

Reward offered for information in Kensu case; police and prosecutor stand by conviction

Liz Shepard, Times Herald Published 11:06 a.m. ET July 12, 2017 | Updated 11:27 a.m. ET July 12, 2017



Buy Photo

(Photo: JEFFREY SMITH/TIMES HERALD)
27CONNECTTWEETLINKEDINCOMMENTEMAILMORE

A man who has fought his murder conviction for more than 30 years and his lawyer are offering up to \$50,000 for information related to his case.

Temujin Kensu is offering up to \$5,000 for information regarding the shooting death of Scott Macklem Nov. 5, 1986, in the St. Clair County Community College parking lot, according to David Sanders of Proving Innocence, an organization that works with people they believe have been wrongfully convicted.

He is also offering a reward up to \$25,000 for information that either exonerates Kensu, formerly known as Fredrick Freeman, and/or information that leads to an arrest or conviction of another person in Macklem's death.

Kensu was awarded \$325,000 from the Michigan Corrections Department in March after winning a 2013 lawsuit alleging he was deliberately ignored care for chronic joint pain.

Kensu's lawyer at 1-800-Law-Firm will match any reward that leads to his exoneration, Proving Innocence said in a statement.

"Matching the reward was the right thing for us to do," Ari Kresch, founder of the law firm, said in the statement. "It's just heart-breaking to know Mr. Kensu has spent three decades in prison when it's abundantly clear he is wholly innocent. It's a travesty of justice."

Kensu's case was featured on [Investigation Discovery's "Reasonable Doubt" TV show](#) June 28. Macklem was engaged to Freeman's ex-girlfriend. Kensu has maintained he was in the Upper Peninsula at the time of the slaying.

"This case has all the classic hallmarks of a wrongful conviction — unprofessional police work, suggestive eyewitness identification, perjured testimony of a jailhouse informant, a trial rife with prosecutorial misconduct, and representation by a drug-addicted defense attorney who has since been disbarred," Sanders said in the statement.

Police and prosecutors stand by Kensu's conviction.

St. Clair County Prosecutor Mike Wendling said the case has been reviewed.

"Ethics and professionalism would require the criminal justice system to consider any evidence in any case that would potentially exonerate a criminal defendant," he said. "This case has been reviewed multiple times, hundreds of times, by multiple administrations at the prosecutor's office, the police department, the court of appeals, the supreme court, a jury, the federal court of appeals, each time coming to the same conclusion after reviewing the evidence.

"That conclusion being the conviction of Fredrick Freeman was overwhelming supported by the evidence and constitutionally sound."

Wendling said his office would consider any credible evidence.

"The criminal justice system, in coming to the conclusion the conviction is valid, is required to look at all of the evidence that supports or questions a criminal conviction, not just the parts that frame the defendant's side of the argument," he said.

Port Huron Police Chief Jeff Baker agreed.

"This case and the issues brought up by the Innocence Project have been reviewed multiple times by both federal and state appellate courts, including the Michigan Supreme Court, and Mr. Freeman's conviction each time has been affirmed," Baker said in an email. "We are confident we have the correct person in prison responsible for the tragic death of Scott Macklem."

Contact Liz Shepard at (810) 989-6273 or lshepard@gannett.com. Follow her on Twitter [@lvshepard](https://twitter.com/lvshepard).