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MANHATTAN RESIDENT SENTENCED TO 35 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR STABBING DEATHS OF TWO MEN

Codefendant Sentenced to Seven Years for Robbery

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Raymond Kenner was sentenced to 35 years in prison for the stabbing deaths of two men, one killed in Hollis on December 21, 2021, and the second man killed near Rufus King Park two days later. Kenner's codefendant, Alexander Stephens, was sentenced to seven years in prison for robbery.

District Attorney Katz said: "Raymond Kenner stabbed two young men in cold blood and callously left them to die in late December 2021. These completely unprovoked attacks will impact the families of Andrew Cunje and Benjamin Vazquez for years to come. I hope that today's sentence bring the Cunje and Vazquez families comfort as they continue to mourn."

Kenner, 25, of West 31st Street in Manhattan, pleaded guilty on June 3 to two counts of manslaughter in the first degree before Queens Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Holder. Justice Holder sentenced Kenner today to 35 years in prison to be followed by five years of post-release supervision.

Stephens, 34, of 109th Road in St. Albans, pleaded guilty on June 5 to robbery in the second degree. Justice Holder sentenced him today to seven years in prison followed by five years of post-release supervision.

According to the charges, on December 21, 2021, at approximately 9 p.m., Kenner followed victim Andrew Cunje, 25, from Francis Lewis Boulevard to Carpenter Avenue in Hollis and then approached him. Moments later Cunje was found on the ground bleeding from multiple stab wounds inflicted by Kenner. He was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead. Kenner and Stephens stole the victim's backpack.

Two days later, on December 23, 2021, at approximately 11 p.m., Kenner ran after 29-year-old Benjamin Vasquez on 89th Avenue in Jamaica near Rufus King Park. Once he caught up to him, he threw the victim to the ground, stabbed him approximately eight times and stomped on him. The victim stood up and started to run away but Kenner caught him and slammed him to the ground. Vasquez was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

When Kenner was apprehended by the police on December 29, 2021, he was wearing the same clothes he was seen wearing on video footage when he followed Cunje and there was blood splattered on his clothing. Police also recovered a folding knife from his pocket.

Assistant District Attorney Kenneth Zawistowski of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, Karen Ross and Jonathan Selkove, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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