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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

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ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OFFICE
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Washington, D.C. 20536



APR 09 2003

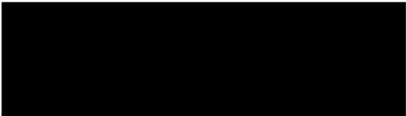
File: WAC 01 254 52670 Office: California Service Center Date:

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



Petition: Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker as a Skilled Worker or Professional Pursuant to Section 203(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)

IN BEHALF OF PETITIONER: Self-represented



PUBLIC COPY

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (Bureau) where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. *Id.*

Any motion must be filed with the office that originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.7.

Helen E Crawford for
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The employment-based preference visa petition was denied by the director, California Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The petitioner is a company which custom imprints stuffed animals. It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a secretary. As required by statute, the petition was accompanied by an individual labor certification from the Department of Labor. The director determined that the petitioner had not established that it had the financial ability to pay the beneficiary the proffered wage as of the priority date of the visa petition.

On appeal, the Vice President for Operations for the petitioner asserted that it has the ability to pay the proffered wage. In a statement, the writer explained that the company has a staff of 176 and annual income in excess of \$21 million.

Section 203(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3), provides for the granting of preference classification to qualified immigrants who are capable, at the time of petitioning for classification under this paragraph, of performing skilled or unskilled labor, not of a temporary or seasonal nature, for which qualified workers are not available in the United States. This section also provides for the granting of preference classification to qualified immigrants who hold baccalaureate degrees and are members of the professions.

Eligibility in this matter hinges on the petitioner's ability to pay the wage offered as of the petition's priority date, which is the date the request for labor certification was accepted for processing by any office within the employment system of the Department of Labor. *Matter of Wing's Tea House*, 16 I&N Dec. 158 (Act. Reg. Comm. 1977). Here, the petition's priority date is February 27, 1996. The beneficiary's salary as stated on the labor certification is \$25,916.80 per annum.

Initially, counsel failed to provide any evidence of the petitioner's ability to pay the proffered wage. On November 9, 2001, the director requested additional evidence to establish that the petitioner had the ability to pay the proffered wage.

In response, the petitioner submitted a letter through counsel verifying the number of employees and financial viability of the corporation. Counsel stated that the business was established in 1984; that its current number of employees was 200; and that it had gross annual income of \$20,000,000.

In the decision, the director noted that counsel's statement contradicted the statements on the Form with regards to the date

the business was established and to the amount of gross annual income the company earned. Due to these discrepancies, the director determined that the petitioner had not established that it had the ability to pay the proffered wage.

On appeal, counsel submitted a statement through the petitioner's Vice President of Operations explaining that the company employs 176 employees; that it earns gross annual revenues in excess of \$21 million; and that the assets of the company far exceed the liabilities of the company.

The regulations at 8 C.F.R. 204.5(g)(2) state, in pertinent part, that in a case where the prospective United States employer employs 100 or more workers, the director may accept a statement from a financial officer of the organization which establishes the prospective employer's ability to pay the proffered wage. In this case, the petitioner has submitted a letter asserting that it has more than 100 employees and that it is financially viable.

The record does not contain any derogatory evidence which would persuade the Service to doubt the credibility of the information contained in the letter from the financial officer or the supporting documentation. Therefore, the petitioner has demonstrated its financial ability to pay the beneficiary's salary as of the petition's filing date.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, the petitioner has met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained.