

# Nikki North - Real Time Crime Analyst

**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 five years of law enforcement analysis experience with eight years of law enforcement experience overall. She is currently the administrative vice president for the National Real Time Crime Center Association.

She's also the Real Time Crime Center supervisor for Flagler County Sheriff's Office in Boonell, Florida. Please welcome Nikki North. Nikki, how we doing? We're doing

**Nikki:** good. We're doing good. How you doing, Jason?

**Jason:** I am very well, fellow Floridian. The

**Nikki:** weather? It's finally very nice out. [00:01:00] We are out of the homestretch of the crazy humidity here.

**Jason:** Yes, the winter is over, right? Folks from the north don't appreciate that July and August here are basically our winter out of the year. And now we're getting into going outside and eating dinner outside.

**Nikki:** Actually enjoy it.

**Jason:** All right. Very good. So how did you discover the law enforcement analysis?

**Nikki:**

Profession. So back in high school, I actually attended a little class out in Washington, D. C. that was meant for forensics and law students. So that was kind of where my interest started, and I was mostly interested in forensics. So I decided to pursue my bachelor's in forensics investigations at Kaiser University here locally in Daytona.

So after finishing my degree, I think within like a week after graduating, I wanted to get to work. So I started dispatching at one of our neighboring agencies. And eventually realized I kind of liked what I was [00:02:00] doing but wanted to apply the skills a little differently and found crime analysis and it's just progressed from

there.

**Jason:** So then in terms of the degree with in forensic investigations, I guess, what, what were some of the things that they taught you that helped you when you became an analyst? I think a

**Nikki:** lot of it relates back to working directly with our detectives, kind of knowing what they're looking for when they're doing their investigations, the details of their cases, and being able to understand why they're asking for what they're asking.

So I think that was a big part of how they translate.

**Jason:** Yeah, and then, and being a dispatcher is impressive, when I was looking for a job years ago, I took a test. To be a dispatcher and they had us , look at a map, listen to information, answer a bunch of questions, a very, a very practical exercise to become that.

Dispatcher and I found that really really difficult and I didn't get the job, but that's okay So I i'm [00:03:00] always impressed when I hear people That are dispatchers because that's not just something that you can just pluck somebody off the street and they're going to be okay At dispatching there's a lot

**Nikki:** going on.

Yeah. No, it's definitely a lot of training that goes into it for sure It's at least It's about a year until you actually kind of feel comfortable and feel like you know what you're doing. Yeah.

**Jason:** And so, and that's, and that's always a good step too in, in becoming an analyst as well, because you're going to be exposed to a lot of procedure, a lot of data, a lot of personnel, and it is, it's, it is a good learning experience.

How long were you a dispatcher? Just shy of two years. Yeah. So as you think back what any, any stories or anything you particularly like you remember during your time as a dispatcher?

**Nikki:** So I think the most prominent thing that stands out to me is I remember we would always try to counsel each other after we'd have like a more serious call.

So like a suicide or something like that. And what's crazy is one of the ones I [00:04:00] had taken. Immediately after i got a person calling in about someone wearing a clown mask in their backyard so the suicide was completely out of my mind and i was more concerned for this clown mask guy in this lady's yard luckily it ended up being a false alarm and she it was just dark out and it was hard to tell what was going on but it's some of the crazier calls that stand out to be more than some of the more involved ones so you try not to take work home with you is the big thing from dispatching for sure

**Jason:** yeah yeah it's it is and you there's usually a calming rooms or rooms, private rooms that dispatchers can go into and with the telephone and just can can kind of ease ease out of particular calls because it is, it is very stressful dealing with some really, really serious issues in the job.

Yeah, absolutely. When you said , the clown mask thing, all I thought of was like insane clown posse. So I thought maybe that was,

**Nikki:** I don't know if you remember, but it used to be a thing like a few years back where you kept seeing all those news stories about [00:05:00] people running around with clown masks and nine times out of 10, they were in Florida.

So sure enough, that was one of the calls I was bound to get because I am terrified of clowns.

**Jason:** Oh, you are. Okay. So yeah, so yeah, no, yeah, we do get our share of the Florida man stories or woman stories. So, which I think just the rest of the country needs to follow suit and then they should open up all their cases.

Publicly too, and then you would have a whole smorgasbord of pretty interesting stories out in the public. That's right But yeah, so all right. So it's halloween then so if you're scared of clowns Then that's probably not necessarily your best time of year right now. No, no, not

**Nikki:** particularly I'm all for the pumpkins and all that stuff.

But yeah crowns will try to stay away from

**Jason:** . Alright, very good. So then, how did you transition from being a dispatcher to being an analyst?

**Nikki:** So, I started looking [00:06:00] into other, like, potential career paths to go from dispatch just to see what kind of skills were similar, and reading some of the job descriptions for an analyst, I realized multitasking would be very beneficial, which is Probably your top skill you have from dispatching to basically be able to organize case priority.

So if you have something you're working on for one investigator, knowing how much effort to put into that one before switching over to something else and then going back to it. And just juggling what's important, what's not, what takes priority, what doesn't. So, that is essentially how it came to be. And I remember when I first started, I was originally sitting directly in with our major case unit.

And they were talking about their cases. And I just remember overhearing some of the things they would say, and they wouldn't realize they were talking about similar things across the room on other sides because they were talking to different people, and I would call out something to someone else and help them kind of start building their case.

And very quickly they realized how they could use a crime analyst a little more than what they had been. They started off with something like, can [00:07:00] you do a criminal history? I'm like, yeah, I did like hundreds of those on teletype and dispatch. No problem. Here's your criminal history in two minutes. And they're like, Oh, so it was very applicable of the different skills that I had known that I was able to put them into crime analysis then too.

Yeah.

**Jason:** Now, was this an original position for the

**Nikki:** department? So when I had started with the department, I actually got hired as the domestic violence analyst. So I was assigned with our domestic violence detective in that unit. And we primarily focused on repeat offenders within domestic violence and once getting past that realized the ability from the skills that I had learned to go further beyond just those specific cases and kind of evolved it into, all right, we can expand this more into different parts of investigations.

Okay, now all of a sudden there's this buzzword real time crime center that everyone's hearing make it happen. So once I got that, that's when I really got

into the. Crime center realm of kind of exploring how to transition it to not only investigative but also real time

**Jason:** So when [00:08:00] you're an analyst with domestic violence and you were talking talking about looking for repeat Offenders and it's from from the police department's point of view.

What is their angle? What is their their goal and in terms of obviously reducing the number of repeat offenders?

**Nikki:** Trying to ensure that the correct charges are being assigned, so if we're able to get, like, any additional charges after someone's arrested, like a violation of a pretrial release condition, to kind of just make the case more concrete, that was something we were able to do with it.

Upon identifying repeat offenders, we were able to coordinate with our victim's advocate unit as well to correspond with the victim, too, to try to get them better resources to get out of that situation. Because sometimes it was necessarily the same victim over and over and other times it was different.

So even just victim education and getting them the resources they needed to, you

**Jason:** know, and so and that's those are tough cases to work to write domestic violence. I mean, if you deal with scenarios with [00:09:00] assault victims and Children and and the like. I mean, that is that is Can be tough as well. And so given, given your time I'll call it hardening for lack of a better term, the hardening that you went through at the dispatcher.

I can, I can see that it that allowed you to then start analyzing some of these domestic violence cases. Yeah, absolutely. And then. So where did you go after domestic violence?

**Nikki:** So I then became an official crime analyst and was able to explore everything within the agency and not solely focus on crime analysis.

So I continued to still help with the domestic violence analysis as that was my original Forte of being able to assist, but it kind of transitioned into property crimes, car breaks where we are along the east coast smashing grabs are one of our most common crimes we have along our beach approaches.

So that's a big thing we try to combat or at least be able to solve once they do happen. So we'll put a lot of effort into those probably more than some other places that have some more violent crime compared to what we do. So [00:10:00] basically just opened. The book, though, of anyone that needed help, I was able to help them based on the different resources that I had access to.

**Jason:** Yeah, so then are you the only analyst for the office?

**Nikki:** So I started with just one other partner, and as they realized how heavy our workload had become, we actually now have myself and three others, so we have four total for the agency currently. Okay.

**Jason:** Okay. And then, and I should have looked this up before Flagler County, what cities are in Flagler

**Nikki:** County?

So the majority of our population is within Palm Coast, but fun fact is Bunnell is actually the second largest city in the state, but it is very more rural and not as developed. So those are our two main cities. And then additionally we have Flagler Beach and a few small others. So Flagler Beach and Bunnell each have their own police departments as well that utilize us in our dispatch center as well.

So we all correspond together. And for those who have absolutely no idea where [00:11:00] any of those cities are, Daytona is 20 minutes south. Almost everyone normally knows.

**Jason:** Yeah, I mean, I'm guilty of that as well, because I was, as you were talking, I was like, Oh, what do I recognize? What do I recognize? And I I knew it was in the generally, because we had talked in the prep call about Daytona.

So I know it was in the vicinity,

**Nikki:** but yeah. And a lot of our crime is also driven from the fact we're pretty much dead center between Jacksonville and Orlando. So we'll get a lot of people coming through between those two as

**Jason:** well. Okay. So then do you see similar trends as maybe like spring break comes around and then it's that that's a big deal there.

Absolutely

**Nikki:** spring break bike week by October fast. That's our one coming up here. Yeah, that kind of stuff. We definitely see the trends of the carryover from other

**Jason:** places. Yeah. And so like that bike week. So, I mean, there's. I remember we were traveling to Daytona a couple years back and we were in Daytona for one version of [00:12:00] bike week.

I can't remember which one it was, but I was, I was really surprised how many bikes I saw and the different license plates that I saw from all across the country. So it's a big deal. Now, then how do you So as an analyst, what additional responsibilities do you have when these weeks

**Nikki:** come up?

So one of the big things we'll do during that week is kind of emphasize to our patrol officers through our comp stat that we do weekly is extra patrols at our hotels is our absolute biggest target. Our hotels book out almost every time for any of those events. So trying to prevent those crimes of opportunity from it being more populated than it normally is here is one of our big elements of where we step in.

Otherwise, just coordinating resources with our neighboring counties, such as Volusia, to make sure there's not anything they have information on, such as gangs or anyone specific that may be in the area at that time

**Jason:** as well. Yeah, and then about in terms of working with some of these hotels, do you guys [00:13:00] have either, problem solving unit or a crime prevention section that works with these businesses to help them do what they can to prevent. Yes, we

**Nikki:** do. We have our community outreach will reach out for certain things. We have a street crimes unit. Ours is known as pace. For problem area crime enforcement and then we also have our intelligence unit.

So amongst those, depending what the circumstances are of what's going on, they can kind of target whatever they need

**Jason:** to. Yeah. Okay. So this is a lot of theft from auto type scenario or theft from stuff left on the beaches and and whatnot. Exactly. All right. That's that's that's interesting. And then do you feel that when it comes to that type of stolen items?

Is that immediately like turned over, sold over to pawn shops? Or is that something that you guys see trends different differently depending? What the top what the

**Nikki:** item is. It trends differently for the [00:14:00] most part. Typically, it's items left in plain view, and it's not necessarily stuff that can go pawn, but the fact that they'll go use credit cards

**Jason:** after.

Okay, so you get into a whole other different scenarios with identity theft. Yes. Okay. Yeah, that is that is a whole different ball of wax there. Okay.

I see you went from a crime analyst to a senior analyst, and so was that something that you put in for?

Was it just a promotion? How did that work there

**Nikki:** at the office? So, as they started realizing our workload was becoming heavier, it was when they decided we needed to add more analysts to our unit. So at that point, to give me some authority over adding new analysts, I was able to get promoted, so it was something I had to put in for.

I was the only person that put in for though, because I was really the only person at that point qualified to kind of take that lead. And from there, it just kind of kept building. So as the unit continued to grow, that's how I ended up in my supervisor spot as well was again, through a promotion of just kind of showing everything I was doing as the senior analyst spot.

Yeah.

**Jason:** And I could [00:15:00] see where that scenario there, and maybe, well, you can correct me if I'm, you think I'm wrong, but I've, I've talked to other analysts who eventually became supervisors at their department. And there is this adjustment period when you go from analyst, these are your co workers, to analyst, now I'm your supervisor.

And I can imagine in your scenario here, where you go from crime analyst to senior analyst, there is a little bit of a baby step there before you get into being supervisor over your former co workers.

**Nikki:** Yeah, it definitely at least helped kind of. Use it in but i know my personal biggest struggle that i'm finally making some progress on was getting used to delegating what i was so used to doing i was so used to doing so many things by myself so finally having help there are certain things i didn't want to give up so we're making progress there i'm willing to let people do things but it's definitely an adjustment to not always be as involved in everything as you were used

**Jason:** to that sounds [00:16:00] like either like control freak or perfectionism is either one of those.

Yeah, but I'm

**Nikki:** a little bit of Smosh TV there. That might be me.

**Jason:** Yeah, no. And I, and I I struggle with the delegation aspect of it too. And it seems to me either, I get it, I've gotten into two different roles. Either I don't. Give them enough information. So when they come back, I'm disappointed, or I've locked it in so much that they're basically just pushing a couple of buttons and getting that back to me.

So it's, there is a, there is an art and to being able to delegate and being able to give enough information for the person to just run with it and get back what, what you're looking for. Absolutely. Yeah. So, all right. Well, before we get into the real time Crime Center talk, let's talk about your Analyst Badge story.

And for those that may be new to the show, the Analyst [00:17:00] Badge story is a career defining case or project that an analyst works. And so, for you, it's, it's 2021 and we're dealing with a homicide. That's

**Nikki:** correct. So, this is the case that stands out. The most pivotal to me for showing the art of the crime center and crime analysis field working together with the agency.

So I actually just recently testified about a month ago for my first time. And this was my case that I testified for we were able to get a successful guilty conviction. So he's currently awaiting sentencing, but essentially this guy had called in. And was trying to say he was robbed and someone shot his girlfriend and identified a park that they were possibly at.

We had cameras at that park and were able to confirm he was in fact not at that park. So we ended up with him at the hospital so we had a starting point. So

from the hospital we were able to start backtracking and trying to pick the story to figure out what exactly did happen. Through the combination of license plate readers, other city traffic cameras, surveillance cameras.

Just anything and everything we could come up with based [00:18:00] on what we had for our starting point. And essentially we were able to make it so he was accounted for every single second from the time he woke up at the hotel he was staying at until the time he got to the hospital. So for that case, I was able to initially have a PowerPoint done in less than 48 hours that we were able to present to the sheriff and show At that time, the attempted homicide, which ended up passing about a year ago now, and it just really built the case of showing, here's all the videos, this is how we make our timeline, this is where we potentially have a gap in the technology we have.

This was us relaying that back to the detectives. They were able to fill in our minor gap of about five minutes with surveillance video that they were able to obtain, and other sources that they were able to utilize. to pull the case together and just, there were no, there was no room for any error, like everything was accounted for second by second, and in doing so, through their interviews, through the presentation, [00:19:00] just the combination of work effort among dispatch getting the initial call, patrol assisting with the investigation, detectives, K 9, almost agency wide, everyone was involved in some way, so it was just, Incredible to see that story come together as we were starting to really bring in the technology for the real time crime center element And to now have the guilty conviction for this case.

**Jason:** All right, so filling the so in terms of Exactly, where does the homicide come in? I'm, sorry if I missed

**Nikki:** that part So he originally reported it as a robbery that someone had stolen his gun and shot his girlfriend Mm hmm. So it was in fact him that had shot his girlfriend and he ended up hiding the gun after so He was trying to say he didn't have the gun anymore because someone had stolen it And when in fact he had actually hidden it which was some of the surveillance We were able to fill in to figure out where he had in fact hidden the gun and we were able to locate the gun That he tried to

**Jason:** ditch.

Okay, and then were you able to get any prints or anything off the gun?

**Nikki:** We that I'm not entirely sure to be honest. So we try to stick to [00:20:00] being the liaison of everything and not necessarily get into that weave of the web to get any kind of biased opinions or anything for it. So that way it makes it a little more.

Unopinionated, and we're just actually like a hub for the information, so we don't necessarily follow up on all those details to know what all the detectives ended up with exactly.

**Jason:** Okay, so then, you mentioned hotel, are they from there, or were they visiting?

**Nikki:** They had recently moved here and were looking to save up to get a place, so they were staying in a hotel in the meantime.

**Jason:** Oh, okay. And so oh, geez, and then gets into an argument and then ends up killing her. Yep, exactly. And then why, I'm just, I'm just curious, like, why did he pick the one park? Did he just see it while they were driving around? That's the only

**Nikki:** thing we could think of is he was just trying to think of a place and Sure enough, though, it was about 10 miles, about a good 10 minute drive out of the way from the hotel.

So we were able to prove he never went anywhere near that park. So it made it easy. At least.

**Jason:** so You were made aware of this [00:21:00] case because you were working in the real time crime center,

**Nikki:** correct?

So we heard the call come out over the radio and immediately jumped in as soon as we started hearing what was going on

**Jason:** Okay, so then and that's and I think that's a nice distinction. So you're you're hearing the call it comes in as a a robbery and And so that you're just going based on that bit of information, the location.

I'm

**Nikki:** taking everything he's saying word for word and investigating it just as he's reporting it in real time.

**Jason:** You talk about the fact that , you couldn't find them at the park. But as you're working this case and you get it from dispatch and you are.

Get into task of using all the tools at your disposal for the center. When does it turn from , this is a victim to, oh, this, this guy is not on the up and up and this is actually not what it seems. I

**Nikki:** think once we started getting some of the information relayed back from [00:22:00] detectives and as we were trying to, starting to see the pattern of travel that we realized it wasn't corresponding to his story.

Mm-Hmm. . So once we realized the story wasn't corresponding, we were a little suspicious. But again, still trying to take his word for it, that he was a genuine victim. And as we got more and more info from interviews though, we were able to conclude and kind of transition from that real time element. Into okay.

Now we need to go investigative.

**Jason:** All right. And then you mentioned your PowerPoint presentation for your timeline. What what time span total are you talking about? Because I know you said you were only missing 5 minutes. I'm curious what the total time span was. So.

**Nikki:** It was a relatively short amount of time.

I mean, we had all morning from the hotel, but the series of events itself was, I believe, less than a half hour. I'm not positive on that, but it was a relatively short time period. .

**Jason:** And then you had mentioned that you testified for this case. So what in Is it the timeline, or [00:23:00] what all information did you get asked about during testifying?

**Nikki:** So my focus was on the timeline of building the story of events, so that way when they got into questioning the detectives for the case, that it was well established exactly when everything happened. So it was explaining how we obtained license plate reader information, how we identified that he was in fact in that car, how we pull the traffic videos and confirming how the times are

verified and just filling in with the surveillance video based on those traffic videos and understanding timestamps and.

How some aren't necessarily always right was a big focus. So being able to explain that, and that's just something I absolutely wanted to mention, because I feel like that's something you don't ever hear enough as about analysts testifying is I've made it this far without any, and I now have multiple subpoenas after this case.

So it's just a very interesting perspective that not everyone always thinks of. I know when I've gone to trainings, people always ask. The analysts, if they've ever testified [00:24:00] and there's normally a few hands that go up, but not a lot. So every time I would have those, I would try to go talk to them, but it's just sometimes surprising how few there are.

And when you actually do it, what exactly it ends up being,

**Jason:** And I can get on a whole soapbox about that. Cause I, I do think one of the, the, the core. Skill sets for an analyst that I think is often overlooked is communication and that feeds into it perfectly. The idea of testifying in court and there's, I do wish there were more opportunities , for analysts , to learn and grow.

With communication right and it's not something that you can just go to a class and listen to I mean you got it It's got to be hands on. You've got to be able to go through the process of Learning the techniques and actually practicing the techniques of communication. Absolutely.

did the defense ask you anything?

**Nikki:** So the things they tried to go [00:25:00] after were they focused on the timestamps confirming? How I knew what was accurate and what wasn't So we always emphasize to our deputies and detectives when they're pulling video, verify the current time, and compare that with your time stamp, and let us know if the cameras are off because More than likely they probably are another question They were trying to prove was if he was speeding to the hospital after and they started asking me about speeds.

So I was able to Reiterate you cannot identify speeds from traffic cameras. Mm hmm. And then they went into based on your timeline Would you say he was driving fast? Yes, I would say three minutes Is relatively fast to get from one side of the county to the other. Yes was the only thing That we really had that I

answered yes to otherwise it pretty much went into no further questions as they realized I didn't actually Investigate the case and was essentially Liaisoning the case to pull everything together.

Okay,

**Jason:** so the trend okay So the defense was they were still going with the the robbery gone bad [00:26:00] And that he was his whole thing. And this is that he was when he was going to the hospital. You're trying to get his girlfriend to the hospital. All right. And then did you where did you say the case was at the at the moment?

Is it going through sentencing?

**Nikki:** So, yeah, he was found guilty of all charges and is awaiting sentencing in the upcoming months here. Okay.

**Jason:** That's a good job. , I think people don't realize how difficult it can be to pull cameras and sync everything up like that.

That can be a very tedious, time consuming difficult task. To because you could be going through a lot of different video just searching through for one particular thing and you get a lot of noise before you get the

**Nikki:** yeses exactly, especially confirming that cars are one in the same as a whole other thing of making sure [00:27:00] you notice those minor details on it to confirm to be able to prove.

Yes, this is the same car consistently. Yeah,

**Jason:** yeah. And then did it have something like that, either bumper stickers or dent or something like that, that you were able to?

**Nikki:** Confirm that that one. There were just a few like other details that we were able to just kind of keep an eye on just like the shape of the car.

Another thing we'll consider is where all the car is traveling with. So we'll pay attention to what other cars are traveling at the same time to kind of notice at what point do I lose it? That I want. Okay. All right. No, I was driving next to a yellow jeep. I see the yellow jeep at this 1 and I don't see it at the next 1.

Okay. Where's my cargo?

**Jason:** Yeah. Okay. No, that's that's a good point. How many cameras do you all have off the top of your head? I mean, we've definitely

**Nikki:** got well over 3 to 4, 000 county wide. At least city wide is at least over 600 as well for just various locations throughout the city of Palm Coast.

**Jason:** Yeah, no, you mentioned the 5 minute gap and that the [00:28:00] investigators were able to get that. Was that from like a private source?

**Nikki:** They were able to obtain that from businesses in that area then? Yeah.

**Jason:** 3000 cameras.

Geez. That's a, that's a lot to get to go through and to, and to the amount of data to keep. Do you, do you guys keep, what about 28 days worth, or what do you, what do you guys usually keep in the queue? We keep

**Nikki:** 30 days worth of. At least every camera and then there's some other ones depending on the storage limits that they'll keep a little longer, but everything's at least 30 days.

**Sally:** Hi, this is Sally Taraban, here to tell you that nobody needs to know what first car you have, or what's your pet's name, or what street you grew up on. We all see these on Facebook, and we all want to answer them, but keep in mind that there are people who are reading them, and they're going to go on your bank account, and they're going to say, oh, I forgot my password, let me reset it.

**Nikki:** And the bank's going to ask, what's the first street you lived on? [00:29:00] What is your cat's name? And what color car did you own? And the person reading it, they're going to look through your question, and they're going to answer, and they're going to get access to your bank account. We call that social engineering.

The next time you see that survey, that questionnaire.

**Jennifer:** This is Jennifer Loper. When you wear too much cologne, it stays in the elevator forever.

**Jason:** We did get a little bit into it in terms of your analyst badge story, but I do want to get into the real time crime center aspect of it because obviously you go beyond the office here in terms of your work with real time crime centers. . In terms of the sheriff's office go into this idea of the inception of the real time crime center there at Flagler.

So

**Nikki:** [00:30:00] relatively early on in my transition into, from domestic violence analyst to crime analyst, they made it clear that an end goal was to have a real time crime center as pretty much everywhere around us was kind of getting in that mode as well. So I kind of just started traveling around to different ones and...

Getting ideas of what I liked, what other people were doing, whether it be camera sources, databases, programs, staffing ideas, just exactly what it was and how to do it. So almost anyone you talk to in the crime center profession will tell you. Traffic cameras, their city cameras, and license plate readers are their top two most successful products that they will invest in when it comes to real time.

Those two are definitely the biggest game changers in helping solve cases, potentially helping prevent cases. For example, if a stolen vehicle enters your county, you get notified and you're able to stop it before it does anything else. So we started off essentially with picking two locations, relatively strategically based on points within the County that just made sense.

And [00:31:00] essentially just started tracking the success of those two license plate readers and very quickly realized how successful they were and were able to keep justifying now each year to add more and more based on what we realized gaps are of, Hey, we were tracking this vehicle. This is where we always seem to lose them.

Let's add another license plate reader here. And then a lot of it, for example, the city cameras. They were originally live view only, but it was something that already existed from when they had prior red light cameras throughout the city. So something like that was just making a connection that wasn't already in existence with some city officials.

Hey, this is what we're looking to do. How do we get access to this and coordinating that? And we ended up. Being in charge of and still are for holding the recordings, but they maintain the cameras themselves. So it's a lot of

partnerships is a big thing to people always think it's big bucks to start a crime center and eventually, yes, you can spend some money to keep them going and everything.

But a lot of it is initially just those partnerships, whether it be. Within your community, within your county, within your city, or across

**Jason:** [00:32:00] jurisdictions. , is your center multi jurisdictional, or is it just for Flagler?

**Nikki:** So, we focus on our sheriff's office. But we also assist our two police departments that are within our jurisdiction, but it's the same county altogether.

**Jason:** When you're first getting established, is this was something that an office, the center's actually being built new construction, or are you in a location for a little bit before you're eventually moved into the center?

**Nikki:** So fun fact for ours was we were originally in a moldy building that we vacated and ended up in our county courthouse actually for about five years.

So when we started our crime center, we were actually in our county courthouse at that point.

**Jason:** Like in the basement.

**Nikki:** Essentially a closet is exactly what it felt like, yep. 100%. So, again, when I go back to saying you can start it from [00:33:00] nothing, I am genuinely telling you, we basically started ours in a closet and have seen it evolve.

We started with just buying some TVs on a wall, putting them up there, and making our own little video wall to having an actual space now. Where we have an actual full blown crime center, but we started essentially in a closet.

**Jason:** in the beginning? Were you 24

**Nikki:** 7? We weren't and we actually still aren't.

So the way we do our 24 7 though is. We primarily staff based upon the fact of considering that we're also still doing investigations as well. So we focus on those core hours Monday through Friday with some extended hours of just kind

of keeping a shift change and that kind of thing goes on. Then in addition to that, though, we are also.

On call to make up for the 24 7. So if there is something after hours after we leave, we're able to assist.

**Jason:** In general, what's the times that the center is

**Nikki:** open? So right now we're just doing Monday through Friday. 7 to 7. We were temporarily short staffed. Eventually we'll work our way back to Monday through [00:34:00] Saturday.

About 7 a. m. To 8 30 p. m.

**Jason:** How many do you normally have

**Nikki:** on staff? So kind of varies essentially I did it based on knowing the calls that we can typically assist with like those missing persons stolen vehicles that kind of thing and Based on that kind of varies. So Wednesday, for example is our comp stat day So we try to have everyone here that day Fridays, believe it or not, are typically less busy for whatever reason.

So we're a little lighter on Fridays. Same with Mondays. I think some of that is attributed to the fact that a lot of people in the agency work four 10s. So in addition to those, a lot of people are off Mondays, Tuesdays. So internal requests are sometimes a little lighter due to those schedules.

**Jason:** Well, I guess as you've gone through this process.

And you've established, you were part of establishing your real time crime center you mentioned the cameras, you mentioned the TVs and some of the other equipment that you have, but is there [00:35:00] other things that, as you're giving advice to people that are wanting to create their own , or what you would say are must haves?

I would

**Nikki:** say the genuine must haves are a motivated person working in it, access to your radio system and your CAD system to be able to communicate, and that's pretty much it that you genuinely need to start. Beyond having some of the databases that you'll initially have, you can start with something as simple as a call is coming in, they can identify the caller.

Let's use Clear, TLO, whatever program we have, and help provide that information so they know we're here. So yes, eventually, of course, you want to acknowledge. Evolved to have the technology and everything a little more involved, but you don't necessarily need it to start. And then of course, like for us, for example, we recently purchased an integrator system that tries to bring all the camera feeds together and bring in some private feeds as well.

And in doing so it's to put everything into one, but. It's not the end of the world when you have school cameras on this computer, county cameras on this [00:36:00] computer, city cameras on this computer. At least you have them. So if there's ever an emergency that you need them for or something you can use them for, you have them and they're accessible.

**Jason:** So did you say you got that integrator put in or you're about

**Nikki:** to? So, we have it. We're still working on getting a lot of our stuff integrated into it, but we at least do

**Jason:** have it. , does that allow you more ease of searching through the various

**Nikki:** videos? That is the end goal.

So, we're not quite there yet, but that is the end goal, is to make it a little more. Easy to but in the meantime, what we're doing is working. So it's just to kind of expedite that process is our goal.

**Jason:** That's interesting. Is there any data that you wish you had?

**Nikki:** I think our biggest thing and a lot of people seem to kind of be in the same boat.

It's just. Access to social media and open source investigation type things that, of course, there's programs out there and everything that you can get, but just being able to get those things more easily, I would say, is the number one thing I would pick

**Jason:** , let's move [00:37:00] on then to the Real Time Crime Center Association. And that's a new association. And that is something that you also had an influence over the

**Nikki:** creation.

So once. Interesting about that one is, I was actually going through the FDLE, Florida Department of Law Enforcement Analyst Academy, Class 32, about two years back now. And part of that was to write an assessment on something within your agency. So at that point, our crime center was relatively new, so I kind of wanted to look into the success and what we could be doing differently and what people thought of it internally to get some ideas.

And IACA forum. a question reaching out to other crime centers across the country, world for that matter, to kind of get their feedback of hours, technology, staffing, how exactly everyone else was doing things. And so from there someone that actually responded is our association president, Chris Henningsen, [00:38:00] and was like, Hey, you kind of seem like you might know what you're doing with this.

The way you're asking me, is there some kind of association for this or something? I was like, no, not that I know of. And so from there, we kind of started talking more, got some others involved, and it just kind of grew from there, realizing it, that there wasn't anything in place for it yet, because it was relatively new.

There were some that have been established for 10 plus years that are known, but as a nationwide trend, it was relatively new. So very quickly, we realized We should, we can do something with this and essentially kind of started our group from there and it has grown faster than we ever could have imagined.

Yeah.

**Jason:** Do you have an idea of how many real time crime centers there are in the U. S.?

**Nikki:** So one of the things we're trying to do with the association is develop a list to actually answer that number. So, for the association, we have a website, nrtccaa. org, and on there, there's actually a survey to include a list, if you become a member, of tracking the [00:39:00] ones we have.

So, on there, as of now, we have over 150. I know that number is nowhere even near probably what it actually is. So... If we had to estimate our personal guesses just from talking to others are probably somewhere between three and four hundred and growing by the day. So whether or not that's accurate, don't know, but that would eventually be our goal of what we would love to see is to actually have that full list to give someone an answer when they ask.

**Jason:** Now, do you have an official definition of a real time

**Nikki:** crime center? So part of one of the things we did for the association was that we developed a white paper to kind of define and. Go over as best as we could as a group of what we were doing and what we kind of came up to be a real time crime center.

So a lot of that information of what people are looking for is in our white paper, but a lot of it drives back to being that technology hub. Yes,

**Jason:** and that mainly gets around the license plate readers and cameras. Yes. Okay. All right. And then do you make the distinction in the white paper about fusion centers?

Yep,

**Nikki:** absolutely. That's one thing we actually made specifically [00:40:00] sure and another big thing we include and pride ourselves on with the association is we partnered with the National Fusion Center Association to work together and show we're not trying to take away from each other that we want them to be a part of what we're doing because a lot of the real time stuff is stuff that ties back to them that they will need to know to be able to get that information out.

Yeah.

**Jason:** Once you get established and get some of these on board is how many are both fusion and real time

**Nikki:** centers and that's the thing we're starting to see more and more to is. People are starting to embed those analysts within their fusion center and crime center and doing dual tasking.

In addition to that, some agencies are starting to incorporate multiple jurisdictions into their crime center. I know there's some that their sheriff's office is the main hub for the crime center, but they'll put police department analysts in so they have the same technology, but not at the cost of the police department necessarily, that they're all working together.

**Jason:** I know you're getting just getting started, but I also know that you went and researched and visited other [00:41:00] real time crime centers in your

situation here. , you have a couple of different hats on. So you have your real time crime center hat, but you also have your analyst hat on.

What's the trend there with other real time crime centers? So do you have folks doing both or do they, do they have that segregated?

**Nikki:** So it tends to be, seem more common in some of the. Smaller jurisdictions or at least like lower crime areas where it's a little more plausible to do both for example Sorry, jacksonville.

You have a lot of shootings You don't have time to do real time and crime analysis. You have designated crime analysts just for your shootings alone Whereas when we're mostly property crime driven if we get a report when it comes in We're able to investigate it live if it's slightly delayed it becomes investigative So we of course prioritize those live incidents But a lot of them end up actually corresponding.

So we actually start it live and end up turning it investigative. So rather than having to relay all those details to someone, to me personally, it's kind of nice to [00:42:00] know those details going into it and just utilize what I was already working and just kind of, okay, I can take a breath now. I don't need this information as urgently.

I still need it, but I can focus on thinking through the process. Yeah,

**Jason:** that's a, it's a whole other ballgame there to truly work a case from dispatch to conviction. Absolutely. Yeah, like that is, that is a whole other level of analysis there that you get into that you're really involved from, from beginning to end.

Yeah,

**Nikki:** it's. It's very different because especially dispatch, you normally only kind of get to see the initial. You don't always know the final outcome of everything you're doing. So there's one thing that is kind of nice in the crime analysis side. At least is we get to see the case all the way through for the most part.

**Jason:** Yeah. And then. What about best practices? I, I would imagine that's something that , is being discussed as well

**Nikki:** so that's actually something else that's included in the white paper too. Again, not [00:43:00] everyone is going to be the same, but it's some of the more key guidelines of okay, if you have license plate readers, here's what we suggest to do with them and how to place them, i.

e. points of ingress or egress, for example, or something to consider where you have higher crime areas, so just mostly common sense things, but as there's so much coming up. It just kind of puts it into perspective of how exactly to utilize that technology you're bringing in because it can be overwhelming to get that much technology at once after being used to just having those investigative databases and not actually seeing anything.

**Jason:** I mean the hardware alone just inside the center right if you are you talked about the TV is in the computers but the the servers and the. The disk space needed to keep 28 days, 30 days of video of 3000 cameras , is large.

**Nikki:** So that's definitely why we absolutely don't sit here and just monitor them by any means.

We're sitting here and reacting based on things as [00:44:00] calls come in or. Requests are received from patrol or investigations or whoever it may be.

**Jason:** . So you just had your first conference. And you just got back from that. It was in New Orleans, correct?

Yeah,

**Nikki:** so this was our first official conference. We've done some more like minor events since, but this was our first official conference after getting established. August of 2022 was when we officially started doing memberships.

**Jason:** In terms of the conference, what was the basic setup? Is this normally what folks would consider as a five day conference or how was it broken

**Nikki:** up? So we started off on Monday. We kind of tried to do more involved classes as our start out day as like a pre conference event.

So we held a certification class that was recently developed by our professional development director. And we now have 35 certified real time crime professionals based on that class. We had a build a pole camera class. So that's another thing that's very common is deploying cameras from your crime center.

So that kind of gave some people an opportunity from [00:45:00] 25 different agencies across the country to have the opportunity to learn how to build their own camera

**Jason:** temporary cameras that you're talking about or like a temporary pole situation.

**Nikki:** Yes it's basically just like a little access camera that's portable and you can essentially put it on to a pole attach it into.

The fiber or wire it up or however exactly you want to do it. So you can make it stationary in one spot if that's where you want it, or you can move it around based on depending what you need. Okay. So that was something we included. And those 25 agencies that were able to build those cameras, they were able to take that camera back home with them as well to their agencies.

And then we also included a social media open source training class on that day as well. So we kind of. Liked that idea. We got really good feedback on those concepts, so that's something we definitely want to bring into our next one to keep in mind is some of those more interactive classes of applying some of the skills to be able to use them.

So then day two Tuesday was essentially all general sessions of different speakers. So we had our welcoming opening ceremonies. [00:46:00] Some guests from the city of New Orleans speak as well, went into Cobb County did an active shooter presentation from their hospital incident that they had a few months back.

We had New Orleans did a presentation on Mardi Gras just to kind of show how exactly they handle a more large scale event in their jurisdiction. We had some special guests from IDF out in Israel that were able to do a presentation kind of on what they're doing and how it is. In another country compared to what we're doing in real time in the U.

S. So that was a very

**Jason:** unique. How was that like just to compare and

**Nikki:** contrast? So it's very interesting how similar but different they are. So a lot of the concepts are the same of what everyone's trying to do. It's just the different technologies and stuff that are available. So it's a very unique perspective to actually get to hear that though.

So that was a great opportunity that we look forward to continuing partnerships exactly like that to show. This is the evolution of this technology and this is where it's going. It's not going away. So that was a big highlight of Tuesday that we got a lot of positive feedback on [00:47:00] as well. And then Wednesday and Thursday were our breakout sessions and just we had a variety of different things from community engagement to regionalization as a concept to starting one from absolutely nothing just kind of the basics.

So we try to do a variety to accommodate. So some things we're looking forward to going ahead are some more advanced classes and not just some of those more general classes on getting started. Because now as people are getting established, we're realizing that's the next thing is, okay, I have one now.

Because there's always new tech

**Jason:** coming out. What would be some maybe examples of some advanced training you would want to.

**Nikki:** So I know hot topics that are coming up or everyone's always, of course, also asking about facial recognition is a big one.

So some more stuff in that area would potentially be something to consider. Some more of like the regionalization element. Like, how do we partner with those around us to communicate? So if there was a large scale event, say. Like we had 9 11. How do I in Florida [00:48:00] help New York City? I have these skills that I can apply that will help them.

How do I get in contact with them to do that for them? So it's kind of thinking outside the box beyond just doing what you would do for your jurisdiction and expanding that to help others.

**Jason:** And so how many attendees did you have at the conference?

**Nikki:** So, it absolutely exceeded any expectation that we could have ever had, and we had over 500 attendees from over 200 law enforcement and private company agencies.

We were expecting maybe 300. We were very surprised at the 500 and the 500 was us having to cut it off because we never estimated to get that high.

**Jason:** Yeah. And when you say cut off, because that's the, you cut it off because of the hotel. Yes. Exactly. Right. Yeah, exactly. So, and I just learned

that over the years of talking with different people that work so hard to put these conferences on.

So that's the only reason I know that. But for some,

**Nikki:** we excluded the [00:49:00] hotel at that point.

**Jason:** So then , for the most part, do you have a sense of the breakdown of the attendees, whether they are from established real time crime center versus looking to establish a real time

**Nikki:** crime center?

That was something we actually included in their signups for registration. It was definitely a good mix. It's really hard to remember an exact number per se, but it was definitely a very good variety of established. Consulting companies, private companies that are partnering. With it, those that were looking to get established, those that were newly established, those that were in the process of getting established, there's definitely a mix across the board, so that's just something we know we need to consider, though, for future conferences, is the fact that there is that variety, so to accommodate the sessions based on that.

**Jason:** Yeah, so it seems like you hit, like, a particular niche. Right, because I think when you talk about analyst conferences and some of them can be so large and so general, [00:50:00] it's you send, you send your analyst there, there's a whole wide beret of Topics there's some best practices and maybe some hands on stuff in Excel and mapping and link charting and it can be just a little baby hit or miss in terms of nailing down exactly what you do, you're going to get something out of the conference.

Don't get me wrong, but it could be a mixed bag of what you actually bring him back to the office, right?

**Nikki:** And even if it's, and some people, it might even just be those new connections you had a, Hey, I need something out at this agency. I met them at that conference. So if I need something in Louisville, Kentucky, I know I can call this person and I know they know what they're doing because I've talked to them and had a good conversation with them to know what their agency is utilizing there.

**Jason:** Yeah, absolutely. Always doing networking. At these, types of events, but I feel that with. Real time crime center conference. This is most likely either

their job currently, or it's [00:51:00] something they're about to do because they're building one. Exactly. And so you are, for lack of a better term, boxed in, but I don't mean that in a negative.

sense that it, because you're, you have maybe a more singular purpose, I could see the interest and the conversation and just the back and forth being a little bit more, , maybe exciting, maybe thinking that you're all in there for a similar goal. And hence the, the reaction that you've gotten and even the turnout that you got with 500 Attendees at your first conference, given that you did.

Maybe I didn't ask that. How many members do you

**Nikki:** currently have? So we actually just hit over 900 officially this week for members.

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we even joke, Is that when we started, we're like, yeah, maybe we'll get lucky and get like a hundred members in the first year. So the fact that we're almost, we're nine times that coming up on 10 times, that is [00:52:00] just beyond what we ever expected this fast.

**Jason:** And it was in New Orleans, , that always helps too, because New Orleans is awesome, ,

**Nikki:** That's not find a bad restaurant the entire time I was there.

**Jason:** Yeah, so, but not everybody gets 500. Attendees just because it's in New Orleans, but , this is still pretty impressive. Now, you mentioned for next time, moving forward, you want to get to a more advanced training is what else is next, either in in terms of the association or future

**Nikki:** events.

So one of the next things we're looking to, that we did actually announce at the conference and are looking to proceed with soon, is a consulting company in partnership with Police Technical. So what that'll do is allow some of those that have been a part of establishing real time crime centers go around helping others that are looking to do the same.

And kind of assess, okay, what do you already have? Okay, [00:53:00] here's the next steps we would take, and here's how we recommend to get to your end

goal. So a big thing to consider is what are you looking to accomplish? For example, as I've mentioned, we're primarily property crime driven. So what we're trying to accomplish is different than what Jacksonville is trying to accomplish is different than what Miami is trying to accomplish is different than what Tallahassee is trying to accomplish.

**Jason:** As part of being a member to the association would allow access to that type of consultation. Correct.

**Nikki:** And then, in addition to that element, of course, the contact sharing, how we're trying to build that list is another thing we want to keep working towards to be able to provide something back to our members of, hey, when you know you need someone, you can count on us to get it for you.

And then, in addition to that, some of the next things going forward is we want to keep building some of those partnerships, like the one we're starting with Police Technical. So. I was able to attend IACA, for example, this year and kind of get a perspective and participate in some of their events and talk to some of their board members and get some ideas for going forward.

So [00:54:00] IACA, IALEA locally, FCIAA, just all the different entities that are out there, Fusion Center, you name it, we're trying to partner with them to provide the best that we can for our members.

**Jason:** And then how much does it cost to be a member? So

**Nikki:** right now we are at 25 for the year. We're kind of reassessing to come up with some different membership ideas for the upcoming year.

To include like agency memberships for example. So something like that would include some like extra special perks to it. So another new thing we're looking to add is a nationwide radio system. So again, back to the 9 11 example, if there wasn't an event like 9 11, if you have that radio in your crime center, you're able to tap in and contact NYPD if you need to.

**Jason:** So that's getting some true collaboration.

**Nikki:** So that is ultimately our goals is to work smarter and harder together and not make it worse. So

**Jason:** did you, have you looked into maybe a federal grant to help you with that?[00:55:00] nationwide

**Nikki:** connection. So we're kind of starting off trying to figure out like a best practices policy for that element.

And then from there, that's probably where once we kind of realize we want to get more of how to approach getting more. So that's when we'll potentially start looking at the grants and see what we can come up with right now. Everything we're doing. We're a 501 C3. We're a nonprofit organization. So some of the stuff like that, we might have to reach out to the Fusion Center and coordinate with them for someone that can have a little more insight for that.

Oh,

**Jason:** okay. The Fusion Centers aren't 50 whatever? They're able

**Nikki:** to provide a little more like correspondence to get different things such as the grants and stuff like that than what we are able to do at this

**Jason:** point. . All right. So, we'll we'll include links in the show notes for the white paper that Nikki mentioned and obviously additional links for more information.

Great. Thank you. For real time crime center. If those that are listening want more information on the topic all right, Nikki, let's let's move on. I want to talk a little bit [00:56:00] in general about law enforcement analysis training and looking at your resume here, you have several training that you've attended over over the years.

Is there a particular training that you're That you like that you would highly recommend. I think

**Nikki:** the one that sticks with me the most out of all the ones I've attended was the FDLE analyst academy. It gave me a different perspective going into supervisor at the time. So during that is actually when I did get promoted was while I was attending that.

But it also gave me a perspective as an analyst of some other things I didn't think of, whether it be something as simple as part of it included personality tests, realizing as a supervisor that Everyone you're working with does not necessarily have the same personality as you, so kind of adjusting what you're doing based on how that person will react, whether it be something as simple as hands on learning versus verbal learning, or asking someone to do something

versus telling them that you kind of have to cater to how you know they'll respond, and that one, it's a six month class.

It's a week at a [00:57:00] time over that six months. So you're with those same people and you develop very strong relationships. So I know like for me personally, I have a group of a few of us from all across the state of Florida that we still have a group chat to this day. And if we ever have questions about something that we're experiencing at work, we'll just reach out to each other.

And that goes beyond work too, that we've of course developed personal relationships and everything. But if we ever need anything, we know we can count on each other to be able to answer some of those questions.

**Jason:** You, you said that it's six months and a week at a time. So you basically go

**Nikki:** for a week, come home for say three weeks, go for a week, come home for three weeks and go on for six months like that.

So it kind of gives you time to work while you're back home and not completely miss your job for six weeks.

**Jason:** Okay. It's one week a month for six months. I got you there. Okay. I thought it was six straight months. I was like, that doesn't sound right.

That's a little too intense there. That is a lot, but I and it's one [00:58:00] thing with the networking thing, you talked about the class. What did you say? You were the 32nd class.

**Nikki:** Yes, we were class 32 for the FDA analyst Academy.

**Jason:** Yeah, and that's a, that's a fascinating concept that forever. You all will be linked and it's from all across Florida there that you guys will be able to network and reach out to each other at any time.

Absolutely.

**Nikki:** And then currently they're now up to class 36 and pretty much. Soon after the completion of my class and since I've actually been mentoring as well. So I still stay involved with the different classes that they come through to kind of share my experience and help them work through some of the assignments and everything

**Jason:** too.

That program must be doing something well because I know Arizona is looking to set up something similar. The last I

**Nikki:** heard they had just done their first round of it, I believe as well too. So I know they were actually there. During my class to start drafting their own so I think that's something that would be nice to see more universally across is some kind of [00:59:00] certification that just kind of shows I did this class this is why I have the knowledge to do what I'm doing

**Jason:** and I think

there has to be a little localized flavor in it, that's what has become so valuable to the FLETC program is that you're dealing with, with Florida, and just talked about the networking, but you also talk about, You all are dealing with similar stuff, Florida state law, you're dealing with similar aspects that only Florida sees, and I'm sure, I'm sure Arizona is in probably in something a little bit similar dealing, dealing with the desert I was just seeing an article today about some about the governor and water usage in Arizona, which there's probably a foreign concept.

Yep. To most of the U. S. But in Arizona, water uses is a big deal.

. Right, as good as

**Nikki:** it is to be able to reach out to someone and say, California, what they're doing there is completely different, [01:00:00] so it's also nice to have significantly more context in Florida, so when I have something a little more specific, when it comes to Sunshine Law, where we give up a lot more than some other states.

That you have those reference points to still ask to

**Jason:** yeah, I mean, I mean, and there's just you're dealing with training conferences are also good at at networking and building relationships with people clear across the country or clear across the planet. Right, but in terms of this, of this training here sometimes the one size fits all model doesn't doesn't fit particularly well when it comes to training.

Absolutely. Good deal. Let's move on to advice. What advice do you have for our listener, whether they're a brand new analyst or maybe they're an experienced analyst?

**Nikki:** I think one thing you'll hear around the office a lot is people want change, but people also hate change, especially in the law enforcement profession,

So being open to change though, unfortunately, is definitely a big piece of it for advice. Another thing to [01:01:00] consider is knowing where you're looking to work. Of course, it's something you can learn, but county familiarity and city familiarity are very important when it comes to identifying things such as cameras, crime trends, just kind of knowing the way that area works.

And a big thing for anyone really looking to just get in is don't be afraid to reach out to those that are already in the field. IACA, ILEA, all of them, they accept members from people that are currently in school or looking to get in. On there, don't be afraid to look through people in your area and reach out and ask them what they're doing and how they got into it and what you can do to prepare.

Something as simple as, hey, I'm interested, can I come tour? Worst case, the answer you're going to get is no, depending on how that agency feels. Best case scenario, you're going to get a tour and you're going to be a lot more well informed of what you're exactly looking to get into and have a better idea if it is something you actually want to do.

Yeah,

**Jason:** yeah, and I definitely think as you go and you're maybe you're in school and you're in the [01:02:00] city and everything else and just and you go attend major events like just especially if the event is unique to that area, just kind of go there. You're there, you're there as an attendee, but you can certainly observe all the different aspects of the event, the police presence, the security presence, the people flow, and even the stuff like , that if it's a major event , for that city, especially if it's annually, we talked about the biker event or spring break in your area there.

That's a great example. They're just observe that aspect of it. Makes you appreciate the, what, what needs to be done in terms of, of managing this large influx of, of people. Absolutely. How about return on investment? What's something that an analyst can study [01:03:00] now that's going to be important five years from now?

I

**Nikki:** think, as hard as it is to say, because technology is constantly changing, but just trying to keep up with the technology, not even just in the real time element, but the crime analysis element. Social media, for example, my space was a thing. There's no, my space anymore. Now it's Tik TOK and all these other things.

So making sure you keep up with what's new and great, whether it be for your personal use or not is incredibly important.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I think that's, if yours were another thing in terms of the advice. I mean, that's you getting out there as just being on Twitter or tech talk or all the different, different social media at apps that, I mean, being familiar with that is definitely something that it could be a tool in your career eventually as an analyst,

**Nikki:** especially professionally.

I actually didn't even have a LinkedIn profile till a little over a year ago. I didn't realize how much LinkedIn can be utilized within our profession of just finding [01:04:00] people. If you do ever have questions beyond emails, that LinkedIn is an incredible resource too.

**Jason:** Yeah. So, and then we find a lot of guests.

On the show via LinkedIn, so we can I can certainly speak to that as well. So, all right, Nikki, let's finish up with personal interests. And you are a challenge coin collector. I

**Nikki:** am. So. Around the time of my analyst academy, so about two years ago, I kind of started getting a few here and there, and my hobby very quickly grew, and I have about three racks, a case, and they're pretty much full, so I'm about to run out of room here in my office, so I'm going to need to invest in some more storage for them, but it is a...

Definitely a very addicting hobby to have in the law enforcement profession. ,

**Jason:** how many did you have? Oh,

**Nikki:** it's gotta be over at least 200 if I had to guess. There's definitely a few hundred if I had to estimate.

**Jason:** That is impressive. And so did you get most of [01:05:00] those going to conferences and whatnot?

Or how did you obtain most of those?

**Nikki:** So starting the crime center, we had a lot of people come through and tour the center to kind of get ideas. So that was where it kind of. Started and then of course from there it just grew teaching at different conferences and everything and Conferences were definitely a main source of a lot of them.

**Jason:** Yeah. So do you have a goal in mind? Are you just collecting as you go?

**Nikki:** Not just collecting as I go.

**Jason:** Mm hmm. , you gotta get them on display. Right. You gotta work on

**Nikki:** that display. My office neighbor, my office neighbor here has quite a lot, so I don't think I'll ever compete with him.

He's gotta be closer to like a thousand over there,

**Jason:** but. Oh, wow. Yeah, yeah. So you gotta, but yeah, you gotta get a good display for them. So you gotta focus on that next. . And you're a Jeep owner. So we'll just, what's your Jeep look like?

**Nikki:** So my favorite color ever since I was a little kid is green.

So as a result, I had a bright green Jeep Wrangler and that is my baby. That is my dream [01:06:00] car that I've always wanted. And a lot of people refer to it as a cult. You'll see a bunch of ducks in my dash. That's what I was going

**Jason:** to ask you.

**Nikki:** I got my, my duck, duck, deep ducks. I keep a bunch in my center console.

And then I, of course, collect them as I receive them. So those are all across my, my dash. .

**Jason:** Where did that duck thing come from?

**Nikki:** So I think there were, there were, there's some like. More detailed backstory to it, but I originally just kind of saw it on social media as a thing of hashtag DuckDuckJeep and was like, all right, this is cool.

I like rubber ducks. We can roll with this. And then one of the other perks of being near Daytona is every year Daytona has an annual Jeep week. So I also make sure to attend that every year as well. All

**Jason:** right. And so, and it's it's a classic two door. No, I

**Nikki:** did go four door now. I did go four door.

My husband has a two door, so we decided we should probably have a four door with three dogs in the house.

**Jason:** Yeah. , my wife has a cheap, I bought it for her for her 40th birthday and, [01:07:00] it's the classic two door, but , she sees why people go four door.

Yes.

**Nikki:** I started with a two door. That was my first one. And I did enjoy just being able to flip the top back though. That was great. So I kind of missed that on my four door, but so I see both sides of it. Yeah.

**Jason:** . Our last segment to the show is words to the world. This is where I give the guests the last word.

Nikki, you can promote any idea that you wish. What are your words to the world? I think,

**Nikki:** let's see, one thing that you will often hear people joke about is having a candy dish in your crime analysis unit. It is a centerpiece to bring people in the agency in to see it. So that is one thing we try to always make sure we have in here.

Everyone loves candy apparently. So whether it be just for them to come down and grab a piece of candy and they don't say anything else to you, it just kind of reminds them where you are within the agency. So when they do need something, they know where to go that we're here for them.

**Jason:** Yeah. And you're going to need to get an official candy sponsor for the real time crime center.

That's [01:08:00] right. Very good. Well, I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later, but I do appreciate you being on the show. And Nikki, thank you so much. And you be safe.

**Nikki:** Thank you.

**Mindy:** Thank you for making it to 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 website at [www.](http://www.leapodcasts.com)

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