hmm. That's great training. And then the home, I think it's department of Homeland Security. They offer a, a critical thinking and analytical methods course. And I, I believe it's called by kind of a different name right now, but [00:39:00] that, that is like a foundational course for an analysts that I took back in, I don't know, 2013.

And I, I still use those core foundations today. So that was something. Something I found really helpful. All

**Jason:** right. And then I, one question I'm like to, to ask these days is what I call an unpopular opinion, and that's just maybe your take on a law enforcement analysis concept that's against the grain.

Do you have something that's maybe considered an unpopular

**Pamela:** opinion? I do think it's an unpopular opinion around some, so I, I'm very particular about, I've learned more from analysts who maybe didn't have degrees or didn't have degrees like you say, and branching into other fields other than criminal justice test.

And I was at a training in St. Louis. A while back. And the gentleman that was teaching the course asked me, I was with my two supervisors, like my chain of command, and he is like, so what's your master's degree in? And I said, I don't have a master's degree. And he goes, [00:40:00] good luck with your career. And I was like, wow.

**Jason:** So,

**Pamela:** And then he proceeded to go on about how at his agency, he requires anybody going into that unit to have a master's. And I was like, I mean, that might work for you, but I, I have not found that to be the case at all again. Yeah. So yeah, it, it's,

**Jason:** it is interesting from time to time that I'll, I'll hear about education requirements and you know, even if you get into some of these associations with the certification, you're looking to get certified and to have a degree gets you so many points. Of course, you have to earn so many points to even qualify for certification there will be some people here. I don't have a degree, but I've

been in this analyst role for 20 plus years and it certainly should qualify them. To at least be able to take the test to get certified, I would think.

But that's, that comes up from [00:41:00] time to time. And another thought, so we just had somebody on there that, , they didn't get a supervisor role because they didn't have a master's degree. And so it does seem a little odd to me that they would require a certain degree to be promoted. Especially, to me, if you can prove that you have the skills to do the job, then certainly you can use a degree, an advanced degree to, to show that you do have that role.

But certainly you're going to be excluding maybe some really good candidates. Because of that restriction.

**Pamela:** I agree with you a hundred percent. And especially talking to local, like the officers here and patrol briefings and stuff they're not walking around with a bunch of diplomas from all of these.

So you have to be able to relate to them. And if you talk, if you go into a patrol briefing and then talk above them the whole time they're there, they're never gonna listen to you. So I don't know. I, it's just one of my soapbox things and [00:42:00] apparently maybe I should work on forgiveness cuz he's, that happened to me a while ago and I've like never forgotten it.

It just, it's, it really stuck in my car. I was like, what in the world? Who would say that? Well, especially

**Jason:** to say that to you, not knowing you, in that situation in front of everybody, especially in front of your direct reports, , that's just against any kind of training tact that I've ever.

Heard of, no one would recommend that you do that. Yeah. In a training scenario, I'd say good. You know, be snarky and say good luck with your career kind of thing. I might say that to you just jokingly if we knew each other real well, but even then I in to do it in an open forum is, is not necessarily the, the best course of action.

I don't think so, but anyway. All right. Well, let's move on to Colin segment then. Favorite first jobs. So those who might not be aware, where I got this idea was when I interviewed Steve Gottlieb, [00:43:00] who told me that when he was first starting out, he hosted a radio show on Sunday mornings at 16 years old

so I, I find it fascinating to ask and find out what people's first jobs were and get different perspectives from there. So first on the line is Nick. Nick, what's one of your favorite first jobs?

**Nick:** My favorite first job was selling cars because nothing will make you feel worse about yourself than talking to people in that manner every single day.

**Pamela:** And nothing will make you wanna be better than being a car salesman. It was awful, man. I'll tell you what I learned real quick. I did not want to do that as a full-time job for the rest of my life. It's just awful.

**Jason:** Was it new or used?

**Pamela:** Honda and you know what? I really liked the product, but like the

**Jason:** whole people don't understand that whole world

**Pamela:** of Clarks car sales is just awful.

You're working 60 hour weeks, you're begging and pleading with people

**Jason:** to buy cars or you don't get

**Pamela:** paid. Owners are awful. General managers are awful. Like the whole [00:44:00] industry is just awful.

**Jason:** I find that funny cuz this is like a stereotype of like the sleazy used car salesman, right? Yeah. So, but I, I don't know, some people really like the whole car shopping experience.

I'm not one of those people, but I, that's, I think I would be right there with Nick. I'm not sure I would really enjoy this whole thing of trying to sell somebody

**Pamela:** a car. I, I think he nailed that. Yes, a hundred percent.

**Jason:** Going back to actually putting a positive spin on a bad situation, sometimes it's good to find out what you don't want to do.

If you, if you're trying to , explore this world, it's, it becomes easier to say, okay, I tried that and I know I don't wanna do that. So I know to steer clear of

anything that's like that. So that can still be helpful, even though it turned out what he didn't really want to do. All right, next on the line is [00:45:00] Kelly.

Kelly. What's one of your favorite first jobs?

**Kelly:** My first job was at a ice cream shop. Spent the whole first week of my job scraping the freezer picking up all the ice cream and d droppings from the ice cream cones that they had. But then shortly later I lost that job because we were shut down by the health department.

I guess I didn't clean that freezer good

**Jason:** enough.

It seems to me that you really have to be filthy in order to get shut down by the health department.

**Pamela:** Yeah, I, that made my stomach like a little bit queasy,

**Jason:** right? I mean, it's serving ice cream and I, I've served ice cream before. I used to work at amusement parks and sometimes you get transferred to different stations depending on , what the need is.

And so I had to make ice cream a little bit for it and it wasn't, but it was soft serve, big difference between soft serve and scooping it yourself, obviously. But that's also kind of crummy. You get a job thinking you're [00:46:00] gonna be dealing with the public selling ice cream and then you end up just being like, scraping.

, the floor for a week. That just sounds awful though. I guess that's how they, they break you in. All right, next on the line is Tammy. Tammy, which one of your favorite

first jobs?

**Tammy:** My favorite first job was, is a volunteer candy stripper at a hospital during my senior year of high school. In fact, it was the hospital I'd been born at some 17 years earlier.

**Jason:** I liked getting to know the retired ladies that volunteered there, and I enjoyed helping visitors and patients, and I'd like to think that being attentive and helpful are skills I've honed as a crime analyst. Huh.

Yeah, I don't see, that's really cool too, being that young and getting to volunteer in the hospital because there, I mean, for as many crazy stories that you and I can probably come up with dealing with our decades in our police department, the hospital is another one that there is always [00:47:00] craziness going on there.

**Pamela:** Yes. You're right. All right.

**Jason:** Next on the line is Amy. Amy, what's one of your favorite first jobs?

**Amy:** Oh, I'm gonna have to say it's working at Pomona Police Department. Jason, I loved having my, having that experience there, working with Annette Fado, who's now the supervising crime analyst with L A S D. All the fun times, the jokes, the laughs, meeting Albert Mesa there, who's putting out flyers on baby Jesus figurines, stolen from the nativity scenes in Glendale.

**Pamela:** While we, over here in Pomona, we're trying to locate some homicide suspects. Great times, great times

**Jason:** at Pomona. Yeah. It seems like maybe she was talking trash a little bit there. Like, Hey, we're dealing with homicide serious situations and you're dealing with figurines.

**Pamela:** Yeah.

It's always like a thing with people who try to say like, oh, well, we're dealing with this here. It's like, oh, well we have bigger fish to fry.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. Then it is so, well, you probably experienced that too, right? , the reaction was, are you going, are you gonna be bored working here?

Because it's definitely, this is small [00:48:00] town Denton type thing, but I don't know. So

**Pamela:** yeah. And then, yeah, it was, it was a surprise to all. But once an analyst comes into the field, like what they can find that, they're like, we didn't even know that was a problem. I was like, yes, this is a problem.



Yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. So, but All right, very good. Last but certainly not least, is Charles. Charles. What's one of your favorite first jobs? My favorite first job,

**Charles:** I worked at a little rundown amusement park in the panhandle Florida. And the little roller coaster that I worked was made of

**Jason:** wood falling apart and a total death strap but a really built character.

What's the name of the park? It was called Miracle Strip

**Pamela:** Amusement Park. It closed down probably like 2006, 2007, but they closed it down because

**Jason:** people were going to die on that roller coaster. Oh man. What do you think of that one? I,

**Pamela:** I love rollercoasters, so I probably would've been like, this is my fate.

Like she died doing what she loved. That's what somebody would say.

**Jason:** Oh [00:49:00] man. It, well, to me, the wooden ones do get pretty rough. Like I've, I've felt like bruised and battered getting off of some of these wooden roller coasters.

**Pamela:** Yeah. Up in Kansas City worlds of Fun has a wooden rollercoaster called the Timber Wolf.

And I mean, it was like a badge of honor to ride it. And my oldest, apparently, she told me this first. She's like, you remember when you talked me into going on that ride? And I was like, yeah, I wonder of fun. She's like, no, mom. It shook me all over. It was the, it was the worst ride.

**Jason:** Yeah. My, my son, when he was eight years old, we went to, oh, what we, we went to Holiday World.

In Santa Claus, Indiana. So that's southern tip of Indiana. And I, I had, he was eight and my daughter was five, but she was too small to ride the wooden rollercoaster, the raven. So he convinced me to let him go on there by himself.

And he said, he said that it threw him around [00:50:00] so much that he thought his brain was rattling around in his head.

That's

**Pamela:** funny.

**Jason:** And he still talks about it to this day. So, hey, there, you know, while it is a death trap, it does create memories. It does. All right, so that's favorite first jobs. If you have a favorite first job you wanna share with us, contact us at LEA podcasts. gmail.com. All right, Pam, let's finish up with personal interest then, and cuz for you apparently you like swinging objects cuz you're into softball and golf.

**Pamela:** Yes. I, I love both sports passionately. I played softball for many, many years. Played in college and then as I kind of got older and, you know, with, I was also reckless when I was in col I played softball, I'd be diving in the outfield for, for balls or whatever. Mm-hmm. I ran false force [00:51:00] into an outfield fence one time trying to chase down a home run ball that I had no business chasing after, cuz it had cleared the yard by a long ways.

But when I started having kids, I decided maybe I should switch to golf cuz it was, I thought it would be safer for me. And, and I, and I love it. But I will say, I was thinking today as I was driving into work, I'm like, in Texas, I have seen some things that I've never thought I would see. And on one of the golf courses there was a sign by a pond that said like, beware of the snakes.

And I didn't care how many balls like I lost, I was never gonna go. Near that, I think I picked up my ball Ashley and just went to the green. I was like, no, we're not playing this hole. Not if there are snakes here. Yeah.

**Jason:** Well same thing here in Florida with alligators. Like, I'm not going, I'm not going near that water.

Right. It could, it could be only like a, you know, 15 foot pond. I'm not going near that [00:52:00] water. Right. Yeah. Especially if there's a sign there that says, , beware of alligators. . So do you get out much now?

**Pamela:** So yeah. When I lived up in Kansas, now granted I was born and raised in Kansas, so mm-hmm. There was a group of girls, like there, I think there were around six to eight of us, and every once a week we'd pick a day and

we all would go. Hit, hit the links for, you know, 18 holes, like we'd go after work.

It was kind of that stuff where, you know, the guys do it or and so we would go and do it, and I haven't had that down here in Texas. I kind of missed that, but some of the the detectives and a couple of the patrol officers who would never play, and I was like, come try this. They're like, well, we've only played top golf.

And I was like, top golf is not golf. I was like, you need to go, like, you need to go to a course. And once they're out there, they're like, I love this. This is fun. I'm like, yes, it is smashing something is. A complete, complete, awesome experience.

**Jason:** Yeah, I mean, I've had an office job my whole career. [00:53:00] I, I really like just getting outside and, and just doing something other than in the office.

Right. That's, that was my big thing. I, I don't play much anymore, but when, before I had kids in my twenties, we played a lot and it was just nice. Like I'm in the office eight hours a day. It was just nice to go out and, , walk out and the

**Pamela:** outside. Yeah, I, I agree with you. And I also used it to my advantage because my former assistant chief, so we report to the assistant chief down here in Denton, but he picked up golf.

And so when we would have these monthly, like performance reviews, We always ended up, he'd be like, oh, Pam, like do this, do that. I was like, cool. And then we talk like 20 minutes about, you know, our last golf game or which courses we would recommend. So that was,

**Jason:** it was fun. , do you have a handicap or what do you normally shoot?

**Pamela:** Probably, I, so handicaps are like around a hundred because I. I can drive a ball off the tee, no problems, but you get me close to a green [00:54:00] and I will fore putt the heck out of it. So, so I, I really like I tend to over swing off the tee cuz I just, the softball player in me. But I love playing the, probably my best is my six iron.

I love it.

**Jason:** Yeah. So you do get favorite clubs, that's for sure. It's funny, I, I played last year and that was after taking a year off, like I, I guess, so that's, that was, I played in 2021 and I played as if I never played golf before in my entire life, I probably, I, I quit to keep a score. It was so high that it was just, I was done.

And then buddy took, called me, convinced me to go last year, and I probably played one of the best rounds of my life. So I but I haven't been out since, so I, I, maybe it's the expectations. If I don't expect anything, I'll be all right.

**Pamela:** Yeah, no, that, that, I mean, that's the thing about golf too, is like you could have the best golf game of your life and you could play that course like four days later and be like, have I ever [00:55:00] golfed?

Like, yeah. Yeah.

**Jason:** Very good. All right. Well, this brings us to Our last segment to the show is Words to the World, and this is where I give the guests the last word. Pam, you can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world? So

**Pamela:** it's actually kind of funny. A couple months ago, our deputy chief sent out an email to our criminal investigations division and told the detectives that they were no longer allowed to cuss in the C I D Bay.

And one of the detectives, immediately upon receipt of that email, marched into that guy's office and said, if I can't cuss, I can't solve cases. So that would be my words to lies.

**Jason:** Very good. Well, I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later. Perfect. But I do appreciate you being on the show, Pamela.

Thank you so much. And you be safe. Thanks.

**Mindy:** The end of another episode of Analyst Talk with Jason Elder. You can show your support by sharing this and other episodes found on our [00:56:00] website@[www.elliottpodcasts.com](http://www.elliottpodcasts.com).

**Pamela:** If you have a topic you would like us to cover or have a suggestion for our next guest, please send us an email@[elliottpodcastgmail.com](mailto:elliottpodcastgmail.com). Till next time, analyst, keep talking.