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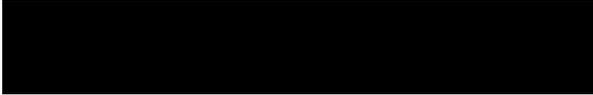
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FILE: WAC 02 214 55321 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date: **MAR 22 2005**

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office 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.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The service center director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner is a wholesaler of medical, dental, and hospital equipment, and seeks to employ the beneficiary as a sales representative. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

The director denied the petition because the proffered position does not qualify as a specialty occupation. On appeal, counsel submits a brief and asserts that the offered position qualifies as a specialty occupation.

The issue to be discussed in this proceeding is whether the proffered position qualifies as a specialty occupation.

Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b), provides, in part, for the classification of qualified nonimmigrant aliens who are coming temporarily to the United States to perform services in a specialty occupation.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184(i)(1), defines the term "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires:

- (A) theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and
- (B) attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

The term "specialty occupation" is further defined at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(ii) as:

[A]n occupation which requires theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge in fields of human endeavor including, but not limited to, architecture, engineering, mathematics, physical sciences, social sciences, medicine and health, education, business specialties, accounting, law, theology, and the arts, and which requires the attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher in a specific specialty, or its equivalent, as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A), to qualify as a specialty occupation, the position must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the particular position;
- (2) The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, an employer may show that its particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree;

- (3) The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position; or
- (4) The nature of the specific duties are so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) interprets the term "degree" in the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A) to mean not just any baccalaureate or higher degree, but one in a specific specialty that is directly related to the proffered position.

The record of proceeding before the AAO contains: (1) the Form I-129 and supporting documentation; (2) the director's requests for additional evidence; (3) the petitioner's response to the director's requests; (4) the director's denial letter; and (5) the Form I-290B with supporting documentation. The AAO reviewed the record in its entirety before issuing its decision.

The petitioner is seeking the beneficiary's services as a sales representative. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes the Form I-129 petition with attachment and the petitioner's response to the director's request for evidence. According to this evidence the beneficiary would: sell medical and dental equipment and supplies to doctors, dentists, hospitals, and retail establishments; give advice to customers in such areas as cost analysis, office layout, insurance and legal policies, and collection methods to increase sales and promote goodwill; compile data on medical equipment and supplies preferred by customers; give advice to customers on equipment for given needs based on technical knowledge of products; and study product data. The petitioner requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in banking and finance for entry into the proffered position.

Upon review of the record, the petitioner has failed to establish that a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the offered position, or that a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations, as asserted by counsel. Factors often considered by CIS when determining these criteria include: whether the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)* reports that the industry requires a degree; whether an industry professional association has made a degree a minimum entry requirement; and whether letters or affidavits from firms or individuals in the industry attest that such firms "routinely employ and recruit only degreed individuals." See *Shanti, Inc. v. Reno*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 1151, 1165 (D. Minn. 1999) (quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Sava*, 712 F. Supp. 1095, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1989)).

The AAO routinely consults the *Handbook* for information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. The duties of the proffered position are essentially those noted for wholesale and manufacturing sales representatives the *Handbook*. Regardless of the type of product that they sell, sales representatives' primary duties are to interest wholesale and retail buyers and purchasing agents in their merchandise, and to address any of the client's questions or concerns. They may represent one or several manufacturers or wholesale distributors by selling one product or a complimentary line of products. They may also advise clients on methods to reduce costs, use their products, and increase sales. The *Handbook* notes that the background needed for sales jobs varies by product line and market. Many employers hire

individuals with previous sales experience who do not have a college degree, but often prefer those with some college education. While college degrees are increasingly preferred as job requirements have become more technical and analytical, a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specific specialty is not normally the minimum requirement for entry into the position. The petitioner has failed to establish the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1).

The petitioner asserts that a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations and in support of that assertion submits copies of four job advertisements for medical sales representatives. Each advertisement submitted required a bachelor's degree, but none of them required a degree in any specific specialty. The evidence does not establish that a degree in a specific specialty is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations and the petitioner has failed to establish the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(2).

The petitioner does not assert that it normally requires a degree in a specific specialty for entry into the proffered position, and offers no evidence in this regard. The petitioner has not, therefore, established the criterion at 8 C.F.R. §§ 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(3).

Finally, the duties of the proffered position appear to be routine for sales representatives. They are not so complex or unique that they can be performed only by an individual with a degree in a specific specialty. Nor are they so specialized or complex that knowledge required to perform them is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specific specialty. The duties are routinely performed in the industry by individuals with a wide range of education and experience. A baccalaureate level education in a specific specialty is not required for entry into the position. The petitioner has failed to establish the referenced criteria at 8 C.F.R. §§ 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(2) or (4).

The petitioner has failed to establish that the offered position meets any of the criteria listed at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Accordingly, the AAO shall not disturb the director's denial of the petition.

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 sustained that burden and the appeal shall accordingly be dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The petition is denied.