

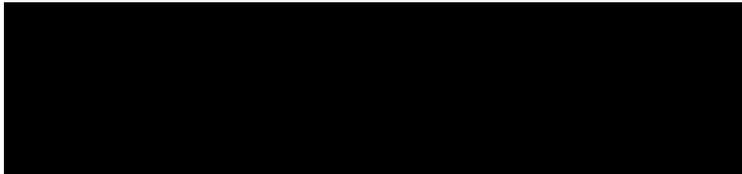
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Citizenship and Immigration Services

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



OCT 23 2003

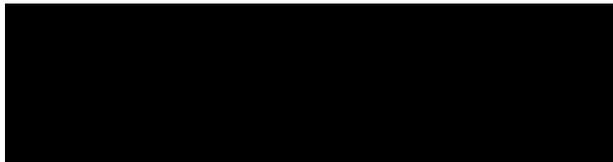
File: WAC 00 054 52766 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date:

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:



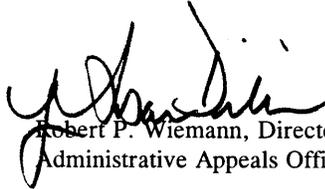
INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision 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 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 Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) 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, California Service Center. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a corporation that engages in the wholesale of fabrics. It has 13 employees and a gross annual income of \$2,150,110. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as an accountant. The director denied the petition because the beneficiary did not qualify to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

On appeal, counsel submits a brief and additional evidence. Counsel states, in part, that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation in that a reliable credentials evaluation service has determined that the beneficiary holds the equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, with a specialization in accounting, from an accredited college or university in the United States. A credentials evaluation from the Foundation for International Services, Inc., and an evaluation Dr. Gary L. Karns is submitted with counsel's appeal.

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 the classification of qualified nonimmigrant aliens who are coming temporarily to the United States to perform services in a specialty occupation.

Implicit in the director's denial letter is her conclusion that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. The director's determination denying the I-129 petition was based solely on the beneficiary's qualifications to perform the duties associated with that occupation. The only issue to be discussed in this proceeding is whether the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

Section 214(i)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (i)(2), states that an alien applying for classification as an H-1B nonimmigrant worker must possess:

- (A) full state licensure to practice in the occupation, if such licensure is required to practice in the occupation,
- (B) completion of the degree described in paragraph (1)(B) for the occupation, or
- (C) (i) completion of such experience in the specialty equivalent to the degree, and
 - (ii) 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)(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.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(D), for purposes of paragraph (h)(4)(iii)(C)(4) of this section, equivalence to completion of a United States baccalaureate or higher degree shall mean achievement of a level of knowledge, competence, and practice in the specialty occupation that has been determined to be equal to that of an individual who has a baccalaureate or higher degree in the specialty and shall be determined by one or more of the following:

- (1) 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;
- (2) The results of recognized college-level equivalency examinations or special credit programs, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or Program on

Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction
(PONSI);

- (3) An evaluation of education by a reliable credentials evaluation service which specializes in evaluating foreign educational credentials;
- (4) Evidence of certification or registration from a nationally-recognized professional association or society for the specialty that is known to grant certification or registration to persons in the occupational specialty who have achieved a certain level of competence in the specialty;
- (5) A determination by the Service that the equivalent or the degree required by the specialty occupation has been acquired through a combination of education, specialized training, and/or work experience in areas related to the specialty and that the alien has achieved recognition of expertise in the specialty occupation as a result of such training and experience.

The petitioner seeks to qualify the beneficiary by establishing that the beneficiary meets the requirements of 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(C)(4). In support of this assertion, the petitioner submitted an evaluation from Jack E. Hoover, of the Foundation for International Services, Inc. Mr. Hoover states that the beneficiary has the equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, with a specialization in accounting, from an accredited college or university in the United States. Mr. Hoover bases his opinion on an evaluation from Dr. Gary L. Karns. Dr. Karns purports to have been a professor at Seattle Pacific University for 21 years, formerly serving as Associate Dean of the School of Business and Economics, and as the Director of Graduate Programs. The record does not establish that Dr. Karns is presently employed by Seattle Pacific University. Dr. Karns opines that the beneficiary has the equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, specializing in accounting, from a university in the United States. Both equivalency evaluations are based solely on the beneficiary's prior work experience.

The record does not, however, establish that either evaluator is qualified to render an opinion on degree equivalence based upon the beneficiary's work experience. There is no proof in the record that either evaluator possesses authority to grant

college-level credit 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). Counsel further asserts that the evaluations should be accepted by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(D)(3), as they are from a reliable credentials evaluation service. Credentials evaluation services may only evaluate an individuals **foreign educational credentials**, however, not training or work experience. The evaluations will, accordingly, be given little weight. See *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972). (Emphasis added.)

In addition to the experiential evaluations submitted, the petitioner submitted evidence that the beneficiary is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). The record fails to establish that the AICPA is a nationally-recognized professional association or society for accountants. The record is silent as to what qualifications an individual must possess to obtain membership with that organization. As such, the petitioner has also failed to qualify the beneficiary pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(D)(4). Furthermore, the record does not contain sufficient information for CIS to make a determination as to the beneficiary's qualifications under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(D)(5).

The petitioner has failed to establish that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

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.