

KILLER WAS FIRED, HAD GUN ILLEGALLY: COPS

The Associated Press

AURORA, Ill. — The man who opened fire and killed five co-workers, including the plant manager, human resources manager and an intern working his first day at a suburban Chicago manufacturing warehouse, took a gun he wasn't supposed to have to a job he was about to lose.

Right after learning Friday that he was being fired from his job of 15 years at the Henry Pratt Co. in Aurora, Gary Martin pulled out a gun and began shooting, killing the three people in the room with him and two others outside and wounding a sixth employee, police said Saturday.

Martin shot and wounded five of the first officers to get to the scene, including one who didn't even make it inside the sprawling warehouse in Aurora, Illinois, a city of 200,000 about 40 miles west of Chicago.

After that flurry of shots and with officers from throughout the region streaming in to help, he ran off and hid in the back of the building, where officers



Gary Martin

found him about an hour later and killed him during an exchange of gunfire, police said.

"He was probably waiting for us to get to him there," Aurora police Lt. Rick Robertson said.

Martin, 45, had six arrests over the years in Aurora, for what Police Chief Kristen Ziman described as "traffic and domestic battery-related issues" and for violating an order of protection. He also had a 1995 felony conviction for aggravated assault in Mississippi that should have prevented him from buying his gun,

Ziman said.

He was able to buy the Smith and Wesson .40-caliber handgun on March 11, 2014, because he was issued a firearm owner's ID card two months earlier after passing an initial background check. It wasn't until he applied for a concealed carry permit five days later and went through a more rigorous background check that his Mississippi conviction was flagged and his firearm owner's ID card was revoked, Ziman said. "Absolutely, he was not supposed to be in possession of a firearm," she said.

Scott Hall, president and CEO of Mueller Water Products Inc., which owns Henry Pratt, said Martin came to work for his normal shift Friday and was being fired when he started shooting.

"We can confirm that the individual was being terminated Friday for a culmination of various workplace rules violations," he told a news conference Saturday. He gave no details of the violations by Martin at the plant that makes valves for industrial purposes.

A look at victims of Aurora massacre

CHICAGO — The victims of a disgruntled employee who opened fire at a suburban Chicago industrial warehouse were co-workers ranging from an intern to the plant manager.

Trevor Wehner

The 21-year-old Northern Illinois University student was on his first day as an intern in human resources at Henry Pratt Co. in Aurora and attended the fateful meeting where the gunman was fired and then started shooting.

Jay Wehner said his nephew grew up about 30 miles south of Aurora and was expected to graduate from Northern Illinois University in May with a degree in human resource management. He was on the dean's list at NIU's business college.

Clayton Parks

The 32-year-old from Elgin, about 20 miles north of Aurora, had just joined Henry Pratt in November 2018 as HR manager

responsible for operations in Aurora; Hammond, Indiana; and Denver, the company said. He also was in the meeting where the gunman was being fired.

Parks was married and had an infant son Axel, according to a Facebook post by his wife Abby.

"Every time I've closed my eyes over the last twelve hours, I've opened them hoping to wake from a terrible dream, but that's not the case," Abby posted. "I'm living my worst nightmare."

Vicente Juarez

Juarez was shot outside the meeting where the gunman was being fired from his job. Juarez had been employed at Henry Pratt since 2006 and was a member of the shipping and warehouse team in Aurora.

The Chicago Tribune reported that Juarez lived with his wife, adult daughter and four grandchildren about 6 miles south of Aurora.

Neighbor Joven Ang said anytime he was working outside

Juarez asked him if he needed help. "That's the kind of person he was," Ang said.

Josh Pinkard

A native of Alabama, Pinkard became plant manager at Henry Pratt in the spring of 2018. He was also in the meeting with the gunman.

The father of three earned a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Mississippi State and a master's degree from the University of Arkansas, his LinkedIn account said.

"He loved God, his family and Mississippi State sports," a cousin wrote in a text that he said was written on behalf of Pinkard's wife, Terra.

Russ Beyer

The company said Beyer was an employee at Henry Pratt for more than 20 years during which time he held most of the different jobs in the plant. He was shot outside the meeting. Beyer had served as union chairman. — AP

Pullout

Amazon decision impact strains Dem coalition, could affect '20 vote

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ALBANY — The broad impact of Amazon's decision to cancel plans for a Queens headquarters on New York politics would be hard to overstate.

It was perhaps Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's biggest setback in nine years in office and the biggest win yet for the political left and grass roots organizers who have budded in New York since the Occupy Wall Street movement, observers say.

It showed the left asserting itself in effective ways that it hadn't been able to before, they say. It showed the governor doesn't have his thumb on the State Legislature as he did in his first two terms in office. It showed Amazon miscalculated that its promise of 25,000 jobs would mute any criticism of its anti-union stance and the \$3 billion tax-incentive package it was offered.

Looking ahead, the outcome might end a brief honeymoon between the governor and Senate Democrats, and, some say, between pragmatic and progressive Democrats. And it might make some suburban Democrats, especially on Long Island, vulnerable in the 2020 election to Republican challengers who paint them as anti-job and anti-business.

The finger-pointing will go on for a while. The longer-

term question is whether it marks a turning point in state politics and a new approach to the state's tax and economic development policies.

Analysts said Cuomo and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio made the mistake of thinking "everyone would fall in line" after they had negotiated the incentive package that landed Amazon back in November. The governor, mayor and Amazon misjudged the reaction.

"I would argue the governor blew it," Doug Muzzio, a Baruch College political scientist, said Friday on "The Capitol Pressroom," a public radio program. "He assumed — he saw it as a good thing and, therefore, good for the state and, therefore, good for the constituency."

He said Cuomo and de Blasio — two officials who come from the pragmatic and progressive sides of the party, respectively — figured "if we agree, everybody will fall in line."

But the local resistance sprouted quickly and denounced \$3 billion in giveaways to one of the world's largest companies. They decried what they called a lack of transparency about the deal and of assessment on housing and transit, and bypass of the land-use review process. And when Amazon indicated it would oppose a unionized workforce, criticism mushroomed.



Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio shake hands on Nov. 13 after Amazon announced that it would build in Queens.

YEONG-UNG YANG

may alter N.Y. politics



Protesters against Amazon gather on the steps of City Hall before the start of a New York City Council hearing in January.

“Both Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio were caught flat-footed,” Iona College political scientist Jeanne Zaino said on the radio program. “And I’m not sure they nor Amazon did the due diligence on the ground to get this done.”

An additional factor, Zaino said, is that the public’s views on tech companies and regulation have changed sharply in the last two years. The implication: Americans are viewing tech more skeptically now and a company promising jobs probably would previously have faced less scrutiny.

Cuomo has been successful achieving most of his agenda during his first two terms in office and has completed or launched scores of infrastructure projects. Some have fallen through, such as a casino at Aqueduct Race Track, but nothing on the scale of the 25,000 jobs Amazon was promising.

A Cuomo official contended the outcome wasn’t so much a political loss for the governor as a “loss for New York State,” and

said the administration did everything it could to land Amazon. The administration and unions met with the company frequently in the last week to reach peace on the labor issue. It publicly and privately pressed Senate Democrats to relent and back the deal, and criticized the company for not doing more to tout the benefits of the project. But Amazon suddenly canceled its Queens plan altogether.

Cuomo lashed out Thursday at Senate Democrats, particularly the nomination of Sen. Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria) to an oversight panel that would have say over part of the Amazon incentive package. Gianaris, who represents Long Island City, was one of the most vocal critics of the deal.

Cuomo spokeswoman Dani Lever said Senate Democrats “tanked the Amazon plan by placing a stalwart Amazon opponent on the government approval board to pander to the local socialists.”

She went even further, blasting Sen. Todd Kaminsky (D-

Long Beach), dean of the Long Island Senate Democrats. Lever said he should have fought for the Amazon deal and instead “cowered when he should have shown courage.”

Some Democrats saw the finger-pointing as the governor’s attempt to splinter the conference. They cited his tacit support for a renegade group of senators called the Independent Democratic Conference, which operated from 2011-17 and aligned with Republicans to keep the GOP in Senate power. With Democrats controlling the Assembly, the legislative split gave Cuomo great leverage over what laws were enacted and how money was spent.

In contrast, the Senate has been unified under Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers) since Democrats won control of the chamber in November and has worked with Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (D-Bronx) to set the agenda and enact major pieces of legislation in the first few weeks of 2019.

“The new Albany dynamic is

that things go through Carl and Andrea,” said one Democratic consultant who requested anonymity.

Republicans stopped just short of saying they would use this episode against suburban Democrats in next year’s elections, though that is all but assured. “They stood in the way of 25,000 jobs coming to New York,” said Scott Reif, spokesman for Senate Minority Leader John Flanagan (R-East Northport). “It shows that New York City interests will prevail in that conference, despite the fact that Long Island senators said it wouldn’t happen.”

The new progressives in New York politics saw it quite differently. For them, it was the day grass roots groups successfully fought to block giveaways to one of the world’s biggest companies.

“Today we have seen the power of grass roots community organizing,” Sen. Jessica Ramos (D-Jackson Heights) said. “This deal was going to set a dangerous precedent that

KEEP UP FIGHT, HOUSE REP. TELLS BACKERS

NEW YORK — Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is urging supporters to keep up the kind of activism that resulted in Amazon rescinding its plan to build a campus in New York City.

The freshman Democratic lawmaker said Saturday that it’s “not just about any job, it’s about dignified jobs in New York City.”

Ocasio-Cortez spoke at a ceremonial swearing-in at a high school in the Bronx.

She did not mention Amazon by name but said New Yorkers “do not have to settle for scraps in the greatest city in the world.”

Amazon announced Thursday that it would abandon a plan to build a secondary headquarters in Queens.

Ocasio-Cortez was one of many elected officials who opposed the deal to offer Amazon \$2.7 billion in tax incentives and subsidies for a New York headquarters. — AP



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

circumvented the public review process to welcome one of the biggest corporations of our time that pays zero taxes already. What we, the people, did in Queens was finally draw the line in the sand.”