

D2

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

PUBLIC COPY

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



File: EAC-02-042-56183

Office: Vermont Service Center

Date:

MAR 19 2003

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:



**Identifying data deleted to
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy**

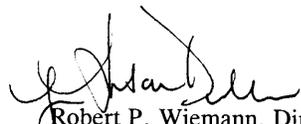
INSTRUCTIONS:

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 nonimmigrant visa petition was denied by the director and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner operates gas stations and convenience stores. It has 15 employees and a gross annual income of \$300,000. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a controller for a period of three years. The director determined the petitioner had not established that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

On appeal, counsel submits a brief.

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.

The director denied the petition because the petitioner had not demonstrated that the beneficiary holds the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree. On appeal, counsel states, in part, that the beneficiary's educational background and employment experience are the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree.

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 record indicates that the beneficiary holds a baccalaureate degree in commerce conferred by a Pakistani institution. A credentials evaluation service found the beneficiary's educational background to be equivalent to two years toward a bachelor's degree in business administration from an accredited university in the United States.

This Service uses an independent evaluation of a person's foreign credentials in terms of education in the United States as an advisory opinion only. Where an evaluation is not in accord with previous equivalencies or is in any way questionable, it may be rejected or given less weight. *Matter of Sea, Inc.*, 19 I&N Dec. 817 (Comm. 1988). In this case, the credentials evaluation will not be accepted because the record does not contain any evidence that the beneficiary holds a degree, such as a copy of a diploma and/or transcripts.

The record also indicates that at the time of the filing of the instant petition, the beneficiary had been employed as a general manager of a car dealership for approximately six years. Counsel asserts that the beneficiary's employment experience and educational background are equivalent to a U.S. baccalaureate degree.

A review of the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2002-2003 edition, at pages 87-88 finds no requirement of a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specific specialty for employment as a general manager. Many general managers/operations managers (top executives) have a bachelor's or higher degree in business administration or liberal arts. In addition, in some industries it is possible for individuals without a college degree to work their way up within the company and become managers. Thus, the petitioner has not demonstrated that the beneficiary's employment experience as a general manager of a car dealership was experience in a specialty occupation or that it is sufficient to

overcome the beneficiary's lack of a degree in a specific and related field of study. It is also noted that the record does not contain any evidence that the beneficiary's educational and employment backgrounds are equivalent to a baccalaureate degree in a related field of study, such as an evaluation from an official who has authority to grant college-level credit for training and/or experience in the specialty at an accredited college or university which has a program for granting such credit based on an individual's training and/or work experience, as required by 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(D)(1).

The beneficiary is not a member of any organizations whose usual prerequisite for entry is a baccalaureate degree in a specific specialty. The record contains no evidence that the beneficiary holds a state license, registration, or certification which authorizes him to practice a specialty occupation. In view of the foregoing, it is concluded that the petitioner has not demonstrated that the beneficiary is qualified to perform services in a specialty occupation.

Beyond the decision of the director, the record contains insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. As this matter will be dismissed on the grounds discussed, this issue need not be examined further.

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.