

# Megan Cruz

## From Burnout to Leadership

**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 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 13 years of law enforcement analysis experience. She holds a Master's of Science and Homeland Security. She's currently the crime analyst supervisor at Richmond Police Department in Virginia.

Please welcome Megan Cruz. Megan, how we doing?

**Megan:** I'm doing great. Thanks for having me, Jason.

**Jason:** All right. So you can blame your husband for this podcast experience. 'cause for those that have, might have guessed your husband's also in this profession. I've had him on the podcast. So Chris on my last recording with him and said, oh, [00:01:00] Megan should have been on here before me and gave me a hard time about it.

**Megan:** Yes the circle of law enforcement analysis tends to be a small one, especially in the Central Virginia area. So we run into each other quite a bit professionally.

**Jason:** Yeah. I am glad to have you on this show. Looking forward to getting your perspective to the profession and your contributions to the profession.

All right, let's start from the beginning though. How did you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

**Megan:** Sure. So, I grew up in New Jersey and I was in sixth grade when nine 11 happened. So that was a kind of formative experience in my life. I lived not very far from New York City at all.

I lived right off of a military base, so there was a lot of things that happened very close to home. My parents knew people that were in the World Trade Center that day. So when I think about it my master's degree is in Homeland Security and that kind of field wasn't, didn't [00:02:00] exist before nine 11.

So I have already have, I've always looked at the law enforcement avenue of working and I decided it's something that my colleagues here at Richmond Police make fun of me for a lot. They always ask, oh, why aren't you sworn? Why aren't you sworn? And I jokingly say, I have several reasons why I am not sworn.

One of which. Doesn't really apply anymore is that I always said I was terrible at a driving a Crown Vic Richmond Police doesn't drive Crown Vics anymore, so they tell me that's not a good excuse, but I'm also not a very good shot. So I am very happy being behind the desk. Uhhuh, I'm also a bit of a nerd, so, I think that, my skillset is best in the analysis realm.

**Jason:** All right. All right. So then what was your. Can you just your first taste of analysis once you got outta school?

**Megan:** Sure. So, I actually, when I was [00:03:00] in school, my first two internships were in the law enforcement analysis realm. I did an internship when they New Jersey State Police in the regional Operations Intelligence Center, the Rock, which is the New Jersey Fusion Center.

That was many moons ago as I look back at it now. And then I also did an internship with the Virginia Department of Corrections in their security threat group unit doing analysis on prison gangs. That was very entertaining as well, and that actually led me into my first position here in Richmond.

**Jason:** And I just I forgot to mention earlier, for the listeners, we are gonna do a call in segment. Don't be that analyst. So if you have a, don't be that analyst you wanna share with the program, get your calls in now. All right, Megan. Corrections in terms of analysis, that's not something that people think of when they think of corrections.

**Megan:** No. But definitely there's a lot of, certainly there's a lot of intelligence and, you have a [00:04:00] captive target there. There's a lot of information that is garnered from things like jail calls. Also there's this, the idea of kiting letters. What that is, is that, someone on the inside would send a letter to someone on the outside and they repackage that letter and send it.

Back to someone else, maybe in another facility, so on and so forth. So that's where you might get some of the juicy stuff. So that kind of information will be read and analyzed and put together basically looking at that kind of stuff, especially among self PEs gang members.

**Jason:** Yeah. Every once in a while I, we would get some when we were analyzing jail calls, we would get where they would be in a code and they would send like the cipher code in a different mail, but sometimes it would be in the same envelope. So you just had to translate it based on the code that they sent.

**Megan:** Yeah. It definitely was very interesting.

**Jason:** All right. So then you were [00:05:00] also part of the Fusion Center during your time with. The Virginia Department of Corrections. So talk a little bit about that and your perspective on the Fusion Center.

**Megan:** Sure. Yeah. So I was a departmental liaison to the Virginia Fusion Center from the Virginia Department of Corrections.

So that was having that representation in the multi-agency Fusion Center. And I specifically sat in a gang unit. And where I would come in would be if there were any ties to any, people on the inside, or if there was any ties, anything in probation and parole. I was there as the conduit for that information into other law enforcement investigations.

**Jason:** Sure. It's interesting how the, fusion centers, real-time crime centers. These are. Groups that have come along since you and I started in the profession. And it's fascinating the number, that you might see in a given area. Does [00:06:00] Richmond have both the realtime crime center and the Fusion Center?

**Megan:** So Richmond Police has a realtime crime center is our capital city intelligence center. And actually that's a separate unit from the Crime Analysis Unit. They have a different mission. And then Virginia has the overall Virginia Fusion Center that's housed at Virginia State Police that's more of a higher level intelligence gathering institution, more or less that state police participates in and carries heavily.

**Jason:** I gotcha. I gotcha. For the listener that somebody that might be brand new to both concepts. Yeah, I think you can hit the nail on the head there when

you're talking about high level intelligence versus realtime crime is crime that's going on now and helping with the response to something that's going on now.

Is that how you would describe it? Or is do you have a different way of describing both those groups?

**Megan:** No, I would definitely agree with that. I definitely think that, the, from the [00:07:00] role of a fusion center that's gathering information from all across jurisdictions, you can look at things happening, all of the state.

You can also network with things happening across the country where different localities can push items up to the statewide level kind of being that conduit. And also information can come down from either federal or other states coming down to the fusion centers to then come back out to localities when it comes to real time crime centers.

That's. I almost feel like that's super detailed and granular where, the real-time crime center that functions at the Richmond Police Department, they're the operators there, they are on the radio, they are following the cad. Anything that pops up, they will certainly jump on that look to see if we have cameras in the area.

It's very like beat by beat very quick at a very fast pace. And I give them a lot of credit because I don't have that skillset. I'm not the greatest of that at that kind of pace.

**Jason:** Yeah. [00:08:00] Yeah. So then, so then from Department of Corrections, then you go to the Virginia State Police as a senior intelligence analyst.

So what do you get into the. They're at the fraud le, at the state level.

**Megan:** Yeah. So that I was still within the Virginia Fusion Center. I switched agencies at the time. But I was still looking at, mainly large strategic statewide trends, things that were seeing with multi-jurisdictional nexuses items like that.

It's on a mu at a, a larger scale.

**Jason:** Okay. All right. And then it seems like here then you went to the private sectors. CACI International. I remember seeing their name when I was living in the Baltimore area. Talk a little bit about leaving the public sector and going to the private.

**Megan:** Yeah, so technically that's private sector, but I was a federal contractor. So it was still in the sphere of public safety. I was doing background investigations for people getting security [00:09:00] clearances. So, I was on a DOD contract and that wouldn't, require me going out into interviewing people for either their background or people.

In reference of another. It was getting a lot of records. It was a lot of time on military bases in the region and a lot of talking to people

**Jason:** that, that, that's one thing I wish I actually could see and hear what people said about me when I went through. A background investigation where people had to go interview people.

Like, when you think about it, 'cause when you go through it in your twenties, they're going to people when you were a child, knowing that's what's this neighbor boy doing that you, you didn't like? . But I would find it fascinating to find out , who said what about you.

But that's obviously something that you never find out.

**Megan:** Yeah. It's really entertaining. Yeah. I did this when I was about 25 years old and then I had to get a TS level clearance when. I became an investigator. So yeah, [00:10:00] they had to interview my godmother as who, she's not a blood relative, as someone who could say, something about where I lived as a child.

Because I didn't have too many people to go on.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I moved around so much, and every time you have, you move, you have to put somebody that knew you there. And it's like, and they asked you don't repeat people. And I was like, oh geez, this is gonna get tough. , So as an investigator, going and interviewing different folks, do you have a memorable story or anything that it was out of the ordinary that you remember?

**Megan:** Mainly a lot of the ones that I went to interview people about it was go talk to these young kids about why something didn't show up on their initial application, why did someone say that you like to smoke weed as a kid? Or why did why didn't you mention this or that you got fired from the job at the ice cream store or something like [00:11:00] that?

That was a majority of them, but then I had this one investigation where it was still a younger guy and he was in a different school at the military base outside

of Richmond, and it, he was getting a ts and he was so prepared for this interview. He's just like, he had all of these people, all these references, he's, and.

He was in a program that was for like ordinance, tech disposal. So it was a really hard program to get into, and I just remember. Thanking him so much for being so organized and so on top of his game, because usually trying to get more references from these, 19-year-old kids was like pulling teeth and it was so refreshing.

So I hope that kid is doing well. Yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. And oh man. And I do remember, nowadays everything they're probably not entering, you're not probably filling out these background investigations by hand. Everything's probably on the [00:12:00] computer, you're typing it all up. But I remember just writing everything out.

And, filling out a 25 page like background form and, the 25th time that you've had to put down your name or your address or whatnot. I think the one I remember, you had to put your social security number on every single page. Yep. And so it was just by the time you did it like four, four or five times that your handwriting wasn't as sharp as it was the first time.

I'll just say that. And I don't have good handwriting to begin with. So I can see where that would be refreshing what you said about somebody being so complete.

**Megan:** Yes. Anytime I see an SF 86, I shudder inside a little bit.

**Jason:** All right. So this does bring you to Richmond now.

What made you go from, working these background investigations to being a crime analyst in Richmond?

**Megan:** So I found that I didn't particularly [00:13:00] enjoy doing the background investigations. Yeah. It was just in, that wasn't a time that I was hopping around from different jobs, trying to figure out what it is that I wanted to do.

And I had worked at the state level doing the more strategic analysis and that wasn't quite what I wanted to do either. I was. Itching for the boots on the

ground. So finally a spot came up at the Richmond Police Department and I interviewed for it. I specifically wanted to work for Richmond Police.

I lived in the city and the city of Richmond, and I had a special interest in working in the jurisdiction that I lived in. I, I'm strongly pushed by a sense of community service. So I feel like the job that I do gives back to my community, helps my community stay safe. But I also, like, I wanted to work for a larger urban department where there was a lot going on and Richmond, Virginia definitely checks all [00:14:00] those boxes.

**Jason:** All right, when you're first starting out? What tasks are you doing? What are you asking to do? What's the goal? The position?

**Megan:** Yeah. So I was on a team of seven and my first position was I was in one of the geographic precincts within the police department. And it was really you are that precinct's crime analyst.

You are embedded in the detective squad and you're helping the property crimes detectives and you're helping out the tactical team that they're working their investigations. And then you're also helping with patrol allocations and the comps stat reports of everything within the precinct. So, it definitely was like diving in off of the deep end.

But you know, it was it was great and as. Soon as I got over the rush of information that was coming to me I really enjoyed it.

**Jason:** Oh, now did you have a focus, did the precinct have a particular [00:15:00] problem that you were focusing on?

**Megan:** Yeah, so the precinct that I worked out of was the west end of the city of Richmond, and that's more a property crime that we're seeing.

It's geographically the largest and probably the population wise, the largest area of the four precincts. But it saw a lesser volume of violent crime, but a higher volume of property crime.

**Jason:** I gotcha. And I've spent a little bit of time in Richmond. Is it Five Points or is it called the Fan?

Like isn't there?

**Megan:** Yes. The fan is the fan is a neighborhood in Richmond. Yep. Okay. That's in the, that's in the west end of Richmond. Okay. There's also an area that's called Six Points that's up in North side, so, okay. You're close with that one.

**Jason:** Okay. Okay. So, so where you talking about, so where the fan is that, 'cause what it's a, what I was thinking of is like, one of them was like a the downtown area would be kinda almost like the tourist trap area.

Is that the fan or is that the [00:16:00] six points one?

**Megan:** It's neither. Oh,

**Jason:** okay. Nevermind.

**Megan:** Downtown, down downtown Richmond. That is more of like the business and financial district, and then we have the state capital and then you get a little bit further east and you have Chaco Bottom, which is like the entertainment district.

And the fan is mainly a residential district that is bordered by Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Jason:** Yep, I do remember that I, you talked about Richmond and being sworn, I actually. Went through a part of the application process for, oh, so let me see here. Let me date myself that this would've been probably 99.

I remember going down for testing. I remember going down for physical fitness. And I can't remember, I can't remember. I wanna say I made two trips down there. And I, off the top of my head, I can't remember, I can't remember if I got picked up or if I didn't get picked up. I can't remember now that I should be [00:17:00] able to remember that.

But it's also like over 25 years ago. So, but anyway, so that's why I am a little bit familiar for with Richmond, because I went down there a couple of times in the nineties. But all right. So in the beginning you're focused on property crime. You're focusing on a particular precinct.

As. You were developing your skills? What are you discovering when you think back now? What were some of the things that maybe you struggled with in the beginning, but then, you eventually, figured it out?

**Megan:** I do think I struggled a little bit with buy-in. Especially at the beginning. I felt like I wasn't as confident in my abilities that I should have been.

And definitely, I wasn't necessarily like putting myself in there and really inserting myself into the room. And it wasn't until I, I had time there and got used to everybody that I'm like, no, I deserve to be in these rooms.

I deserve to be in [00:18:00] the. Command meeting, and I deserve to be in the detectives meeting and this, that, and the other thing. I have a place here because I have something that I can give you

**Jason:** now. At the time, how many other analysts are at Richmond?

**Megan:** So currently there the unit is seven analysts and a supervisor.

**Jason:** All right this brings us to one of your two analyst badge stories, and for those that may be new to the show, the analyst badge story is the career defining case or project that an analyst works. And so I guess we'll go in order here in 28. What, I guess I'll ask you, which one do you wanna do the, you wanna do the property one first or you wanna do the rape one first?

**Megan:** Probably the property one.

**Jason:** Okay. All right. So this, it's 2019 and you are dealing with a theft in the motor vehicle series. And you use something called a Newton swoop.

**Megan:** Yeah, it sounds super cool. It does.

**Jason:** Yes it does.

**Megan:** Yeah. So it's [00:19:00] basically, it's a geographic analysis method that was developed by Milton Newton technically in 1980.

But it's basically saying if you think that the same person is doing these related incidents and you think that they are operating in this area that they feel comfortable operating in. That there's a high probability based on calculating, where they're doing it and how often they're doing it, and how far the different points are from each other, that it'll zero in on an area saying, Hey, there's a pretty good chance that your suspect has some kind of connection to this area.

Whether or not it is that's where they live, or they have that's where they work or don't work. Or that's where they just have a connection to that they feel comfortable committing crimes in this area.

**Jason:** So that sounds like geographic profiling to me.

Is it the same or is it different?

**Megan:** No, it's [00:20:00] it's pretty the same. The Newton Swoop was really put together for like serial murders. So it was taking it from that kind of idea, bringing it down to the level of I have, 25 incidents of cars smashing cars, getting their windows smashed out. And in an area and a time that really wasn't that common.

It was strange to see that popping up and it happened and it was always happening on the weekends and it was always happening on the afternoons for about a month and a half, and it was in this very compact area of an area that really didn't see that. So it was something to really, dive that direction, saying, okay, there's a high probability that this is all related.

So whether or not, when you're doing those calculations and it comes up with the area, it's that it's so something called a haven. The haven. Where is, where the suspect or suspects are comfortable working out of or comfort, comfortable [00:21:00] operating out of? So this case I did, I, I did it through accurate Workstation and it plopped a circle on maybe half a block of a city block size because it was a very, compacted area.

It was maybe the size of like 40 city blocks. Square wise. And I was like, okay, this is weird 'cause it plopped it like right over a bridge. And I'm like, okay, there's not a homeless encampment, under that bridge.

**Meg:** Yeah.

**Megan:** But there ha there happened to be a. An apartment building about 500 feet away from where that circle dropped.

And we had been getting drug complaints and overall sketchy things that were happening at that apartment. And so I brought that to some of our tactical team guys and the detectives that were working all of the stolen property. And, they started doing surveillance and obviously people were coming in and [00:22:00] out of this apartment building all the time and there's sketchy and there was a lot of known people.

It was like, oh, the drug users and the thieves that are like, oh, these are known variables, and they're known players in the area. A lot of them were coming in and out of there. And then we had a break where a phone. That was stolen out of one of these cars started pinging in that apartment building.

**Jason:** Oh, okay.

**Megan:** So we had already been looking at that apartment building, but then the phone started pinging there, the stolen phone. And it was like, oh, sweet. Let's go. And the detectives and the tactical team, they, got the search warrant. They found that there was a drug dealer operating out of there.

And in lieu of cash, he was taking stolen property. For payment for the drugs. And when they hit the door, there was a lot of stolen stuff from a lot of these cars. And I just remember being ecstatic that finally the geeky [00:23:00] math stuff worked and it was it was right on. And it was pretty cool having one of those.

Oh my gosh. The textbook is real situations.

**Jason:** So how far away was the apartment complex to where a lot of these thefts occurred?

**Megan:** Maybe five, 10 blocks. It was in a weird circle around it, which made sense.

**Jason:** So in terms of. Calculating the Newton Swoop, what all data did it consider?

**Megan:** So it considered space, basically the geographic points on the map and saying that, specifically these ones that are that we believe are. Linked it calculates basically how far they are away from one another. And what that center point would be on basically at the geographic profiling of it.

**Jason:** These thefts were they all in like one general location?

**Megan:** Yeah, they [00:24:00] were around one of the parks in Richmond. So it was like in one or two neighborhoods.

**Jason:** Yeah. So it wasn't like a pinwheel situation where that apartment complex was in the center and it, there was a circle going around the apartment complex.

**Megan:** It was.

**Jason:** Oh,

**Megan:** okay. So it, it was more central to where things had happened. Things had happened in the fan district. Okay. And then going down into the just south of the fan district is one of the large parks. So things had happened in the fan district and into one of large parks, and around that kind of donut hole in the center was

**Jason:** Oh, okay.

This

**Megan:** building? Yep.

**Jason:** Okay. Okay. I was thinking it was more concentrated than that. That's where I was like wait a minute. How far was it? How did it know what direction to go into? Okay now I'm, I caught up to you. Sorry about that.

**Megan:** Oh no, you're good.

**Jason:** Okay, so then that's where kind of the, that century put it in the river there and you knew that wasn't right.

**Megan:** Yeah.

**Jason:** And obviously they lived there. Back to the geographic [00:25:00] profiling upon cept, it's either where they live, work, or play normally. And you said this was a drug dealer, so was a drug dealer. You said it was drug dealers taking payments. So it wasn't that the drug dealer was taking this stuff, he was just owning the stolen property?

**Megan:** Yes. So basically all of the couple people that were doing it were taking the items to to the drug dealer.

**Jason:** Alright. No that tracks no that's exciting. That's exciting stuff. That's good. And you said you presented on this, right?

**Megan:** Yeah, so I recently presented on that to the Virginia Crime Analysis Network at one of their recent symposiums.

I may or may not have been volunteered to do it by my wonderful husband who may or may not have thrown my name in the hat.

**Jason:** Oh yeah. For,

Apparently he's your agent. He gets you all kinds of gigs.

**Megan:** He does. He's wonderful.

**Jason:** All right. Very good. Do you remember how many people were involved in that?

You got the drug dealer, of course, but [00:26:00] in terms of who was actually doing it? Was this just a, was this one person, was this a few people?

**Megan:** It was actually a few people, I think. There were three or four that we identified as being involved with it.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. But obviously all in cahoots and not, hey, they're like, Hey, don't be stealing our in this building.

We can't steal in this building 'cause this is where we are, we gotta go. Exactly. And at any direction from here.

**Joe:** Yeah.

**Jason:** That's good stuff there.

**Eliann:** This is Dr. Eliann Carr from the Ellensburg Police Department here to talk about the first of its kind, the Crime Analyst Census survey. This is an opportunity for crime analysts from around the world to be able to share information on the demographics that make up the field, be able to look at the relationship between commission, non-commission, and how we navigate that relationships in our career field, and also to look at training opportunities and development that will help us foster the opportunities for growth and development both personally and professionally.[00:27:00]

If you're interested in taking the survey, you're welcome to go to the link in the show notes below, sure that your voice is heard and included in the data.

**Jason:** Andrew, I do wanna start right there with the book. What pushed you to write this book? Large Language Models for mortals.

**Andrew:** I was really not happy with the introductory materials for Python, and so I, I initially wrote that book, data Science for Crime Analysis with Python, and it's a similar sort of origin story for the large language models.

**Jason:** Well, how can people contact you if they have further questions or in how can they get the books?

**Andrew:** Yeah, so the book is available on my website. My website is crime decoder.com. If you go to my website, I have a store to be able to purchase the book either in epub or paperback versions worldwide. So you can buy it and get it.

For folks listening, I did create a promo code. [00:28:00] You can use Leap LLM, so L-E-A-P-L-L-M to get \$20 off of the paperback. I know from the prior Python book, a lot of folks like the paperback version, and I'll send you the Eub as well if you use that code. And then to just contact me, I have a contact page right on the site, but you could also just send an email to [andrewWheeler@crimedecoder.com](mailto:andrewWheeler@crimedecoder.com).

**Jason:** All right. As I said, you had two badge stories and the second one's a bit more serious. This is dealing with a serial rapist.

In a university setting. Is that correct?

**Megan:** Yeah. So, we started having these incidents of burglary just off of the university campus and this suspect would come and burglarize the house, break into the house, and sexually assault the women. And several of them were, young college aged women and he had a [00:29:00] very certain mo.

He would, cut their clothes. And it started really popping out as we saw these incidents happening. And it had happened over a couple of years.

And steadily things started we started tracking it and different kind of crime types. We would see assaults, we would see burglaries, we would see sexual assaults.

And then in September of 2018, I believe, it escalated to he got caught upskilling a girl on the university campus. The good thing about that terrible thing that happened was that there was a camera that caught it. So we had the

suspect and that suspect met all of the descriptors of this elusive person that we were looking for, the last couple of years saying, oh, it was this, these specific descriptors of the person who was breaking in and sexual assaulting this woman.

[00:30:00] So, he was, he ended up coming in and was interviewed, referenced the upskilling incident, and slowly, he didn't really come off to it at. At first, but slowly, through further investigation and phone analysis and all this stuff, it turns out that he was the person doing these heinous, terrible crimes.

And we basically had to work backwards that we had the suspect. We then had to associate the incidents that had already happened with the suspect. So, that was, several detectives and several, between the University police department and the Richmond Police Department.

A lot of people involved in that. So I, I was on the edge of that kind of helping pull some of that stuff together. And I actually use this as a case study when I teach to our academy recruit class especially on report writing and MO and so on and so forth, [00:31:00] because a lot of the searching.

That I had done had to be through keyword narrative searches, through o the officer's narrative. And for that very specific mo that the suspect had, when the officers put that in their narrative, that was a way for me to pick that one out and say, okay, let's take a look at that. Because otherwise I'm going through several years worth of reports in this area that, I, it could have been up to reading up to 800 reports where I'm looking at all assault reports, all burglary reports, all, sexual assault reports.

It was not manageable. So, honing in on that mo we were definitely, it was. Good to be able to, cherry pick those things, say, oh, this has the descriptors or the certain characteristics of how this guy operates, so let's see if this could be related to it, and then work from there.

**Jason:** Alright. It's interesting about the, , for a lack of better term, it seems pretty [00:32:00] juvenile to do a, the outskirts, right? Like that, if you've been raping people I just think that's odd, that odd behavior that you would be outskirts in people in public.

**Megan:** Yeah, this guy definitely had a lot of issues, Uhhuh. He ended up getting over 127 years in prison.

**Jason:** Good. Good. Yeah, that's a, that's an interesting one. Now you said this went on for a couple years. The cell phone ping data is probably only gonna go back so far, so you probably couldn't put his phone near the scene of the crime on some of these older cases.

**Megan:** Yeah. So then it was, and it, and this was more the detectives and less me. It was talking to the victims and, trying to get information that way. So yeah, there, it was a long and involved case. Yeah, it was it was a rough one too. Obviously you had these victims of this terrible crime.

But it was great to, give them a certain kind of closure. And [00:33:00] certainly get someone like that off the street. And then, I used that as a case study again with the academy recruits saying. Hey guys. I know probably writing police reports is not why you became a police officer.

You know you wanna jump out on cars, you wanna do the fun things, and writing reports is not sexy, I get that. But you as the patrol officer, you as the log officer and the quick report that you write out can end. With this, where it's a guy that had, he is a serial sexual predator taken off the streets in jail for the rest of his life based on the blog officer's narratives.

That's what really was able to tie those things together.

**Jason:** Yeah. We're probably not too far off of just having transcripts of the conversation between the victim and officer

**Megan:** probably.

**Jason:** Right. Yeah. Because does does Richmond have have body cams?

**Megan:** Yes, we do.

**Jason:** I think everybody does.

Now. I realize when I asked that question, [00:34:00] I'm like, what are you talking about Jason? Probably, who doesn't have body cams now?

**Megan:** Yeah. Yeah. This is the trans, we're not quite to the transcribing technology phase yet. Yeah. But definitely I, I foresee that in the future.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah.

Then you're, the good news is that you're going to have a lot more data than to go through. Yeah. The bad news is just have it in one source and being able to leverage it in a search. So, yeah. But I guess that's where AI is gonna, that's where Chris will help us, right?

**Megan:** Yes.

**Jason:** All right very good. All right. So, it's so you've been an analyst for a couple years then, and then I see on your resume that you leave in 2020. And that I, when talking in the prep call, I know you had a certain reason for why you left in 2020.

**Megan:** Yeah. So, Richmond was a city that, during that summer of 2020, we had an extended period of civil unrest and [00:35:00] it was a grueling operation.

And it was really hard on the department and a lot of people left at that point. And I think I was very much burned out and I was like, maybe I shouldn't be in law enforcement anymore. I was taking it home every day with me. It was just hard to, hard to function. It was, just, it was very heavy and there was a lot of officers that also left the department at that time.

So I ended up doing a couple different things. I worked for the university at one point. I dipped my toe into em. And then I. Went to a private sector company and I was doing data analysis. And then I was bored out of my mind. And, one of the things that I would think of is, when I was doing this analytical work for this private sector company, was that the numbers didn't really mean anything.

It wasn't it didn't have the same meaning as, the law enforcement when we were looking at crime stats, each one of [00:36:00] those numbers represents a victim. That's like, each one of those crime numbers represents someone that has been victimized. Each one of those calls for service represents something that an officer did that, they're out there responding to all of these calls and, taking all these.

Crime reports, and it just, I just felt like it meant something more. So I came back, I did the Richmond Boomerang that I returned to the department.

**Jason:** All right. But, and I do want to get into that on your return, your sequel, if you will. And, but I guess back to the civil unrest and the burnout.

Obviously we're six years past that now. And I guess from your perspective now, what would, what did you, maybe, what were some key factors that led you to the burnout and maybe what do you wish would've happened differently?

**Megan:** I definitely think that [00:37:00] I was not the best at compartmentalizing.

I would bring my work home with me every single. And I would just be thinking about it and my time off would not really be my time off, is that I, was just. Thinking about work 24 7. And that really weighs on someone. So, that's something that I feel like I did not adjust very well to like a, that very long period.

**Jason:** So

**Megan:** I guess a very heightened operation basically.

**Jason:** Was there extra tasks that you were asked to do that you didn't normally do? Or,

Yeah,

**Megan:** so I was on the, basically there was a command post set up. And I worked in that command post for the entirety of the summer.

Along with a couple other analysts that we were taking out of our normal jobs. And we worked specifically the unrest. So that, that was a lot. Yeah. We were operating in the kind of a 24 7 operation that we [00:38:00] would come in and work different shifts and so on and so forth,

**Jason:** man.

You said the summer, is that just, is that three months-ish, or how long were

**Megan:** you in that command stay? Yeah, it was from about Memorial Day to Labor Day. Okay. Of 2020, which was already a weird year prior. Yeah.

**Jason:** And so you were still in the office, you were still going to the office?

**Megan:** We came back into the office for that. Yeah.

**Jason:** That's something we're gonna, when we're retired, we're gonna talk about this and we're all the different perspectives. 'cause depending on what state you're in, it was to, it seemed like it was totally different, yeah, oh, definitely.

Whether you're in person or not or anything else. And I guess we can. We can smile and laugh about it now, obviously it was serious back then. I don't wanna make light of, COVID or even the civil unrest. But it is fascinating when thinking back now and looking at it at with a different lens that just how unique and different it was during this time.

**Megan:** Oh, absolutely. Like, [00:39:00] I, I joke now that, some of the people that I worked with during those operations, it was a, it's a fever dream now looking at it.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. All right. Let's talk about your SQL then and your come back and, 'cause you come back as a supervisor, correct?

**Megan:** Yes. Yeah, so I came back and interviewed for the supervisor position when the previous supervisor had retired. And they decided to hire me.

**Jason:** Man. Had you, given the reason for leaving as burnout had, were they aware of that when you were applying for the supervisor position?

And I'm just curious how you answered that question, because I mean that this happens to people and obviously they need to go on and get other jobs and in Yeah. In your case you at least knew the people. But this, I'm curious how you answered that question.

**Megan:** Yeah. I think, obviously there was a deluge of people who left law enforcement in general.

Yeah. Sworn, not sworn. I think that it was [00:40:00] almost kinda a national trend. And I was very. A force with that. And, I said that it was my sabbatical was that I left and had to do a little bit of soul searching to realize that this is what I wanna do. And there wasn't, I left Richmond Police and there wasn't a day that went by that I didn't think about.

I was like, oh, Richmond Police. And realizing, at through time that I was like, oh, this is what I'm supposed to be doing. Almost it, it was a calling.

**Jason:** All right. All right. So then you're coming back as a supervisor. So, are these, are, is all the same analysts still there?

Or are you dealing with new, a mixture of new and, analysts that were there prior to leaving?

**Megan:** Yeah, so it's a mixture of tenured folks and newer folks. So it's going through a bit of a rebuilding phase. So that definitely is something that we've been working on here at Richmond Police.

But yeah, it's been, certainly supervision [00:41:00] is a whole different ball game.

**Jason:** What comes to mind when you say it's a different ball game? What really strikes at you?

**Megan:** I think that the workflow is definitely different and coming from an individual contributor where someone says, Hey, I need this.

Going to a supervisor when someone says, Hey, I need this, that doesn't mean you go around and do it as a supervisor, you have to have your team work on it. And I have to admit that, like, I'm getting better with it. But I would be working a lot where I'm like, oh, someone told me to do this. I need to do this.

And it's not necessarily my job to be doing that. It's my job to be developing the people to do that.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I understand that structurally. I feel though that, man, there's just, there's sometimes you just want to get your hands dirty with the data. Right. And I feel that in law enforcement, a lot of times it has to be one or the other.

Either you're a worker bee or you're in meetings all day. And it [00:42:00] doesn't seem necessarily, and you, maybe you correct me if I'm wrong, if you think that No, you get a little bit of the , best of both worlds. But it just does seem like, I hear from folks that Yeah, I became a supervisor and now my calendar's full of meetings all day.

**Megan:** My calendar is full of meetings all day. Yeah. I will say that one of the interesting things that I noticed that when I became a supervisor as compared to. When I was an analyst is that, I felt like I was doing a ton of case work as an analyst. I was doing a ton of investigative stuff with the detectives.

I was embedded with detective squads. And then now as the supervisor, I handle a lot of the overall statistic works. So like a lot of the counting a lot of putting together the briefings for city council, a lot of the working with the command staff on, different kind of meetings that they're having, different initiatives they want to do department-wide.

[00:43:00] So it's more, it's at that different kind of a level when you're looking at the numbers now that I'm heavily involved in the UCR reporting and. The stuff and where it wasn't necessarily the case. I was a lot more hands-on with casework when I was an analyst. But I think being a supervisor, the supervisor over this unit in particular, lends itself to, now you are on that kind of, the numbers, the statistics, the telling, the story of the numbers and statistics and of the equation.

**Jason:** You mentioned when you started as the analyst and you were, focused on the precinct. It took you a bit to be comfortable in the room. Just paraphrasing there. , Do you feel that was the same way when you were a supervisor? It took you a little bit to be comfortable in that role of maybe talking with more executives in that level?

**Megan:** Yes and no.

So

**Megan:** The funny thing was not necessarily [00:44:00] talking with the executives and the command staff people. 'cause it was all people that I knew they had been promoted, that they had been sergeants and maybe lieutenants that I had contact with for years. And now they're in the command level.

Our chief. Right now, he was a sergeant when I got here the first time. So I was used to all these people and, I was used to talking with them and I had, in come into contact with them in some way or another over the year. So, that I didn't necessarily feel as nervous about.

What I was nervous about was like, oh, now you are the leader of this unit and you need to find your supervisory voice. I still work for, I still work for that at times and having like a command presence and stuff like that. So, I, again, I'm, I still work on that.

**Jason:** Oh my goodness.

So, so, your supervisor voice. So, is that is that just a change in tone or is that loudness, or what's some [00:45:00] characteristics of your supervisor voice?

**Megan:** It's certainly not loudness and not yelling or anything like that, but , it's realizing that you have to set, set the tone for conversations or you have to set the tone for where the team might be going, and you have to let your people do the work.

You just might need to guide what direction they're going in. Yeah.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I, it is tough. These, it's I think that I've seen plenty of, of instances where managers had difficulty with delegation, and

**Megan:** I definitely agree with that,

**Jason:** right. And I, there's with

**Megan:** it myself.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I just, I, it's a trust thing, but it's not, when you say that, it's not like I, I'm not saying that the people under them are incompetent or anything like that. It's difficult when you, as you mentioned, when you go from, oh, there's a task, I'm taking it, I'm gonna do the work to, oh, I get a task.

No, I'm going to sign it to somebody else. [00:46:00] And be able to, set up the process to getting it complete. That's just, this is different steps, right? Yes. And it's it's just different.

**Megan:** Yeah, absolutely. And, there's part of me that I get a satisfaction when somebody asks for something.

I'm like, oh, here you go. Here's this thing for you that you asked for. I feel useful, I feel wanted, needed, and stuff like that. So, there's part of that goes into like, oh, the delegation and so on and so forth. I'm like, I wanna feel useful still.

**Jason:** I get it. And I, and so I guess, was there aspects of the team that maybe you didn't anticipate?

Is it still like seven seven analysts that you're supervising and Yeah. They're having similar roles, so you were really familiar with that. But if, as you look at

it now, it's just like when you became their supervisor and all the different stuff that they're tasked to do, the different locations.

Was there something that surprised you?

**Megan:** Yeah, one of the big things is, there's, so [00:47:00] the unit at Richmond it's a centralized yet decentralized crime analysis unit. So, it's centralized that, the analysts. Are in the unit and the reporting structure goes, the chain of command goes through me as the supervisor, but each of the analysts are informally assigned to different divisions that they sit with a geographic precinct division or our major crimes division or our special operations division, or our special investigations division so on and so forth.

And again, you, when you become a supervisor over something that touches a lot of different parts of the department, you see things at a 30,000 foot. View as compared to you were just siloed in your division before. And that's a very different view. And that was something that it took me a lot to get used to.

**Jason:** I, when I have supervisors on the podcast, I like to ask about hiring. 'cause I, I think hiring if delegating is [00:48:00] difficult. I think hiring is difficult. I, if I say, I think I always give the analogy of a sports team. If you draft the wrong person, you're, it sets you back years obviously when you get that right person in there it's pays dividends over the years.

In terms of when you're hiring people and you're trying to whittle it down from 10 to one or whatever you, whittling down which kinda your process, what are some things that you look for?

**Megan:** Yeah. So I think also it depends on, the team overall.

Are there applicants that might fit areas of the team that, like you, you're lacking in a certain skillset, you're like, oh, do I need someone who is more technical with this?

Or do I need someone with experience with this? Or do I need someone that has this in their background? Depending on, what your team looks like at the time, that might be different things at different times, so.

There's a lot that goes into it, whether it is familiarity [00:49:00] with the city and the department in itself, or, familiarity with the crime and intelligence analyst. Processes familiarity with certain highly technical things like rgi IS or Power BI or, the many tools that we use. Those all kind of filter in and

depending on the time and the circumstances, some things might weigh heavier than others.

It really just depends on the makeup of the team and what the team needs to be able to do.

**Jason:** Is there any skills that are central that you just think that all analysts should have? And that's what you're looking for when you're evaluating

**Megan:** curiosity? I definitely think that curiosity and the general wanting to figure things out.

There is a opening episode of The Wire, which the Wire is the best show that has ever been on tv. Full stop. I'll argue that till the day I die. But it's in, I wanna say it's the first [00:50:00] season where the more nerdy detective is trying to crack their, the code of the beeper code that they're using.

And he ends up cracking it. And some of the other detectives who are more, I wanna be out on the street, I wanna be surveillance, I'm gonna jump out on people. They're like, how the heck did you do this? And the nerdy detective goes, oh, I like just, I just like figuring things out. And I was like, oh, that's it.

That's what I want. That's what I wanna do. I just wanna figure things out. So I'd say that's, that's my thing.

**Jason:** Yeah. While I'm on the topic, what. Do you, what do you think the most underrated skill in crime analysis is?

**Megan:** Confidence. I think that, and it's something that, it needs to be developed over time and maybe it's something that people might not necessarily be comfortable with.

But I'm definitely a believer that, especially in law enforcement, you might need to force your way into the room that it, where it [00:51:00] happens, you know? You might need to pester detectives sometimes to be like, Hey, I can hug you on your case. Hey, I can help you on your case. Hey, let me show you what I can do for you.

By nature, I think law enforcement officers are not the most trusting people. So I think that, you have to prove yourself and prove to the people that you work with that you're like, yeah, I can do good work. Look what I can do for you before they'll really let you in.

Because once you crack that code, then you become essential. But it's really, it's cracking that code. It's, maybe. It's showing up at people's doorsteps saying, Hey, I was noticing this and like, let me talk to you about this. Or Hey, I was looking into this and this might be tied to this, so on and so forth.

It's really putting yourself out there and making sure that, sometimes you do have to force yourself into the room.

**Jason:** Yeah, I think it's, it sounds like being a go-getter is Yeah. Is what you're just describing. As you were talking there, it got [00:52:00] me thinking I had on the show Rob Aboumitri who's from Canada, and , his unit eventually specialized.

And phone toll records. During his episode, we got to talking about specialization versus generalization the idea of when being specialized, that it's, you're honing in that skill, becoming an expert in that skill. It's easier to talk confidently about that skill. Because it's something that you know really well.

I'm curious to get your take being in a urban environment and knowing that your analysts probably have to be the jack of all trades. Being asked to do a variety of things. Like, I guess what's your perspective on, the concentration versus generalization?

**Megan:** So I am in a kind of a weird spot with this, the analysis unit is in this rebuilding phase where after 2020, I was not [00:53:00] the only one that left.

Several people left and, the previous supervisor retired and a lot of institutional knowledge with things walked out the door.

So, I'm of the opinion that I wanna create a environment where it doesn't matter what, who is in the chair, that each of the people on the team can.

The can, do these core competencies and that it doesn't matter if you are working, in the major crimes division or you're working in one of the precincts that, anyone should be able to pick up a phone and say, Hey, this person's out. Can you help me with this? Just holistically building an analyst that can do those things.

So in this rebuilding phase, definitely I think, when you get into the more highly technical things, some people might be that person for RGI IS or that person for Power bi or that person for telephone telephone record analysis, [00:54:00] so on and so forth. That's fine, but I definitely.

Someone where, I, I'd like everyone to be generally be able to do everything, everyone having the opportunity to experience the different things that go across the department overall.

**Jason:** Good. Yeah. So, just looking at your entire time at Richmond is there a type of analysis or maybe even a product that you think command staff relies on the most?

**Megan:** Ooh, that's a good question.

**Jason:** I have my moments,

**Megan:** I think of things that I get pinged for quite a bit and, or things that, I look and I see, oh my goodness, there, there's a hole here. We need to fill this. It was putting a bulletin together because we were having a rash of commercial burglaries of vape shops and we need to get it on a map. We need to visualize and we needed it on a table and like send that out and just be able to summarize that this is what's going on, this is the m mo that's [00:55:00] going on, this, that, and the other thing. Those are those one-off things. But then, the chief here at Richmond, he does quarterly.

Press briefings on crime stat numbers. I say that's my comp stat report now, is that I'm not necessarily doing it for one of the precincts is I'm doing it with the chief and his audience is the tv. So, it's that kind of stuff. It's telling the story of what's going on in the city and what the department is doing what it, and answering the questions that need to be answered.

Everything from what are we doing about an increase in pedestrian fatalities traffic wise to, oh, there's a string of connected commercial burglaries or robberies or, there's been a lot of gun violence in a certain area. Just being able to put things together that.

Give the command staff or the chief more to talk about and more to think about and evidence-based research to make their decisions on. I'm a [00:56:00] big fan of any big decision that the department makes should be made on data analysis and evidence-based research. Very good. And I will ride that horse home every single day.

**Jason:** Yeah. If Jerry Radcliffe is listening, he's got a big smile on his face.

**Megan:** Yes.

**Jason:** So I, other than Excel? ' What computer program either I, you can't live without or you think is the most valuable?

**Megan:** I am getting more and more into the utilization of Power bi.

I am having to transition to that from using Crystal Reports, which crystal Reports has, we've been using that for 20 years around here. So it's a big jump from a very dated version of Crystal Reports to Power bi. But I think it's a really powerful tool and Dax is just different enough from Sequel to be annoying.

But I'm pretty excited about that. I also, I love making maps. I love GIS I say in [00:57:00] another life I would've been an urban planner and I would've been a, like a cartographer GIS person. I, it's, I dunno, I just, I love staring at maps and I like I like when you're able to connect those dots and visualize the things that you're reading in reports.

**Jason:** Thinking back in. To all the things that you've gotten into, whether it's corrections and corrections, intelligence fusion centers, you mentioned emergency management. You've gone state and local police. As you try to put all those together I, , is there a common theme.

In terms of crime analysis or law enforcement analysis that you see with all those different stops along the way?

**Megan:** Yeah, so I think that the real role of the analyst is to help the badge and gun folks do their job better.

They're doing their, their working smarter with solving cases deploying to the right areas identifying the right people.

It's that [00:58:00] we are there in the background more or less telling them, Hey, you should look into this person, or you should go hit this house, or so on and so forth. Because we have our hands in all of that information. So I really think that the role of an analyst, again, is to help the badge and gun folks do their job better.

**Jason:** Yeah. And I often talk about, on this show the difference between the private sector and the public sector. And you certainly can comment on that as well, but I'm also, I also, as we mentioned, you've had analyst positions at both the state level and the local level. So, some, somebody that's listening to this that may be new, the, an analysis or may be looking to get into analysis.

I, I just gimme your perspective on those two different levels of government and being an analyst.

**Megan:** Yeah, so I, in my specific experience, the experience that I had as at the [00:59:00] state was a much higher level strategic putting together large products that had information from multiple jurisdictions, kind of intelligence that kind of stuff.

And I felt like the local agency was more a, Hey, we're chasing this one guy that's doing this burglary and we're, this homicide suspect and this, that, and the other thing. And it was just much more granular and closed to the boots on the ground. I, myself, I preferred. That view. My husband, he works for the state.

He likes that big, large agency framework. The policy implications of that all. It really depends on what kind of you're looking for. And I would say that looking, if you look at my resume I hopped around a bit and I trying to, it was trying to figure out what I really wanted to do.

And I don't think it was until I got to Richmond Police that I was like, oh this is it. This is what I wanna do. Yeah.

**Eliann:** [01:00:00] This is Dr. Eliann Carr from the Ellensburg Police Department here to talk about the first of its kind, the Crime Analyst Census survey. This is an opportunity for crime analysts from around the world to be able to share information on the demographics that make up the field, be able to look at the relationship between commission, non-commission, and how we navigate that relationships in our career field, and also to look at training opportunities and development that will help us foster the opportunities for growth and development both personally and professionally.

If you're interested in taking the survey, you're welcome to go to the link in the show notes below, sure that your voice is heard and included in the data.

**Jason:** Andrew, I do wanna start right there with the book. What pushed you to write this book? Large Language Models for mortals.

**Andrew:** I was really not happy with the introductory materials for Python, and so I, I initially wrote that book, data Science for Crime Analysis with Python, and it's a similar sort of origin story for the large language [01:01:00] models.

**Jason:** Well, how can people contact you if they have further questions or in how can they get the books?

**Andrew:** Yeah, so the book is available on my website. My website is crime decoder.com. If you go to my website, I have a store to be able to purchase the book either in epub or paperback versions worldwide. So you can buy it and get it.

For folks listening, I did create a promo code. You can use Leap LLM, so L-E-A-P-L-L-M to get \$20 off of the paperback. I know from the prior Python book, a lot of folks like the paperback version, and I'll send you the Eub as well if you use that code. And then to just contact me, I have a contact page right on the site, but you could also just send an email to [andrewWheeler@crimedecoder.com](mailto:andrewWheeler@crimedecoder.com).

**Jason:** All right. That, this stuff fell [01:02:00] nicely into our advice. Section for our listeners what advice do you have for either new analyst analyst trying to get into the field, experienced analyst?

**Megan:** Having confidence in yourself and your work. Nothing's gonna speak better about you than yourself. Being able to say like, Hey, I have put this together. I am putting these, i'm linking these cases together, I'm doing this knowing, that your work has value.

That is probably one of the biggest things, that knowing that you have a piece in this puzzle that you have fight in this game. And, that would be my advice is just knowing that, yeah, you are important in this.

**Jason:** Yeah. I'm curious too. I know you've done presentations fairly, even a fairly large audience and obviously all the way down to speaking one-on-one of the chief or speaking in a small group.

And this is one of my pet peeves in law enforcement analysis [01:03:00] education is the idea of verbal communication. That it's not really taught, you just getting thrown into the wolves. You just get put into these situations. But as you're mentoring your staff are there repeated lessons over time when it comes to speaking?

**Megan:** It's funny because I do not like public speaking. I mentioned that to my previous supervisor and she's like, cool, you're gonna go teach at the academy. And I was like, oh God, no. This is terrible. But actually that was a great way to get my foot in the door of public speaking because the recruits had to pay attention to me and they had to call me, ma'am.

Which that was great. That was great for my ego. So, that kind of opened that door and I'm glad that she. Pushed me into doing that because now I'm much more comfortable, I've presented at ICA, I've presented at different symposiums things like that. So, I would just say that, the, as far as the speaking, [01:04:00] it's getting used to, it's working up from, maybe you're talking to just the detective squad or maybe you're talking in roll call, or maybe you're talking to the lieutenants on a shift or something like that. And knowing that every one of those meetings that you have that's technically public speaking. It's, it doesn't necessarily have to be at a symposium or has to be recorded, or have to be a webinar or a podcast.

Every instance of you, maybe it's you and four detectives and you are just talking about how, what you are seeing in their related cases that's public speaking. I think it's realizing that's very normal and you actually do way more than you think you do. Right.

**Jason:** All it's a call segment time.

We're gonna take some calls here. Don't be that analyst.

. This is where callers call in and let us know things that they see analysts doing that they really should not be doing. And first on the line is, Amanda. [01:05:00] Amanda, what is your, don't be that analyst.

**Amanda:** Don't be the analyst who doesn't document your work. Or like me who takes notes so poor that you can't actually remember the work you did despite having them.

**Jason:** Yeah. So that's getting similar to your thought process on the patrol officer writing the good report. Right.

**Megan:** Yes. That's gonna come and bite you when a, an attorney comes and asks for the documentation for, why a detective arrested someone. And, part of some of the queries that you ran were, part of that probable cause. So when you don't document that or you don't have a paper trail that's not great when the district attorney or the Commonwealth attorney comes to you and say, Hey, I need this. And then you don't really have it organized. Yeah. Not a great thing.

**Jason:** Yeah. Yeah. I understand the organization, I understand those sourcing, but man, I some of the, documentation on some of the stuff I live [01:06:00] in the world of reports, so the idea of documenting a report.

That, or a dashboard or something like that just puts me to sleep. I was like, so tedious and boring. I not one of my favorite things to do, but certainly understand in the law enforcement world to be able to have your data organized and being able to source it so there's no questions about data turning into evidence.

**Megan:** Yeah.

**Jason:** Excellent. All right. Next on the line is Mandy. Mandy, what's your Don't be that analyst.

**Mandy:** Don't do a photo lineup with only your suspect smiling.

**Megan:** Yeah. That's not great. The

**Jason:** attorneys

**Megan:** love this one thing.

**Jason:** Oh, man. It's sometimes, it's hard because you think about it, there might not be another person that's similar that is also smiling.

I don't think, when you're talking about mugshots a lot of the [01:07:00] times, I don't know how many people are smiling in their mugshot.

**Megan:** Yeah, that's probably not many.

**Jason:** I think I'm gonna defend that analyst on that one. I think I think that one, it could be just a matter of low numbers that you had to

pick the one that's smiling. So. All right, next on the line is Patrick. Patrick, what's your, don't be that analyst,

**Patrick:** Don't be an analyst that's a know-it-all. We had an example where we were doing a, regional intel shop, and we had all these events written on a board and one of the analysts came up and he's like, you know what?

We'll be going home early tonight. I got this figured out. Your problem is this four 13 thing. And me and the crime analyst looked at 'em, were like four 13 means a gun was used. These are firearm related. Robert, thank you. You can have a seat.

**Jason:** So that's a little, yeah. That's a little bit though of the, of, the opposite of what, you don't want to go too far.

Right. You talked about confidence earlier in this interview. You don't want to be arrogant.

**Megan:** No, you [01:08:00] definitely don't wanna be arrogant. 'cause that's, that turns everybody off. Definitely too. Like there's, there is no one in any job and anything, or, certainly in our field even people who are experts that they can't learn something about a certain process or a certain program.

Even if you are, oh you are, an a, an expert in telephone toll analysis, that doesn't mean that you're gonna come across someone that like, oh, hey, actually I found this one way of doing this a little bit better. Knowing that there's always room for approval it all that kind of stuff, like, yeah.

You can't be a know-it-all because there's gonna be someone that knows something better than you.

**Jason:** Next on the line is Anthony. Anthony, what's your, don't be that analyst.

**Anthony:** My don't, the analyst says, know the density of your candy. We were at a conference listening to our presentation and one of our coworkers was chomping down on the free hard candy, the hotel provided, and the people around all the thing they could focus on.

And then all next week it [01:09:00] was the talk of the whole group.

**Megan:** That's a good

**Jason:** one.

**Megan:** That is a good one. Yeah. 'Cause I can just hear the crunching right now in my head. Yeah. I Please don't do that.

**Jason:** Even the wrapper is Oh,

**Megan:** yeah.

**Jason:** Is dangerous, right? When you're trying to unwrap the hard candy.

That can be even too loud.

**Megan:** Yes,

**Jason:** That's, that is definitely a tough one. So it's funny working from home I like to chew gum while I work, and I've gotten to the point since I do work from home not having to worry about any of those people working around me. But my family has told me that I'm quite the, gum popper to the point where, I'm teaching my son how to drive.

And as I was in the passenger seat, I snapped my gum and he jumped as he was trying to drive the car. And he is like, don't do that again. , Yes the work [01:10:00] from home thing, you can develop some bad habits as well. Definitely be aware of when you're interacting with those around you.

Yes. All right. Last but certainly not least is Cynthia. Cynthia, what's your Don't be that analyst.

**Cynthia:** Don't be that analyst that hoards resources or knowledge. It's true that knowledge is power, but sharing knowledge is empowering.

**Jason:** That's a good one to end on. What do you think of that?

**Megan:** Absolutely. A rising tide lifts all boats.

I definitely think it's, when you're on a team not key holding information, the, everything is gonna be better when we share the information, when we share the knowledge when we work together for the common good, which is that's really what a police department does that, we all have to work together for public safety for the interest of that common good.

**Jason:** Very good. And that is, don't be that analyst. If you have a, don't be that analyst and you wanna share it with the show, email us at lea podcasts@gmail.com. Alright, Megan, let's finish up with [01:11:00] personal interest. And you told me that you're a mother of a 2-year-old, so I'm curious if you have a supervisor voice.

Do you also have a mother voice?

**Megan:** Yes. And my favorite mother voice word right now is no. My son is a ball of energy and he gets into everything. So, it gets really entertaining at times.

**Jason:** All right pretty soon you're gonna be answering why

**Megan:** Yes, I, that day is coming. I do know that.

**Jason:** Oh, and I also hate to tell you, like I, at least for me.

Everybody talks about the terrible twos. To me, it was four to me, cognitively, they were, way more sassy at four. And for whatever reason, at two I, I was able to handle it. It was four for me that I was like, oh, this is this is different.

**Megan:** I've heard people refer to the terrible twos, but then also having a three major, so that I'm trying to prepare [01:12:00] myself for that too.

**Jason:** Good deal. And you also are a runner. So, what kinda running do you get into?

**Megan:** I I'm getting back into it after having my son, but before I had my son, I was a marathon runner. Nice. So, yes, I was very well known by a lot of the officers on the street that I was the crazy one running around at five o'clock in the morning.

That, different officers coming off of their shift would be like, oh look, it's Megan. Hi. They would put their spotlight on me more than once have I been scared and jumped up several feet in the air when someone turned their siren on behind me. Known thing.

**Jason:** Yeah. And of your nine.

Marathons. Is one your favorite or one most memorable?

**Megan:** I do love the Richmond Marathon. I've run that numerous times. It's my hometown race. It's the streets where I do all my training. So, I hope when I, as I ease myself back into marathoning again, that's the one I return to.

**Jason:** All right. And what are your [01:13:00] upcoming races?

**Megan:** I'm actually going down to New Orleans to run the Crescent City Classic in a couple of weeks. That's a 10 k. And then the Monument Avenue 10 K here in Richmond is one of the largest 10 Ks in the country. That is in mid-April as well. So I'm pretty excited about those.

Not quite marathon distance, but those will be fundraises.

**Jason:** All right. Very good. Recently I saw on the news where the LA Marathon had to cut their marathon short. Yes. People that got to the 18th mile were given the marathon medal. Can you call yourself a marathon runner if you've only ran 18 miles?

**Megan:** If you've been doing a lot of the training, you've run more than a marathon. Certainly. I, myself wouldn't, but I'm not going to poo on anybody who was put in that work and for circumstances out of their control, the race got cut short. So,

**Jason:** yeah. Yeah. I it reminds me, [01:14:00] I have a buddy that he ran the Nashville Marathon and around mile 20 it started Thunderstorming and they kicked everybody off the road.

He was so mad and because he had spent all this time training, 'cause for those at home you are training for 12 plus weeks and he ended up just running. Wherever he could in the street trying to calculate it. Like how long it took him. He thinks he ran like 30 miles that day because he couldn't,

he didn't have any phone or,

**Meg:** yeah.

**Jason:** Watched it was telling him the distance or whatever it is. He just ran for like another hour plus trying to say that he did in fact run 26 miles. Huh? Yeah, that would, if it was my first one, yeah, I couldn't say that I, you finished a marathon.

I, I couldn't count that one. And I feel badly for those that were, that was their first marathon and now Oh, absolutely. 'Cause you have that, you [01:15:00] almost have to put a asterisk by, so. All right. Very good. Megan. Hey, I got one question for you. As we mentioned I've had you and Chris on the show now, and Chris is obviously big into ai, so I am really curious.

When you are texting with Chris, do you ever wonder if it's really him in the response or is he set up in one of his AI bots?

**Megan:** So Chris is a terrible texter. He's terrible at responding to text messages. So I think if he did respond to my text messages, I would think it's ai.

Both he and his mother are both, we both know he's not gonna get back to us 'cause he is terrible at texting.

**Jason:** Oh man. I might have just gave him an idea. So,

**Megan:** Love you dear.

**Jason:** All right, very good. Hey, Megan, this has been great. Thank you so much for your time and perspective today. Congratulations on all that [01:16:00] you were able to accomplish thus far and good luck to everything you're gonna do here in the future.

**Megan:** Thanks Jason. Really appreciated being on the show.

**Jason:** Our last segment of the show is Words to the World. This is where you can promote any idea that you wish. Megan, what are your words to the world?

**Megan:** I think the words to the world is that analysts need to just know their worth and know that they belong in the room making decisions.

**Jason:** Very good. Wiley, if every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later, but I do appreciate you being on the show. Megan, thank you so much and you be safe.

**Megan:** 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@[www.podcasts.com](http://www.podcasts.com).

If you have a topic you would like us to cover or have a suggestion for our next guest, please send us an email at [Elliotpodcasts@gmail.com](mailto:Elliotpodcasts@gmail.com). [01:17:00] Till next time, analysts, keep talking.