

Bb

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

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OFFICE  
425 Eye Street N.W.  
BCIS, AAO, 20 Mass, 3/F  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Identifying data deleted to  
prevent clearly



File: WAC 02 078 53451 Office: California Service Center

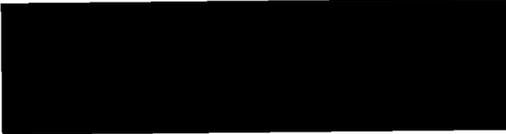
Date: JUL 03 2003

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)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



**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.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director  
Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The 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 dismissed.

The petitioner is a medical clinic. It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a computer support specialist. As required by statute, the petition is accompanied by an individual labor certification approved by 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, counsel submits a brief and additional evidence.

Section 203(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)(A)(i), 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 labor (requiring at least two years training or experience), not of a temporary or seasonal nature, for which qualified workers are not available in the United States.

8 C.F.R. § 204.5(g)(2) states in pertinent part:

*Ability of prospective employer to pay wage.* Any petition filed by or for an employment-based immigrant which requires an offer of employment must be accompanied by evidence that the prospective United States employer has the ability to pay the proffered wage. The petitioner must demonstrate this ability at the time the priority date is established and continuing until the beneficiary obtains lawful permanent residence. Evidence of this ability shall be either in the form of copies of annual reports, federal tax returns, or audited financial statements.

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 April 20, 2001. The beneficiary's salary as stated on the labor certification is \$24.20 per hour or \$50,336.00 per annum.

Counsel submitted copies of the petitioner's 1999 and 2000 Form

1120S U.S. Income Tax Return for an S Corporation. The tax return for calendar year 1999 reflected gross receipts of \$294,908; gross profit of \$294,908; compensation of officers of \$75,000; salaries and wages paid of \$57,831; and an ordinary income (loss) from trade or business activities of -\$19,169. The tax return for calendar year 2000 reflected gross receipts of \$319,119; gross profit of \$319,119; compensation of officers of \$75,000; salaries and wages paid of \$34,362; and an ordinary income (loss) from trade or business activities of -\$2,930.

The director determined that the evidence did not establish that the petitioner had the ability to pay the proffered wage and denied the petition accordingly.

On appeal, counsel submits a copy of the petitioner's unaudited Income Statement for 2001, a copy of the owner's personal tax return for 2001, copies of the petitioner's bank statements for the period from March 2001 through June 2002, and a letter from the owner of the petitioning entity.

Counsel cites *Masonry Masters, Inc. v. Thornburgh* arguing that "the Beneficiary's ability to generate income should be factored in determining Petitioner's ability to pay the proffered wage in the future."

*Matter of Masonry Masters, Inc. v. Thornburg*, 875 F.2d 898. D.C. circ. 1989 is a decision that is not binding outside the District of Columbia. It does not stand for the proposition that a petitioner's unsupported assertions have greater evidentiary weight than the petitioner's tax returns. The court held that the Service should not require a petitioner to show the ability to pay more than the prevailing wage. Counsel has not provided evidence that there is a difference between the proffered wage and the prevailing wage in this proceeding, and the petitioning organization is not located in the District of Columbia.

Counsel's argument is not persuasive. Contrary to counsel's primary assertion, the Service may not "pierce the corporate veil" and look to the assets of the corporation's owner to satisfy the corporation's ability to pay the proffered wage. It is an elementary rule that a corporation is a separate and distinct legal entity from its owners and stockholders. *Matter of M*, 8 I&N Dec. 24, 50 (BIA 1958, AG 1958); *Matter of Aphrodite Investments Limited*, 17 I&N Dec. 530 (Comm. 1980); and *Matter of Tessel*, 17 I&N Dec. 631 (Act. Assoc. Comm. 1980). Consequently, the assets of the petitioning corporation's sole shareholder cannot be considered in determining the corporation's ability to pay the proffered wage.

The tax return for 1999 shows an ordinary income of -\$19,169. The petitioner could not pay a salary of \$50,336.00 a year from this figure.

In addition, the tax return for 2000 continues to show that the petitioner lacked the ability to pay the proffered wage.

Accordingly, after a review of the federal tax returns, it is concluded that the petitioner has not established that it had sufficient available funds to pay the salary offered as of the priority date of the petition and continuing to present.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, § 8 U.S.C. 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed.