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U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS
425 Eye Street N.W.
ULLB, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20536



Public Copy

File: EAC-99-234-51665 Office: Vermont Service Center

Date: MAR - 8 2001

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)

IN BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



Identification data deleted to
prevent clear identification
invasion of personal privacy.

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office which 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 which 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 Service 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 which originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.7.

FOR THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER,
EXAMINATIONS

Robert P. Wiemann, Acting Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The nonimmigrant visa petition was denied by the director and is now before the Associate Commissioner for Examinations on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a travel agency with 10 employees and a gross annual income of \$1.5 million. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a special project director for an unspecified period of time. The director determined the petitioner had not established that the proffered position is a specialty occupation.

On appeal, counsel argues that the proffered position is a specialty occupation and the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

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), provides in part for nonimmigrant classification to qualified 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 a "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and 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.

Pursuant to section 214(i)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1184(i)(2), to qualify as an alien coming to perform services in a specialty occupation the beneficiary must hold full state licensure to practice in the occupation, if such licensure is required to practice in the occupation. In addition, the beneficiary must have completed the degree required for the occupation, or have experience in the specialty equivalent to the completion of such degree and recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions relating to the specialty.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(B), the petitioner shall submit the following with an H-1B petition involving a specialty occupation:

1. A certification from the Secretary of Labor that the petitioner has filed a labor condition application with the Secretary,
2. A statement that it will comply with the terms of the labor condition application for the duration of the alien's authorized period of stay, and
3. Evidence that the alien qualifies to perform services in the specialty occupation.

The petitioner has provided a certified labor condition application and a statement that it will comply with the terms of the labor condition application.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(C), to qualify to perform services in a specialty occupation, the alien must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Hold a United States baccalaureate or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university;
2. Hold a foreign degree determined to be equivalent to a United States baccalaureate or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university;
3. Hold an unrestricted State license, registration, or certification which authorizes him or her to fully practice the specialty occupation and be immediately engaged in that specialty in the state of intended employment; or
4. Have education, specialized training, and/or progressively responsible experience that is equivalent to completion of a United States baccalaureate or higher degree in the specialty occupation and have recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions directly related to the specialty.

The beneficiary's foreign education has been found by an academic expert to be equivalent to a baccalaureate degree in pharmaceutical sciences at a United States college or university. This evaluation is based upon the beneficiary's certificate from the faculty of pharmacy conferred by an institution in Egypt. Accordingly, it is concluded that the petitioner has shown that the beneficiary qualifies to perform the duties of the proffered position.

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

an 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 is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

The duties of the proffered position are described in pertinent part as follows:

I. She will be in charge of the public relations functions of the travel agency:

- a) in charge of media advertisements including radio, television and print media to promote TRAVEL;
- b) Write and finalize specific travel plans and coordinate special travels from United States to Egypt and other Arab countries and vice-versa;

II. She will assist in planning and implementing special projects and events;

- a) She will be in charge of finalizing travel schedules for the company's customers in the United States for their UMRA AND HAJJ trips. These are visits to the holy shrine in Saudi Arabia, Jerusalem and Rome.
- b) She will be in charge of training the tour guides of the travel agency for various trips and projects promoting arab culture and a harmonious relationship between the United States and Egypt.

III. She will write articles, scripts, agenda items, correspondence and provide general administrative support;

a) She will write promotional articles, updating brochures both in English and Arabic languages and coordinate all travel plans of clients.

b) She will be in charge of coordinating all Adam Travel offices locations in connection with their promotional articles specifically applicable to their sites;

IV. She will help in identifying private companies and government agencies; make initial contacts and devise means and procedures to secure contracts for Adam Travel Agency.

a) She will write and solicit funding proposals and projects offering special discounted rate travels and tours;

b) Solicit and coordinate with various private companies to utilize ADAM TRAVEL'S package tours and trips from the United States to Middle East countries and other parts of the world and vice-versa.

The petitioner has failed to establish that any of the four factors enumerated above are present in this proceeding. The petitioner has not shown that it has, in the past, required the services of individuals with baccalaureate or higher degrees in a specialized area for the proffered position. In addition, the petitioner has not shown that similar firms require the services of such individuals in parallel positions.

In these proceedings, the duties of the position are dispositive and not the job title. The proffered position appears to combine the duties of an advertising manager with those of a travel agent. The Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook), 2000-2001 edition, at pages 25-26 finds no requirement of a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specialized area for employment as an advertising manager. A wide range of educational backgrounds are considered suitable for entry into advertising managerial positions. Some employers prefer degrees in business administration but bachelor's degrees in various liberal arts fields are also acceptable. In addition, certain personal qualities and participation in in-house training programs are often considered as significant as the beneficiary's specific educational background.

The Handbook at pages 283-284 also finds no requirement of a baccalaureate degree in a specialized area for employment as a travel agent. The minimum requirement is a high school diploma or its equivalent for entry into travel agent positions. As technology and computerization are having a profound effect on the work of travel agents, some form of specialized training, such as that offered in many vocational schools and adult public education programs, is becoming increasingly important. Here again, certain personal qualities and participation in in-house training programs are often considered as significant as the beneficiary's specific educational background. In view of the foregoing, it is concluded that the petitioner has not demonstrated that the proffered position is a specialty occupation within the meaning of the regulations.

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. Accordingly, the decision of the director will not be disturbed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.