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WE BUILD COMMUNITY • YEAR 136, NO. 138

Amazon launches hiring spree

Goal for distribution center: 1K jobs

By JORDAN FOUTS
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ELKHART — Amazon is expected to make 1,000 hires by the end of the year for its state-of-the-art fulfillment center north of the city. The company announced Friday that it has begun hiring staff to work alongside hundreds of robots in the order processing center, a process that is expected to take around two months before operations start. Employee duties include receiving, picking, packing and shipping customer orders while supporting network logistics, according to the

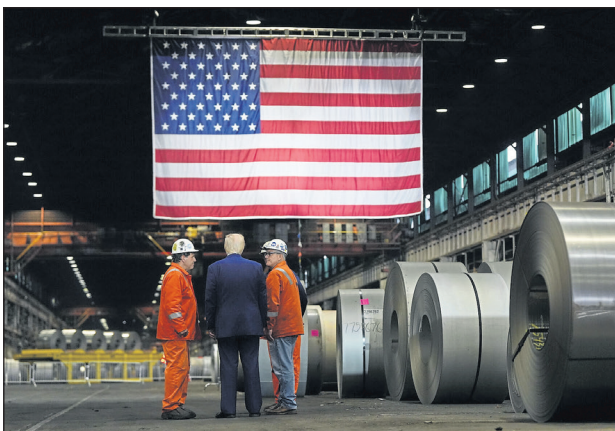


Elkhart Truth file photo / Jordan Fouts
Pictured are Elkhart County Commissioner Brad Rogers, left, and Kyle DeGiulio, Amazon regional economic development manager, during a May 9, 2024, tour of the distribution center in Elkhart.

announcement. “As we prepare to launch our new robotics facility in Elkhart, we’re excited to create 1,000 full-time jobs that combine competitive wages, comprehensive benefits and opportunities to work with advanced technology,” Kyle DeGiulio, Amazon

regional economic development manager, said in the announcement. “These roles offer a strong foundation for building a career at Amazon while contributing to our growing presence in Indiana.” Applicants must be 18 or older with a high school diploma or equivalent. Candidates can view open positions and apply online at amazon.com/localjobs. Job listings will open on a rolling basis and will be posted until the positions are filled, according to the announcement. Average hourly pay starts at \$19 and the company says it offers a range of benefits plus continuing education programs.

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Julia Demaree Nikhinson / AP
President Donald Trump talks to workers as he tours U.S. Steel Corporation's Mon Valley Works-Irvin plant, on May 30, in West Mifflin, Pa.

Manufacturers stuck in a rut despite subsidies from Biden, protection from Trump

By PAUL WISEMAN
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Democrats and Republicans don't agree on much, but they share a conviction that the government should help American manufacturers, one way or another. Democratic President Joe Biden handed out subsidies to chipmakers and electric vehicle manufacturers. Republican President Donald Trump is building a wall of import taxes — tariffs — around the U.S. economy to protect domestic industry from foreign competition. Yet American manufacturing has been stuck in a rut for nearly three years. And it remains to be seen whether the trend will reverse itself.

The U.S. Labor Department reports that American factories shed 7,000 jobs in June for the second month in a row. Manufacturing employment is on track to drop for the third straight year.

The Institute for Supply Management, an association of purchasing managers, reported that manufacturing activity in the United States shrank in June for the fourth straight month. In fact, U.S. factories have been in decline for 30 of the 32 months since October 2022, according to ISM.

“The past three years have been a real slog for manufacturing,” said Eric Haggopian, CEO of Pilot Precision Products, a maker of industrial cutting tools in South Deerfield, Massachusetts. “We didn’t get destroyed like we did in the recession of 2008. But we’ve been in this stagnant, sort of stationary environment.”

Big economic factors contributed to the slowdown: A surge in inflation, arising from the unexpectedly strong economic recovery from COVID-19, raised factory expenses and prompted the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates 11 times in 2022 and 2023. The higher borrowing costs added to

the strain. Government policy was meant to help.

Biden's tax incentives for semiconductor and clean energy production triggered a factory-building boom — investment in manufacturing facilities more than tripled from April 2021 through October 2024 — that seemed to herald a coming surge in factory production and hiring. Eventually anyway.

But the factory investment spree has faded as the incoming Trump administration launched trade wars and, working with Congress, ended Biden's subsidies for green energy. Now, predicts Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, “manufacturing production will continue to flatline.”

“If production is flat, that suggests manufacturing employment will continue to slide,” Zandi said. “Manufacturing is likely to suffer a recession in the coming year.”

Meanwhile, Trump is attempting to protect U.S. manufacturers — and to coax factories to relocate and produce in America — by imposing tariffs on goods made overseas. He slapped 50 percent taxes on steel and aluminum, 25 percent on autos and auto parts, 10 percent on many other imports.

In some ways, Trump's tariffs can give U.S. factories an edge. Chris Zuzick, vice president at Waukesha Metal Products, said the Deerfield, Massachusetts-based manufacturer is facing stiff competition for a big contract in Texas. A foreign company offers much lower prices. But “when you throw the tariff on, it gets us closer,” Zuzick said. “So that's definitely a situation where it's beneficial.”

But American factories import and use foreign products, too — machinery, chemicals, raw materials like steel and aluminum.

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Elkhart Truth photos / Jordan Fouts
Youngsters slide through foam and mud at the start of the inaugural Kerry's Kids and Teens Mud Run at Pringle Park in Goshen.

Mud run held in lieu of youth triathlon

By JORDAN FOUTS
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GOSHEN — Hundreds of mud-caked kids slipped, crawled and jumped through a first-time mucky run at Pringle Park on Saturday. The inaugural Kerry's Kids and Teens Mud Run was held at the west side park and pavilion, along with cleaner activities like rock wall climbing and human hamster balls. The obstacle course for ages 5 to 18 was this year's replacement for the Kids and Teens Triathlon, which was canceled with the closure of the Shanklin Park pool. “We just wanted to create a new family fun event to keep the community engaged while we have the Kerry's Kids and Teens Triathlon on pause, and it will be back next year,” said Kim Stephens, Goshen Parks recreation director. “As a team we had open



LEFT: Runners each received a medal at the finish line Saturday during the inaugural Kerry's Kids and Teens Mud Run at Pringle Park in Goshen. RIGHT: Participants navigate the inner tubes near the end of the inaugural Kerry's Kids and Teens Mud Run at Pringle Park in Goshen.

discussions about what would be a fun family event and we kind of just came up with it together. It keeps

them physically fit and engaged, it's great for spectators, it's great to bring awareness to Pringle Park

and the amenities we have here.”

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BUSY MINDS, BUSY HANDS: THE IMPORTANCE OF LEISURE AND DEMENTIA

Presented by: Patty Piechocki - Manager, Alzheimer's and Dementia Services of Northern Indiana

THURS. JULY 29, 3PM - 4PM

Without meaningful leisure, individuals with dementia face loneliness and decline. Learn how engaging activities can significantly improve their lives and well-being, benefiting caregivers too. Refreshments and light appetizers will be provided. Space is limited. Please RSVP for this free event by July 28th by calling 574-247-1866 or scan the QR code.



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