

## **LANSING: 1 MAN FREED AS 1 CONFESSES - PAROLEE SAYS HE KILLED PROF IN 2005**

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LANSING - Hours after convicted murderer Claude McCollum walked out of jail Tuesday with a second chance **to** prove his innocence, the Michigan State Police said another man has **confessed to** the 2005 slaying of a college **professor** that sent McCollum **to** prison.

That man, prison parolee Matthew **Macon** , also has been linked **to** the deaths this summer of five women and another woman in 2004.

**Macon** 's confession was confirmed by Detective Lt. Jamie Corona of the State Police Major Case Unit in an interview with the Lansing State Journal. Corona is an investigator in the McCollum case.

Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III had asked for the new trial for McCollum last month after **Macon** 's arrest, but he has refused **to** say that the two are linked.

Dunnings said late Tuesday afternoon that he asked for a new trial for McCollum after he learned of new evidence, which he would not discuss, from the Michigan State Police.

"I came **to** the conclusion it would not be in the service of justice for him **to** be held without bond," Dunnings said.

He defended the original prosecution and verdict as consistent with the facts at the time. Dunnings said he is reviewing the evidence **to** determine whether McCollum will be tried again.

After his release Tuesday, McCollum, 30, told reporters: "It was one of the greatest feelings in the world. There was a time when I had doubts, but something told me things were going **to** work out, and that I'll finally see this day."

McCollum had been in custody from a few days after the **professor** 's slaying until Tuesday. He was serving a mandatory sentence of life without parole for the January 2005 rape and slaying of Carolyn Kronenberg, a **professor** at Lansing Community College, whose body was found in her classroom. McCollum attended LCC, but he was not one of Kronenberg's students.

On Tuesday, McCollum was released **to** his family and placed on an electronic tether in lieu of a \$100,000 bond by Ingham County Circuit Judge James Giddings.

Kronenberg's murder was another in a series of **killings** of this summer that brought McCollum's conviction into question.

**Macon** , 28, so far has been charged in only one of the five slayings. Questions of whether **Macon** was connected **to** Kronenberg's **killing** prompted McCollum's family **to** demand a new investigation.

McCollum was convicted despite questions of DNA evidence that did not match him. His attorney, Hugh Clarke Jr., said new evidence - videotapes from Lansing Community College - may show McCollum could not have been at the scene of the crime.

Also, McCollum's statements **to** police, used as a confession in his trial, came under fire as having been manipulated evidence.

For now, McCollum will live with his aunt Sharon Nevels, who sat with him as he talked **to** the news media Tuesday.

McCollum compared his incarceration **to** a religious experience that strengthened him. He said he is not angry with the legal system, but grateful that it has set him free, at least for now.

He said he was prosecuted "because I was available," but added, "I'm not bitter, I'm not bitter at all."

Nevels said it was inconceivable that her nephew would be convicted of such a violent crime.

"He's so mild-mannered, soft-spoken, he couldn't do that **to** anyone, kill someone like that," Nevels said. "He prays five times a day."

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo

CAPTION: Claude McCollum, left, leaves the Ingham County Jail with attorney Hugh Clarke Jr., right, after being released Tuesday.

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