

Mary Craige - The Marketing Expert

[00:00:00] Welcome to analyst talk with Jason elders like coffee with an analyst, or it could be whiskey with an analyst, reading a spreadsheet, linking crime events, identifying a series and getting the latest scoop on association news and training. So please don't beat that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession.

One episode ahead time.

Thank you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason elder and today our guest has 11 years of law enforcement analysis experience. She started as a crime analyst in Fairfax county, Virginia, and moved on to Alexander of PD, where she was promoted to supervisor and eventually technology services division chief she's worked for Northrop Pearlman Lexus nexus, and currently is the marketing director for cobwebs technology.

She's held IACA conference committee chair position, and was in fact the first training committee chair, please. Welcome Mary Craig, Mary, how we doing?

Hi, Jason. [00:01:00] I'm so happy to be here. I'm really excited to talk to you. I've been listening to your podcast, have heard lots of my former colleagues interviewed and I'm just really excited to see on here today.

Yeah, I,

I am so excited. I was really nervous on that intro. So I should not be nervous at this point in time doing so many of these, but you , have been on my list of people that I wanted on the podcast for so long. And I just didn't know the right time to get you onto the shell. And here recently with this year with you getting back into law enforcement now you've gotten your feet wet with them.

I thought it was. Perfect time to bring you on and tell your story and talk about your contributions to the profession.

Yeah. I was really excited when you reached out to me, it was funny. I was having beers with Noah Fritz a couple weeks ago and you came up and I said, you know, no what am I gonna do to get on that podcast?

And he was like, oh, let me talk to Jason. I said, all right, you gotta do that. [00:02:00] so here we are. And he

did Eddie did. And I will say this though. You don't have to wait for me to invite you. If you a listener are out there and you wanna be on the podcast, please reach out to us@leapodcastatgmail.com. And we'll be happy to get you onto the show, cuz that's a big part of my work is just identifying people and scheduling them.

So if people are willing and able to be on the podcast, that makes my job a heck of a lot easier. Absolutely. All right, Mary, first question then. How did you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

That's a really good question. I was thinking about it the other night.

So I, I'm gonna be honest. I fell into it. did that a lot in, in 2000. I was finishing up my master's degree at American university here in Washington, DC, and, you know, getting master's degree in criminal justice. I always had this [00:03:00] thought that I was gonna be an attorney. Yeah, I wanna be an attorney. I wanna put the bad guys away when I was in college, attended some pre-law seminars and it was like a snooze Fest.

I'm like, when are we gonna talk about like criminal law, criminal procedure? Like, this is what I wanna do. And I decided my senior year, I didn't wanna go to law school. So ended up going to grad school getting a master's in criminal justice and moving into my final semester, started looking for jobs and I really wanted to go to federal route.

So I was applying for criminal intelligence analyst positions, research analyst positions. I was applying at the FBI, the DEA, I mean, you name it. Every theory letter agency in VCI was applying and this is pre nine 11. So. The Intel function. Wasn't what it, you know what? It was post nine 11. So there weren't a ton of positions.

And I went to a career fair at American university, [00:04:00] ended up talking to a police officer from Arlington county PD. And he was like, Hey, you should really start looking at some of these local agencies prince George's county, Montgomery county, Fairfax, Arlington, you know, they have civilian jobs where it's a great way to get your foot in the door and you can eventually go federal.

So I did that. I went home that night. This was December of 1999. Went home that night, the internet, like I have the internet at home at that point. I didn't really have a computer. I had. An AOL email address yes. So I went home and I just started writing down notes. Like I literally took out a paper map.

This is 1999 and I was like, what counties are around? I was living in Arlington. I'm like, what counties are around me? And I just started writing stuff down, went to AU the next day, got in the computer lab. And I just went on the internet and started looking. And there was a [00:05:00] position at Fairfax county crime analyst.

And I'm thinking else, evidence technician, evidence role mm-hmm read the description. I'm like, oh my God. Literally every line I'm like, I took a class on that. Mm. I did that in stats. Oh, I know a little bit about this too. So I, I applied and it was funny. I got a phone call like two weeks later. Hi, this is Sergeant mark.

Cosson Fairfax county police department. We got your resume. We're starting a brand new crime analysis unit, and we want you to come in and interview. So that was a really long lead up to got hired by Fairfax county police department. We started February of 2000, there was 10 of us. There were two, or I'm sorry, there were three retired law enforcement officers from Fairfax.

And then the rest of us were just 20 something year old civilians. several of us coming outta grad school programs. And that was it. That's how I found out about crime analysis. And it was old school, crime [00:06:00] analysis. Like we were reading cases. We were sitting in a room reading paper report and learning about the county being driven around on It, you know, with an officer we were doing RideAlong and I gotta tell you, it was one of the most fun jobs I've ever had.

So yeah, that's how I discovered crime analysis. I fell into it almost accidentally and really with a whole lot of luck. All right.

So what were the main issues that you were working on

back then? So my district was the McLean district big area for property crimes. If anybody knows Northern Virginia, I had Tyson's corner mall in my area mm-hmm but also had the CIA in my area.

Kind of weird. Yeah. So a lot of property crimes, a lot of stolen cars, a lot of organized re retail theft yeah, some violent crime robberies you know, sex assaults, but it was mainly property crimes. So analyzing trends, looking for patterns in the data you know, there was really no information sharing at the [00:07:00] time.

Mm-hmm so it wasn't like we were coordinating sharing data with Arlington. It was a lot of picking up the phone. And at this time, you know, our unit really was the one who. Started regional meetings, you know, reaching out to Arlington, reaching out to Loudoun county. And at the time LN county was starting a unit prince William was starting a unit.

It, it was kind of weird. It was like 2000 must have been the year everything started kicking off. So you know, really just property crimes. That was the main focus and a lot with Tyson's corner mall.

Hmm. So as you're starting, I guess, what was the, the feeling going in cuz you're brand. Right. The unit's brand new you're brand new.

Yeah. And you're just trying to absorb everything and find your bearings.

Yeah. It was exciting. It was exciting because it was brand new mm-hmm and being brand new. They couldn't do anything wrong really because you, you know, like they'd never seen a weekly report [00:08:00] or there'd never been an analyst going to roll call talking about like, oh, Hey yeah, you had a burglary on this street.

Did you know that there was four others with a similar Mo I mean, they knew a lot of that and they were all talking about that stuff, but to have somebody who wasn't sworn coming in and talking about that, like knowing their cases. Mm. It, it was met with a little bit of resistance. Luckily my station was pretty open to it.

The captain of our station, Bob Callahan, he was very he had helped hire us. The analyst. He was very aware of crime analysis and he really was a big proponent, but you know, it, it was exciting. That's the word that I'll use because. It was new and we were getting new technology. So I trained on arc GIS, 3.1.

that's a set of

eyes.

right, right. Like, is that way back machine or what? I was geocoding my own data. Oh yeah. And my GIS [00:09:00] experts will probably cringe when they hear this to the center line. like there was no offsetting or any of that, so yeah. I mean, It was cool. And we got a lot of cool technology.

Like we got GIS they, they put a lot of money into us, you know, they got us trained. They sent us to the alpha group training. Like Steve got lead, came in and trained us. Nice. So I mean, most folks don't get that when they're in a new job. Like, I think about my current role, I was like, dropped into it.

Like, here you go. You know, here, just work then it was, it, it, they were really investing a lot in us. And that was really exciting.

Yeah. So it's funny geocoding. I, I wonder that would be a good question to ask somebody that is in the field within the last couple of years and ask them that question. Do they know what that word means?

Right. Like I, so Tyson's corner mall, like I said, [00:10:00] was Tyson's corner Boulevard. well, In CAD records, they put Tyson's corner B L V D. And if you geocode data, you know, it needs to be BV . Yep. So I remember like writing something that like a small little script that took it and changed it from Blvd to BV so that it would get code.

So there's my way

back. You had to clean the data and then you had to run it through the system to make sure that the address got put on the map and to do that, you had the geo code, you had to put it in geographic information. So you go. Plot it on a map. That's what you had to do. there wasn't any automatically LA long assigned to it.

Like all wreckage management systems do now. No, so no. Oh man. It was old. Yeah. Yeah. That made me old.

well, 3.1. I was trying to think, I think I learned map info as well, and I think [00:11:00] that was 6.0. And I, I don't even

know. I learned map info too, and I remember. Having used RGI or RGIS 3.1 for two years, and then going to another job where they used math, math info.

I was like, oh no, we? Oh, no, we need Esri. Come on here.

Man. So when you look back at your time there at Fairfax mm-hmm , is there mm-hmm maybe a particular project or a particular achievement that you think about?

Not, no, honestly, no. Mm-hmm I mean, I was there two years. It was still so new. I would say I look back on that I made some really good friendships and some really good professional.

Connections. And I think working there got me two other roles into the future. Mm-hmm also being a county that's one of the largest in the country has one of the most advanced police forces. I mean, Fairfax county really is on the east coast. [00:12:00] When you look at county departments, they are one of the top, right?

I mean, they have some of the best training. They have a huge budget. They have a great really well educated command staff. So, you know, I would say it, it just, it was the perfect jumping off point for where I was going to. That

made sense. Yeah. So let's talk about that transition then to Alexandria PD.

Yeah. So I left Fairfax and then I actually went and worked at a nonprofit for less than a year, and I realized that nonprofit life just was not for me. Mm-hmm And I then went to Alexandria. So Alexandria had an opening. I knew, again, going back to Fairfax, setting me up for success. I knew their crime analyst, Billy Tucci.

I had met him at a regional meeting. I had his email, we had kept in touch. And when I saw this opening at Alexandria, I was like, that's strange. I wonder if Phil's leaving. So again, this is before [00:13:00] LinkedIn before, you know, text message or whatever. I shot him a, an email. And I said, Hey, I see this opening.

What's going on with Alexandria? I'm interested in applying and that just started it. And I applied, went in for the interview and I got the position and he had been promoted into the division chief role. So he was going to be my. Oh, okay. Yeah, so I worked so I started with him and then I progressed into his role.

So that was how everything, you know, started with Alexandria was just having that connection from Fairfax, my time there, reaching out to him, interviewing and then, you know, getting the position.

Okay. So then let's to compare and contrast then a little bit moving from Fairfax to Alexandria. What do you, what do you remember?

Huge

difference. So my first thing that I remember sitting down at my desk and at Fairfax, we had a mainframe. [00:14:00] So again, going in the way back machine mm-hmm had a mainframe. It was horrible. I just remember again, writing queries. It was a nightmare. So hard to pull data. Everything was paper mm-hmm

So at Fairfax, I was entering stuff into an access database right. I got to fair. I got to Alexandria first day, you know, I go through all my training first day at my desk, sit down. They're like, here's the records management system, but we know, and at the time it was Sunguard. We know it's not the best that we've created this other system that extracts all the data.

Oh, by the way, we have all of our narratives electronic. Oh, by the way, we have every report, everything arrest records, incident reports, property reports, you name it. It's electronic. It's in the system and it's updated within 12 hours. I almost fell on the floor. the camera? Like, is this kid camera? What are you talking about?

Wow. Yeah. So that is impressive for. [00:15:00] Year it wasn't. And this was 2002. Yeah. There wasn't a lot of police departments that were in that position

at that time. No, no, no, not at all. Not at all. And that was the that's what struck me immediately. And you know, part of the reason is Fairfax, huge county, right?

Lots of bureaucracy, CU Alexandria, smaller city. Yeah. Still a lot of bureaucracy you're dealing with local government, but they had a very progressive chief. So when I was hired, the chief was Charles Samara. God rest us soul. He passed away just a couple years ago. Great man. Visionary. He brought in his deputy chief David Baker, who all gets you in a little bit.

Together. They had a vision. They had both come from DC police department. They had a vision, they wanted to be topnotch technology department in the country. And within about five years of chief Samira [00:16:00] coming in, in my opinion, they were there. Wow. They got incar reporting. By 2001, everything electronic by the end of 2001.

So like when nine 11 was happening, a lot of these departments were behind the eight ball mm-hmm Alexandria was not they were, they were leaks ahead of everybody else. So when I got there, that was the biggest thing for me was I didn't have these, these technological hurdles to get over mm-hmm a lot.

And those were the things that, you know, that was really one of the reasons that I left Fairfax was I wanted to do crime analysis and I was, but I spent four hours in my day doing data entry to be able to get to that point end geocoding data. Mm-hmm to be able to get to that point, Alexandria, I stepped into the door.

I could do analysis at 8:00 AM when I sat down as opposed to one o'clock in the afternoon when I'd finally gotten [00:17:00] through entering all the report. Yeah.

That's impressive. And when you said that 2002, I'm sure. Pretty sure about this. I, I believe that DC Metro was still using pin maps in 2002.

Oh, for. Oh,

yes.

They were just to put that in just to put that in perspective of yeah. What you walked into. So, but that is really impressive. So I think this is, a good segue way to talk about your analyst badge story now, because I think, yeah, from the groundwork that you just laid the base, Y your analyst, badge story is developing, comstat there for the

department.

Yeah. I know a lot of people come on here and they tell their badge story like, oh, this robbery case or this series. My badge story is taking a department that was leading in technology and moving us into being an analytical department. When I was hired, we had great technology, but the department did [00:18:00] not embrace crime analysis.

Like it should. We used to have what we called the nine o'clock. So all command staff would sit in a room together. They'd read the boards from the day before. Folks would talk about what meetings they had, where they were going. And we were literally out the door at 9 0 4. There was no real discussion of pattern, series trends, whatever we in crime analysis were doing all that.

And at this point, you know, 2005, Joe Ryan, little name drop right there. Oh boy, Joe. We hired him from the police foundation. And if you know, Joe Ryan, he's a GIS guru. He is one of my favorite people on the planet. Brilliant mind, brilliant, brilliant, brilliant mind. And he and I used to talk on the phone before I hired him and we would just literally talk crime analysis.

Like what about this? And did you read that and did you hear this person present? Like we were dorks

so hired him. And around the time that we hired him, chief [00:19:00] Samara was retiring. Chief baker was competing with another deputy chief for. The chief position and something, I kept telling him, I'm like chief baker. We need Tom Scott. We need accountability. We need to change the way that we look at crime analysis.

The way that we look at data, the way that we look at trends, we are set up here and we're not maximizing the technology that we have. Chief baker became chief. One of the. The reasons he became chief is when he went in front of council and he went through his whole interview process. He kept talking about metrics and metrics driven, policing, geographically driven policing.

And let me say this too. Alexandria was not when I was hired for all of their technology, that they had everything that they were doing. Right. One of the things that they were doing wrong was they were still time based. So meaning you didn't come in and you work in sector one, or you work in sector four.

You were just on midnight and you might work [00:20:00] beat one 13 on Monday and you might work beat one 20, you know, the next day. So you weren't tied to an area. And one of the things that chief baker, when he came in, said, we need to redistrict because no one had redistricted the beats in like 20 years all, if you know, Alexandria, it's a small city right.

Outside DC, but it's a metropolitan city. I mean, it's huge. It's exploded with population, extremely diverse population. And it had not been redistricted. So we redistricted, we went to four sectors. They reorganized their entire staff to be. Sector based. So sector based captains, as opposed to like the captain on midnight, the captain on days, it was the sector captain, and he was responsible for sector one, which was old town, 24 7.

So the badge story is CompStat and we called it this strategic response system, [00:21:00] SRS. And you think com. Some people have a really bad taste in their mouth about comstat. I will say when we started comstat under chief baker, we did it right, because we drove the conversation with analysis and folks were held accountable and it wasn't just robberies are up 5%.

No, we were really focused on problem oriented G policing, problem locations, you know, problem people and doing analysis. And the first couple years, I would say the first two years that we were doing SRS, it worked. I mean, I

remember this one location and Joe, Ryan might talk about it. He's on, on. Run Parkway, this frigging address.

Excuse my language. You might wanna cut that out. This address, this guy's always calling the police just and homes run Parkway would always come up top 10, call for service location. It's an apartment building. It's not a bad apartment building. And we were like, what's [00:22:00] going on here? Like, well finally going in realizing this guy, you know, he needed services and that there may have been a problem with his landline connection and just getting in there, getting some services, getting some other stuff with the apartment complex, all of a sudden it was out of the top 10.

It wasn't a problem location anymore. We could dedicate it to a real problem location. So the badge story really is changing the focus of the department, changing the focus of the command staff, integrating crime analysis, into everything that we did. I mean, we brought Ron Sampson in, she did a three day training with.

Our entire command staff on problem oriented policing, like, what is it, how do you attack a problem address? How, what, what is a problem? What is you know, what are some of the pop methodologies that we could use? And it was revolutionizing. And there were a lot of folks who were involved in that captains, deputy chief, who have gone on [00:23:00] to.

Chiefs at other departments and they will say their experience implementing SRS helped set them up for success well into the future. Nice.

So with the redistricting, was, did that happen first? And then you were developing the CompStat? Yeah, I,

and, well, I would say a lot of it was happening in concert with each other.

So the redistricting was one of the first things that we did. We brought Ronna in for some training. We went through a lot of different iterations of what reports should look like at the same time. Joe and I, and one of the deputy chiefs, Hassan, Aiden we flew down to Jacksonville Sheriff's office.

So Matt white, Jamie RO they all met with us because they were kind of the beacon. Like we looked at them, we were like, that's what we want. like, we want our comp stats to look like theirs. And they were doing a lot with GIS. They were pumping out reports, constantly pumping out math. We [00:24:00] came back in as this redistricting was going on.

And we were looking at how we wanted to do reporting and we were doing this problem oriented policing training. We came back. We met with our GIS guys, this guy Steve Chok, who's still in Alexandria and we showed them these reports and they're like, you know, what, why would you wanna do something static when you can do something dynamic, we can go auto GI code, all your calls for service, all your crimes every night.

And we can put a mapping module. I mean, get this 2005, 2006 we can put a mapping module in, in car, computer. And they can their own crime. I was like, oh my

gosh, my gosh. Yes. Wow.

So, I mean like all of this is going on together. So when I say it revolutionized the police department, you might just think, oh, well they did Comte no, we were doing everything.

We were putting data in their hands. We were also [00:25:00] implementing, being able to push all of our bulletins electronically into the police cars electronically. So it was just a lot of stuff that, that, I mean, you hear it now. You're like, yeah, whatever we've been doing this for 10 years, then it was revolutionary.

Yeah.

So how much pushback was. From officers,

there was some mm-hmm there was some I was hoping you would ask about that. We had one Lieutenant who ended up retiring. He was the person who just really didn't embrace any of it. Mm-hmm he was in investigations and great guy, super smart. I had a great relationship with him, but he didn't think crime analysis had any role in investigations whatsoever.

Mm-hmm and as soon as SRS launched, he put in his retirement paperwork. Yeah.

So mm-hmm think so. I also think something thing fascinating about the program developed here is it, it is comstat. It is a version of comstat if you want to put it that way, but a [00:26:00] unique aspect.

Of this program is that it was analyst

led. Yeah. Yes, absolutely. And I will say that Joe Ryan and Matt Smith really helped drive that being accepted into listen at the time Alexandria was we were in an offsite location. We were not a headquarters. And you had administration on one side, you had investigations on the other side.

And the analyst didn't sit with investigations, Matt and Joe finally went and sat with investigations, which was huge, huge. And they really, because they were over there, they had the trust of the investigators. They really drove this with them. So it wasn't just the acceptance by the command staff. It was the acceptance by the investigative staff, the detective that We're doing this really to decrease crime like this isn't to get the chief's name out there, or, you know, [00:27:00] to, to make names for ourselves.

Like we really were doing this because we believed in it and that it was going to reduce crime. And it did. I mean, Alexandria hit their 40 year, low in crime. I wanna say those 2007 and huge decreases between, I would say 2005, 2010. And I would do a lot of that on SRS of information sharing and, and analysis, driving, everything that they did at that, that police department.

So this is Sam and I wanna let you know that it's okay

to talk to strangers. Obviously

not if you are

four or if you're walking alone at night or in the

woods, but in general,

if you're just out in your day to day life or you're traveling or whatever, talk to somebody, talk to strangers, it makes you a more interesting person because it gives you more perspective on life.

[00:28:00] Everyone is walking around with an interesting story. So many people will defy your expectations. When you you see someone and you make certain assumptions about them, whether they're conscious or unconscious. I love the moment when you realized you were wrong. It's a great feeling. And think it makes your life richer in general.

You know, if you're too shy,

then maybe

just read humans of New York that might help you to, to understand other people's experiences. But I'm just here to say, don't not talk to

strangers.

Hi, this is

Matthew Smith and I have a public service announcement. When you are walking in a building and somebody's coming behind you, please hold the door for them.

Give them that common courtesy. And at the same time, if somebody's holding the door for you, just say, thank you. It just drives me crazy when people don't say thanks. It's, it's one of my pet peeves. And I think if we all just got along and, and said, please, and thank you, we would get a lot further in this society.

Thank you very.

Hi, this is Carolyn Cassidy, and I'd like to give some information to you. We've all watched [00:29:00] shows on TV, where someone comes home and there's been a break in their house is disrupted and possibly items have stolen. Someone gets on the phone and calls nine one one help. Please come. I've been robbed.

Okay, let's clarify this. You have not been robbed. You have been burgled. If robbery is a person to person crime, a burglary is a property crime. If you are not home, when someone comes in and takes something from you, you have been burgled. There has not been a robbery hashtag you are burgled, not robbed.

You eventually become the technology services division chief and yeah. So I'm imagining that's analysis, but that records management system data, is that data entry, is that what that is

in

charge of?

Yeah. So I had records, I had mobile computing I had for about nine [00:30:00] months. I had dispatch mm-hmm . And then I had all technologies, so I had desktops, mobile computers, radios, the whole, the whole shebang.

And really why I wanted to move into that role is because I looked around the United States and there were not many people in those roles that had analytical backgrounds. Mm-hmm I also knew that we were, we were moving off of Sunguard. They were sun setting our CAD RMMs and we thought that that was the perfect time to look at what else was out there.

Yeah. So I thought, if we're gonna shift and we're gonna upgrade and we're gonna move ahead, I really wanted to be at the helm of that. So I applied it was a really rigorous, it was probably one of the hardest interviews I think I've ever been through. They were asking me like highly technical questions and I mean, I prepared for it quite a bit.

But I just felt like if we were gonna keep moving forward, I, I needed to have a, the head seat at that table. And, you know, I was in that role from 2007 [00:31:00] through when I left the department in 2011 and yeah, I went through the, the needs assessment. I gotta tell you that was. Best experiences just from a career growth standpoint was to go through the evolution of what we needed for a cat RMS going through the true needs assessment.

So what do you have today? What do you need into the future? What's on the market what's make or break. What's a nice to have. That was a really great experience. And if there's any analysts out there that are really trying to grow their understanding of integrated technology and data, and your department is gonna go through a new CAD RMS.

You've got to be on that committee because you're gonna learn so much. I learned so much just about, just about systems and how everything talks to each other. And it, it was just, it was a really good experience and I highly recommend anybody who has an opportunity to do it.

Yeah, I I'd said the same when I was in [00:32:00] Cincinnati, we went through a new RMS and had I got a little bit.

Say and suggestions in terms of the RMS, but it was a really long drawn out process. And I don't think they really necessarily had a steering committee, but that's definitely a good advice to have some input about your analyst for your absolutely CAD and records management system. So I guess before we move on from, from Alexandria and talk about your going to the private sector, there's, there's two thoughts that I have.

And one, cause one, you said it already, you talked about Joe Ryan, and you went down to Jacksonville. Do you ever regret that? Because Joe eventually

goes to Jacksonville. So I wonder if he was wind and dined why he was down there kind

of thing. Oh, I bet. Oh, I bet he was listen. So anybody who's ever worked for me and there's a.

ICA members who have worked for me. I'm all about growth. So anybody who's worked for me in my 22 year career, I'm never gonna stand in [00:33:00] anybody's way. Mm-hmm like, you wanna go onto something better go, do you boo, like, I just want you to do what's best for your career. And when we came back from that trip, I mean, Joe was definitely like, he had that little sparkle in his eye, right?

Like, Ooh, cause I mean, he was the supervisor. Eventually when I became the division chief, he was then promoted into the supervisor. Role for Alexandria. So, you know, I knew what his aspirations were. I knew that he wanted something bigger and he and I had spoken about that quite a bit. When he was going through the interview process for Jacksonville, I was actually one of his references.

I, I totally encouraged him. I said, you know, if the time is right and the opportunity is there, you gotta take it. And he did. And I'm glad that he did.

Yeah. Interesting. And the, and the second thought that I have is, is certainly not saying this as a regret, but there was a time when you, I think you had a position open and I was thinking about applying.

Yeah. And I lived in [00:34:00] and I lived in Baltimore and yes, I happened to take a training. I think the week before the application was due. And I, I was like, oh, that commute, that commute killed me. And I decided not to apply. You know, based on the commute alone. Yeah.

And I remember because Matt Smith was with us and he was living in Maryland.

Yeah. And he did that commute all the time. And I wanna say you talked to him maybe. Yeah. And he was like, yeah, man, it's terrible. .

Cause I think even with the, even if I would take the train, you know, public transportation, I think it was still brutal like hour 15 minutes or something one way or something like that.

And then to drive it was, was almost two hours or something like that with the DC traffic.

So yeah, you would, yeah. You would've taken the metro to the, to the to the Metro and then still yeah. Had to walk. I mean that's awful. No. Yeah.

So anyway, so interesting stuff there. All right. So [00:35:00] let's move on then to talk about.

Deciding to leave Alexandria and join Northrop

Grumman. Yeah. Yeah, that was a hard, well, that was a hard decision. So for folks who, I don't know in real life who are listening 2010 was an awful year. I ended up being diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 34 and that kind of shakes your world, right?

So you find out you have an illness that may potentially be terminal and you kind of step back and go, whoa, mm-hmm . What am I doing with my life? And in the end of 2009 I had had my son, my first child, my life was chaotic and crazy. And at the same time, chief baker ended up leaving Alexandria. So, you know, I was going through hormones, I just lost the absolutely best loss I'd ever had.

I loved my chief and I just really took this diagnosis. [00:36:00] Like this is a wake up call. I have to do something else in my life. And I really enjoyed my job with Alexandria. But for anybody who's had a major illness, you know, that it really impacts your finances. I mean, I'm gonna be real. My husband and I went into some debt from cancer treatment.

And it was hard and it just changed me. And that's all I can say. And this, you know, I remember sitting in my coworker, Jody Donaldson's office one day and I was like, dude, I, I. Like, I think I'm done and he was like, what do you mean you're done? What do you mean? You know? And I'm like, I think I'm just done.

I think I'm done with Alexandria. Like we're in debt and I, I need to make money and I'm never gonna make money here. I'm not gonna move up. Like, you know, you just have these and I'm sure people have been through this. Like you just have these moments and you're like, I, what am I doing? you know, like, what am I doing in my life?

[00:37:00] So we have this program that we participated in the law enforcement information exchange links, and they had an opening. So links, their their engineering company is north Grumman. And they had an opening deputy project manager, program manager. And. One of the women who ran the length program reached out to me and said, would you consider coming to work for Northrop?

And I said, kind of money. Are we talking about

And the money was good. Yeah. It was better than I was making it out. Liker. Yeah. So I went there, I worked there for just under two years and, you know, did I love it? No, no. Did it get us outta debt? Absolutely. But I will say it set me up for where I am now, and this might be my theme is everything you do gets you somewhere else.

Sure. And it, it [00:38:00] got, it helped get me where I am today and it'll probably help me to go where I'm going tomorrow or five years from now. Yeah. So how does it, how did it get you to Lexus next? What I needed? How did it get me to Lexus next? So at north. Yeah, I was working with a ton of police departments.

Cause at the time links had like a thousand police agencies mm-hmm and we were always talking about integrating. So like at the time we were integrating with their analytic name drop right there, Sean Bair. Yes. We were integrating with them and it, we had Sean and I had had a meeting. It had led me to talk to Sam, Gwinn, Sam, Gwinn had just gone to Lexus N so she and I both left government, like the same time.

Right. She went to Lexus. I went to Northrop, but two of us ended up talking and yeah, I was telling her a little bit about the Sean bear stuff and she's like, you know, we've been talking like, why don't we integrate or do something with you guys with public record? I mean, just brilliant. Let's do it. Ended up talking to her.

And his name is [00:39:00] escaping me. But ended up talking to him long story short, he was like, Hey, we have a job open. I didn't wanna do what Sam was doing. Sam was traveling. Sam was doing training. She was with clients all the time. She was traveling nonstop. I couldn't do that. I was like a year out from cancer treatment.

I was still like, you know, A year out from chemo and radiation, you're still kind of in the thick of it. I was still seeing doctors, like every month to two months I

was dealing with a ton of post-treatment issues. And I was like, I can't be on the road. Like, what's your

son? How old, how old is your son

at this time?

He was he was three. Yeah. Or he, yeah, he was two and a half. Three mm-hmm . And it is, you know, you know, you have two, you know? Yes. You know, that age it's a lot. Mm-hmm and my hu and my husband was working in law enforcement and he had crazy hours. I was like, I, I can't, I can't do your job, Sam. Like, I would love it.

I can't do it. Mm-hmm so her boss ended up telling me, well, we have a marketing role, but it's not really marketing. [00:40:00] It's like content. So it'd be like writing articles. Law enforcement and running this thing called the investigator's network, which is gonna be like Facebook for investigators. I was like, sign me up.

so, yeah, so that's how I ended up going. There was again, knowing people, right. I knew Phili. I knew this links person. I know Sam Gwinn. There we, there you. Yeah.

Now, have you always considered yourself a strong

writer? Yeah. Okay. Definitely. So when I was a kid, I, I wrote book nice. I mean, books and air quotes, like I would write stories.

right. I was always right. I, I tell everybody I'm a horrible speller, but I love to write.

Oh, okay. I I'm the exact opposite. I'm a good speller and a horrible writer so we can work together someday. Maybe you make a

great pair, right. [00:41:00]

so that's interesting though. So you, you end up writing for. Yeah, all this content then.

Yeah. And doing the research, using your practical experience is to then talk about different ideas that possibly

could be out there. Yeah. And trying to build, we called it the Lexus nexus and investigator's network and it was originally developed by Tommy Joyce. Another name dropped right there. Mm-hmm he had been the market planner at Lexus nexus for law enforcement.

It was one of his and his wife, Susan CRS. Brilliant ideas. Let's create like everybody's on Facebook. It's 2012. Everybody's on Facebook. To an investigator's network, which is like case sharing Facebook, privacy mm-hmm and it didn't go anywhere. But I got to write articles for it nonstop, and I got to do some development.

Like if I was still an [00:42:00] analyst, how would I wanna share information? Like, how would I want things organized? How would I, you know, how would I wanna communicate with other folks? What would I be willing to share? So it harken back on everything that I did as an analyst, but it also built on the fact that I like to write.

And I'm a people person. I like to talk to folks and I communicate and I, I basically, you know, I keep my network and I make sure I stay connected. So yeah, so that was my first job at Lexus. And then I got reorganized a couple times. That's the thing that I, they don't tell you. So anybody who's interested in going private sector, when you go and work for a big company, you're gonna get reorganized.

And I got reorganized three times. Like my unit was changed. My role was changed. This was, that's just what they do. And at the time, I didn't know that I was like, oh my God, am I gonna be fired? This mean I'm not good. Yeah. You know, they're like, no, no, no. This is just what we do. So I ended up getting reorganized and I was given a choice.

Normally [00:43:00] they, they don't give you a choice. They're like, we're reorganizing you. And now you're doing this. And I was lucky enough, I got reorganized. They were like, listen, do you wanna do just public safety marketing? I was like, yes, please sign me up. Yes, , that's my like yes. Marketing two cops and analysts.

Absolutely. So I got reorganized into that role and that I loved that job because I learned a lot about marketing to law enforcement. I learned how to do trade shows. I learned how to write white papers. I learned how to do research and research, meaning like survey research. I learned how to write brochures.

I learned how to market small events customer events. So all the things that you think of that are traditional marketing, I really got to learn and I got to hone my skills. So when I got reorganized into that, it was like the perfect marriage of, I know public safety. I'm gonna learn marketing, I'm gonna learn government marketing.

[00:44:00] So so it was great. And I did that through 2016. Yeah.

So what marketing? Oh, sorry. I. I guess with no, no, no, go ahead. Before you, yeah. Before you go on, just for, with the marketing aspect of, of that, some of the skills, can you go into that a little bit more? I'm I'm kind of curious specifically what marketing skills you developed during this time.

Sure. So when, so, while I was doing law enforcement marketing, so I did law enforcement marketing through 2016. Then I ended up shifting to healthcare, which I'll talk about in a second, but to the skills I developed, obviously writing, but persuasive writing. So not just writing, like I'm gonna tell you about this topic, but understanding who your buyer is.

So what's your buyer's pain point. What's gonna keep them up at night. How do you talk about a solution to that's not product pushing? So I learned those skills. I learned how to write persuasively. I learned about event management with getting into ICA and a little bit. I'll [00:45:00] talk about that too, but I learned how to Develop an event.

So not just like send pens and notebooks and a backdrop to a conference, but I learned how to develop a concept. And at the 2016 IACA conference, if you were there, Lexus nexus had a huge booth and we developed it around geography and mapping and the acquisition of bear analytics. So I learned how to take a concept.

And develop it into something tangible that markets and that sells a product. I learned that. Also the last thing I learned is I learned how to take sales and work with sales, to take what they were saying and put it into marketing speak. So what do they talk to customers about? What do you hear from customers?

What are customers struggling with? And then putting it, put it into something marketing speak that helps to sell, help [00:46:00] sales, close the deal. That's what I learned. Fascinating. Yeah. And then, but then I moved into healthcare marketing, so I totally did another, I did a 180.

Yeah. I was just gonna go to there, but it, because I, I find that fascinating cuz I obviously I went to healthcare field as well.

So we've, we've followed that, that path. So it's kind of interesting so far because a lot of what you started out with about studying criminal justice and getting your master's degree, thinking about law school, applying for all the federal jobs, this has been parallel to me. So so far, and we even have the same parallel with the healthcare field.

So let's, let's talk about that a little bit.

Yeah. So I'd been at Lexus at that point for four years and I'd been promoted. Like I said, I've been reorged a couple times. They had an opening over and it was a promotional opportunity on the healthcare side of the business and the hiring manager. I love she, the only way I can describe her, her name's Lisa Feliciano.

The only way that I [00:47:00] can describe her is she is no nonsense driven, but with Jesus at the helm, like she is, I love her. She had an opening and she worked in healthcare healthcare marketer, and I called her up and I said, you know, I've been doing trade shows, I've been doing content, but there's so much more to marketing that I don't know that I want to learn because I really, I loved marketing at that point.

Like I loved crime analysis. Like I felt like it was my jam and I was good at it. but there was a lot that I didn't know. There's a whole, whole discipline out there called digital marketing and that was her role. And she wanted to implement analytics. So she had never done analytics on marketing across the board.

Like you can report on how many leads you get, how that contributes to pipeline everything else. But she wanted someone to take every piece of marketing and [00:48:00] analyze it holistically. And it was kind of a challenge. I was like, yeah, I'm down for it. Let's do it. I don't know anything about what I'm doing.

I'm stepping into something I don't know anything about and I'm ready. And it felt very much like when I started with Fairfax county mm-hmm like no idea about crime. Never had crime analysis, let's get in there and do something. I felt that way about this job. So I was in that role for six years and I, God, I learned a lot learned all about website development, learned all about marketing analytics.

I learned about customer relationship management systems. I learned about social media marketing. I learned about remarketing retargeting. I mean, everything that, when you go on Instagram and you scroll and you like something, why you get an ad, you know, the next time you log on why you get ads, when you land in Atlanta that are four in Atlanta, you know, workout studio.

I learned all of that. And while that's not a big way that [00:49:00] you market to law enforcement. Definitely definitely helped get me to where I am right now. All right.

Well, let's let's talk about that then. You've been with cobwebs technologies for how long now?

Six months. Six months. So perfect timing. Yeah. So the, so what's the, what's the first six months been

like? I've been drinking from a fire hose. no, it's been awesome. Yeah, so I started here in January Allison Sullivan one of the OGs with the ICA she posted something on LinkedIn. One day she posted that they were looking for a marketing person and, and actually she wrote on the top of the post if you know anybody interested and I commented as a joke.

Me . Yeah. Haha. And she reached out to me. She was like, would you really be interested? And at the time you know, I'd been in my role for six years and I'd had a new boss. I liked Tim, but I was not going to get promoted anytime soon. And I was really looking for the next challenge. So yeah, [00:50:00] so I met with like six different people in the span of this is like right at the Christmas holidays too.

I met with like five or six different people in the span of one week, you know, everybody's like taking PTO and they're trying to schedule me for these meetings. But it just, it, it sounds cheesy, but it felt right. They, you know, they're, they're kind of like a startup. Not really. I mean, they've been around a while, but not in north America too long.

And I saw a demo, so Allison had given me a demo and I was like, hot damn this. Cool. Like, this is cool. I could do some cool stuff with this, with marketing. So just like talking to people and seeing the demo, like the gears were turning in my head. I had so many ideas of stuff I wanted to do. And it just worked out.

I mean, they, they offered me the role and it, it wasn't even, I didn't even need to go and talk to my husband. I was like, okay. yep. Okay. I'll start in two weeks. wow.

That is great. A [00:51:00] turnaround. So cuz I, I think it just the progression of where we started this conversation is, you know, today there is so much data and mm-hmm, , I've talked about it several times on the show is I almost feel that there's too much data and yeah, you could spend your whole day in Facebook and, and YouTube and Twitter, if you wanted to.

Right. There's just so much data out there that, it's hard for analyst or anybody to consume

that data. So I, when Allison gave me the demo I literally, I told her at the very end, she was like, what do you think? I'm like, well, let me pick my jaw up off the ground. First of all, So I, we have a blog coming out and not to promote cobweb.

That's not what I'm here for, but we have a blog that's coming out next week. And it's something that I've been thinking about quite a while. I think about in 2000 to 2003, 2004 you know, you [00:52:00] get this contact card and some would be paper with Alexandria. They were electronic, but you get that contact card.

And it's like that piece of information, you're like hot, damn. I knew that guy hung out there. Or like, I knew that I knew that they hung together. Right. It was like, I got it. You see cobwebs tool. I think about that from 20 years ago. Think about everything that's done electronically. It's. That one contact card that you got on steroids.

right now, it is because everybody's checking in with each other. They're tagging each other. They're they're online together. They're, you know, going live together. They're doing whatever and it's all there and it can be mine. It's open source intelligence. Mm-hmm and. It's oftentimes it's the missing piece in the puzzle.

And what was that really amazing contact card that put those two people together at that location 20 years ago? [00:53:00] It's the same thing, but it's magnified now. Interesting.

Hmm. So then your, the, the name of your publication is about to come

out. Oh, it's our blog. I'll share it on LinkedIn, but it's on coeb.com/blogs.

Allison's one of our regular writers. John O'Hare writes for us as well. Sally Rollings writes for us. So namedropping in some I, the AOGs right there. There you go. Yes. Yes.

All right. Well, very good. Well, J you've done a great, good job. You helped me out a lot with all these segues. So let's talk about I ACA, so this is, I don't even know why I'm here actually, so, but you're ridiculous.

but anyway, no, I, I, I thought about what, when Noah reached out to me and it's not like he had to talk me into. Having you on the show at all. But I was, I, I thought I was like, man, in terms of the IACA, I mean, Mary Mary's really influential to the point where it's, you know, most people probably that [00:54:00] have just been around the last couple years, aren't aware of you, but you've had, you had quite an influence on the IACA with both the, the committees and the people that you interacted with during your time.

Oh, I loved the ICA. I mean, I loved the ICA still, but yeah, I mean, I got involved. I became a member in 2001 when, when I was at Fairfax, it was another cool thing that they did for us. They were like, and we all got you guys membership into this thing. Cold, the international association of crime analysts.

I had to go and look it up. I was like, oh, there's even an association for us. How cool. But I didn't go to my first conference till 2003. I was supposed to go in 2001. That didn't happen because of nine 11 mm-hmm. Because I think the conference was literally like the next week. I didn't go, I think they still had the conference, but we, they, they canceled us from going and then 2002, I didn't go because I had just started with Alexandria and I didn't really think it was appropriate for me to ask to go to Orlando.

I think it [00:55:00] was that year mm-hmm so my first conference is 2000. Wow. And then the only year I missed was when I had my son in 2009.

Oh man. So, yeah. Yeah. So, do you have a favorite

conference? Yes, I would. I gotta think, hang on. It was two. Thousand. It was the one in St. Pete beach. This is crazy.

What year was that? It's I think it

was like 2008. Was it? Yeah, I think it was on 2008. And, and what's crazy about that. That's my favorite one as well. Is

it really? Yes. Loved that.

Oh yeah. And why am I

dropping this? There was a lot of char, there was a lot of karaoke. Yeah.

Well that was the first, I'm pretty sure that was the first time.

Right. Cause I think we had it in that little, that little

shack. Yes. And I have photos of Stacy bein. Yeah. Like belting out soon with Sam Gwen and with [00:56:00] Albert Mesa. Yes. Like her back. Singers yes, I have those

photos. Yep. And, and that's Albert's favorite conference as well, because he says that's the fir that was the last one where he didn't have to do anything.

yeah, that's funny. Yeah. I love that conference that that was the conference. When I actually like really started becoming friends with Allison Sullivan. Really got to know Albert Mesa that like, I mean, I, I was obviously friendly with them, friends with them, but like really, really connected. That conference.

Yeah.

Cuz I think that conference, that hotel, we basically owned, it was small enough that everybody that was there was staying there at the time was from the, was from the conference and oh yeah. Being in St. Pete, you know, the sunset right over the ocean and

gorgeous. I remember watching it from my, watching it from my from my balcony.

Yeah. I was like, it doesn't get

any better than this. Fantastic. It didn't it's it seemed like it didn't the sun didn't set until 11 o'clock. [00:57:00] It probably wasn't that, but it seemed like it was so late that the actually sun set and it was

just, well, we may have had too many beers along track of time.

that's true

too. So I guess during your time with IACA and when you look, think back of it, what's some good memories that you have or things that you were able to accomplish.

So I would say, oh gosh, there's so much. So I. I loved that. I got to co-chair the conference five with Lynn Brewer.

Mm-hmm we had a lot of fun doing that. It was in Arlington Virginia at the time. That I, I would say obviously chairing a conference is, oh my God. Like, I, I think that that was my whole life for three months. Like I was like, bye Alexandria. I know I work for you, but you pay my salary, but it's not gonna seem like it I'm right.

But I'm working for Iza right now. I would say chairing that conference and then just getting the training committee off the ground, like that was a huge undertaking. You know, it was, it was. A lot of paper [00:58:00] based people faxing registrations to me or emailing them, nothing was electronic. Well, not electronic, but nothing was really automated at the time.

I worked a lot with Chris, Bruce and Susan Woodford on that. So it was really nice to be able to, you know, to work with them. Getting it off the ground. I remember the first training we did, it was, I wanna say it was fundamentals and it was Debbie Osborne who did it. Oh, okay. Nice. Yeah. And yeah. And then we ran like Susan did a couple tactical classes.

I remember Sally was one of our original trainers. So it, it was, it was a great experience just learning how to run. But working a nonprofit, you know, like mm-hmm, , you're not getting paid obviously. Yeah. But just like getting something off the ground, it was very it was a lot of work, but it was very fulfilling.

Yeah. So I would say that was the stuff that I really enjoyed. And then just all the [00:59:00] folks that I met and I got to work with and just all the people, the friends that I made. Yeah. So yeah,

you've definitely set the groundwork for Kyle Stoker. Yeah. And so he, you know, so, and I don't know if he's ever gonna leave that role.

He is. don't think so. He just, that he's just to just be called Kyle Stoker's committee now

at point, you know what, God bless him because that's a ton of work. God

bless. And he's done really, really well. That's really grown under his leadership. And it's funny he's so he's the designated survivor because he's the longest running member currently for the that's a committee lead.

So if the whole executive board can't perform their duties Kyle steps. It, he is a designated survivor. That's

funny. I didn't even think

of it. That . Yeah. So, oh my gosh. Yeah. So that was, I think, written, just written into the bylaws recently, so recently. Wow. But anyway and then anything else that you wanted to say about the ICA?

[01:00:00] Yeah, I mean the last conference I went to, I guess, was 2016 and when I moved into the healthcare marketing role, I mean, I didn't get to go anymore, which is a bummer. I'm trying to get to go in my CoLab's role.

But I would say just, you know, ICA was great. In that I've made some of my closest friends through ICA folks, I really love through the organization.

I got go and see some great cities. Look, I traveled across the west coast with Chris, Bruce and John Chapman before the 2007 conference. I mean, got to do fun stuff like that. Just have met a ton of people who still come and drink beers in my pool. Noritz on a Friday night, you know, I mean, Joe Ryan. I mean, I still call him up and he's, he's working at Lexus now.

But yeah, I mean, just the connections that you make through that organization, I really feel are connections for a lifetime. All right. I feel very blessed to have been a part of the organization.

All right, Mary. So just[01:01:00] couple more questions. What advice do you

have for our listeners? My advice is get connected. So talk to everybody, go to the conference, talk to folks at your police department, reach out, just be connected.

You know, back in the day we had the paper Rolodex. Now we have the contacts in our iPhones, get connected to folks, stay connected to folks. You never know what that connection is gonna lead to in the future. Every single job that I have gotten has been because of a connection and it will take you through your career.

It will take you through life. Stay connected. Keep good solid relationships with people. You never know where it will lead you to

all. Excellent then. And then we're just gonna go into words to the world then. And so this is I give the guests the last word and you can promote any idea that you wish, Mary, what are your words to the world?

My world, my words to the world are life is short and you [01:02:00] never know. What life is gonna throw at you. Life is too short. Don't stay in something you don't wanna do anymore. Go and explore. Take that vacation. Go be with your family. Push away from your desk at five o'clock. Turn off your computer and go have a drink with a friend.

Life is too short.

Very good. Well, I leave everyone with you. Giving me just enough to talk bad about you later. you're fine, but I do appreciate you being on this show, Mary, thank you so much and you

be safe. Thank you. It's been a pleasure. Thanks so much, Jason. Thank you for making

it to the end of another episode of analyst.

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