

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

September 28, 2016

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TO: Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PAYMENT OF REWARD OFFER ON CITY COUNCIL
FILE NO. 11-0010-S2

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. That the Board of Police Commissioners REVIEW and APPROVE the attached Application for Special Reward Payment.
2. That the Board TRANSMIT to the Mayor and City Council the Application for Special Reward Payment for review and approval.

DISCUSSION

On Saturday December 25, 2010, at approximately 2220 hours, Victim Kashmir James, a twenty-five year old female, was in front of 1723 West 85th Street. James was with Victim Diondre Woods, a male, 26 years of age, and her three year old daughter, Neveah Jackson, who was seated in a 2007 silver, four door, Chrysler, 300, California License No. 6NZN922. James and Woods were standing on the street at the rear passenger door of the vehicle. They were approached by a male, later identified as Darnell Houston, who produced a handgun and fired multiple rounds at James and Woods. James was struck by the gunfire and collapsed on the street in front of 1723 West 85th Street. Woods escaped with injury, and James was pronounced dead at scene. Although there were some witnesses in the vicinity at the time of the murder, no one was in the position to see the shooter, and they cooperated to the best of their ability. For approximately seven months, countless leads failed to produce the identity of the shooter and his accomplices.

On December 28, 2010, a \$50,000 reward was introduced (then increased to \$75,000) by the Los Angeles City Council for information leading to the identification, apprehension, and conviction of the person responsible for this murder. The reward was again renewed July 21, 2011.

Witness-1 provided information to the Detectives indicating that he knew the identity of the shooter, and additional gang members in the vehicle, and could also direct investigators to the location of the vehicle. Darnell Houston, a 111 Neighborhood Crip gang member, admitted to witness-1 that he had shot and killed the victim. Additionally, Witness 1 overheard conversations that the driver, Lamar McKnight, had with family and associates regarding his involvement. Witness 1 was present on Christmas night when the group of gang members-

The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

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Houston, McKnight, Simon, and Williams entered the SUV and drove to a neighborhood which was rival gang territory. Although witness-1 first came forward with this information on June 22, 2011, his on-going assistance was required in order to file murder charges on the defendants. On August 28, 2011, the District Attorney's Office filed murder charges on Houston, McKnight, and Simon because of the information provided by witness-1. Williams was filed on September 15, 2011, due to further investigation. One defendant took a plea bargain and the jury trial resulted in convictions for the other three defendants. Witness-1 testified at both the preliminary hearing and trial, and his testimony was vital to the case against all defendants.

It is the opinion of Detective II Stacey Szymkowiak that witness-1 is qualified for the reward offer. The information provided by witness-1 enabled murder charges to be filed on the defendant. Witness-1 was directly responsible for the identification, apprehension, and conviction of Darnell Houston, Lamar McKnight, Ezekiel Simon, and Derrick Williams. Based on these facts, it is requested that the reward funds be paid to the claimant listed on the attached Applications for Special Reward Payment.

Should you have any questions, contact Lieutenant II Michael Oppelt, Acting Commanding Officer, Criminal Gang/Homicide Division, at (323) 786-5100.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Beck', written over a white background.

CHARLIE BECK
Chief of Police

Attachments

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL REWARD PAYMENT

DISTRIBUTION
ORIG -- LAPD
DUPE -- City Clerk
DUPE -- Claimant

Neither the filing nor submitting of information, nor the receipt or consideration thereof by the City, shall establish legal claim to, or right of recovery of, any reward offered. The provision of payment shall be governed by Chapter 12, Division 19 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code.

1. PRINT NAME OF APPLICANT:
Last, **Witness-1** First: Middle

2. ADDRESS: (Street) (City) (State - Zip)
Daytime Phone & Contact Person
Confidential- In Care of Investigating Officer

3. TODAY'S DATE: 1/07/2016 4. OCCUPATION: Unknown

5. DRIVER'S LICENSE # or CALIF ID #: **Confidential** 6. SOCIAL SECURITY #: (For payment purposes)

DESCRIPTION OF CIRCUMSTANCES: (Fill in or mark ALL that apply)

NOTE: The applicant is responsible for providing ALL of the following required information. A claim that does not provide the following required information may be disapproved for insufficient information.

7. DATE OF INCIDENT: 12/25/2010 8. TIME OF INCIDENT: 10:20 PM _____ NOON
_____ MIDNIGHT

LOCATION OF INCIDENT: 1723 West 85th Street

TYPE OF CRIME / INVESTIGATION: Murder-(1) Victim deceased

9. DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: On December 25, 2010, suspect Darnell Houston fired several rounds in the direction of Victim Kashmir James and Victim Diondre Woods. Victim James suffered multiple gunshot wounds and expired at scene. Victim Woods was not struck. Suspect Houston fled the location in a vehicle with additional gang members.

10. _____

12. X Detectives For Applicant 13 X
APPLICANT SIGNATURE PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE (under 18 years)

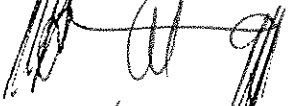
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INVESTIGATING OFFICER: Name Detective II Stacey Szymkowiak Serial# 33084 Agency LAPD/CGHD
Phone # (323) 786-5113

NAME OF VICTIM OR CASE: Kashmier James DR 1012-30914

RECOMMENDATION: X APPROVAL _____ DISAPPROVAL INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST ATTACHED:
X Yes _____ No _____ INSUFFICIENT INVOLVEMENT
_____ INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION

BRIEF EXPLANATION OR COMMENTS: Witness-1 contacted detectives and provided information regarding the suspect making admissions to killing the victim. The information provided by witness-1 enabled murder charges to be filed against the suspects, Darnell Houston, Lamar McKnight, Ezekiel Simon, and Derrick Williams. Witness-1 also assisted the detectives by providing information regarding the whereabouts of the suspect. Witness-1's actions were instrumental in the arrest of the suspect. Witness-1 testified in the preliminary hearing and trial of People V. Houston et al., Case BA294388. The trial resulted in (4) convictions. The case against Houston et. al. would not have been prosecuted without the information provided by witness-1.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY: 
CAPTAIN PETER WHITTINGTON #26013

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
REWARD CLAIM CHECKLIST**

**This form must be submitted with the Department's recommendation concerning payment of the reward.
One checklist must be submitted for each claimant.**

COUNCIL FILE NUMBER: 11-0010-52 DR/AGENCY FILE NUMBER: 1012-30914

TYPE OF CRIME/INVESTIGATION: Murder REWARD AMOUNT: \$ 75,000

REWARD EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/28/2010 (renewed 7/21/2011) REWARD EXPIRATION DATE: _____

INFO. REC'D WHILE REWARD IN EFFECT: YES NO DATE REC'D: 6/22/2011 and on-going
(circle one)

CLAIMANT: Witness 1 CLAIMANT'S OCCUPATION: Laborer
(Name or "Anonymous." If multiple anonymous claimants, indicate as "Claimant A, Claimant B," etc.).

CASE INVEST. BY: LAPD Criminal Gang/Homicide Division OTHER CITY DEPARTMENT: _____
(Div/Section)

Investigator(s) Assigned: Detective II Stacey Szymkowiak Telephone: (323) 786-5113

Telephone: ()

(Name and Serial No.)

The above claimant is ELIGIBLE NOT ELIGIBLE to receive payment of a reward pursuant to the Los Angeles Administrative code Division 19, Chapter 12, Sections 19.120 through 19.129.4.

Reason(s) for claimant being NOT ELIGIBLE to receive payment

____ Claimant is a City officer, employee, or public officer or employee whose employment includes duties of law enforcement.

____ Claimant obtained information for a relative who is a City Officer, employee, or public officer or employee, and that person obtained the information in the course of his/her employment.

____ Claimant is a dependent of a City Officer, employee, or public officer or employee whose duties include law enforcement

____ Claimant has not provided continued cooperation within the criminal justice system relative to the case for which the offer of reward is made.

____ Claimant has already been compensated by his/her employer or in some other manner for the actions which are the bases for

____ Claimant is co-suspect in the crime for which the reward is offered.

____ The suspect would benefit from payment of the reward to the claimant.

____ Other: _____

____ The claimant is acting as an agent for the suspect.

Explanation: _____

(If additional space is needed, use back of form.)

APPROVED BY _____ RANK/TITLE _____

[Signature]
PETER WHITTENBYAM #26013

[Signature]
CAPTAIN