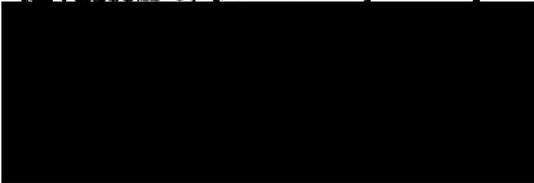


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U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

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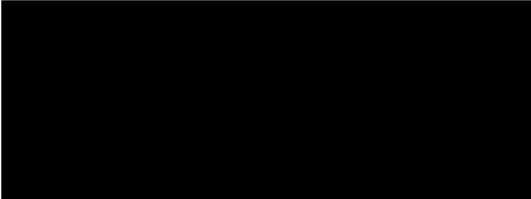
FILE: WAC 02 092 50712 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date: APR 15 2004

IN RE: Petitioner:  
Beneficiary:



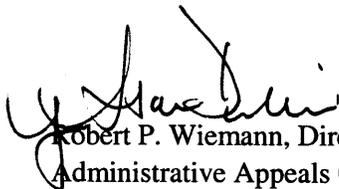
PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the  
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b)

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 manufactures, distributes, and wholesales water purification systems. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a business development manager. 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 is not a specialty occupation. On appeal, counsel submits a brief.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (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.

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.

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

The petitioner is seeking the beneficiary's services as a business development manager. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's January 8, 2002 letter in support of the

petition; and the petitioner's response to the director's request for evidence. According to this evidence, the beneficiary would perform duties that entail: planning business expansion; preparing budget for business development projects; planning, directing, and coordinating marketing campaigns; researching and devising business strategies and objectives; reviewing pricing, warranty service availability, and recommending adjustments; reviewing profitability and studying ways to cut loss; studying sales territories; analyzing demands on variety, after-sales services, and custom-made systems; devising new sales strategies and conferring with engineering and production department; reviewing new dealership development; negotiating with domestic and overseas distributors; and coordinating sales network expansion. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree in business management.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the proposed duties are not so complex as to require a baccalaureate degree. Citing to the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)*, 2002-2003 edition, the director noted that the minimum requirement for entry into advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managerial positions was not a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent in a specific specialty. The director found further that the petitioner failed to establish any of the criteria found at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A).

On appeal, counsel states that the proffered position requires a baccalaureate degree. According to counsel, the Department of Labor's *O\*Net* finds that the minimum of a bachelor's degree is required for business development and marketing managers. Counsel states further that the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)* assigns the position an SVP rating of 8, which according to counsel, requires a degree to enter into the position. Finally, counsel states that the position should be considered a specialty occupation because the AAO has granted similar petitions.

Upon review of the record, the petitioner has established none of the four criteria outlined in 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Therefore, the proffered position is not a specialty occupation.

The AAO turns first to the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) and (2): a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is the normal minimum requirement for entry into the particular position; a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations; or a particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree.

Factors often considered by CIS when determining these criteria include: whether the *Handbook* reports that the industry requires a degree; whether the industry's 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.Min. 1999)(quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Slattery*, 764 F. Supp. 872, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1991)).

The AAO routinely consults the *Handbook* for its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. A review of the Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Manager job descriptions in the *Handbook* confirms the accuracy of the director's assessment to the effect that, the job duties parallel those responsibilities of these positions. No evidence in the *Handbook* indicates that a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specific specialty, or its equivalent, is required for advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales manager jobs.

Counsel's reference to and assertions about the relevance of information from *O\*Net* and the *DOT* are not persuasive. Neither the *DOT's* SVP rating nor a Job Zone category indicates that a particular occupation requires the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty as a minimum for entry into the occupation. An SVP rating and Job Zone category are meant to indicate only the total number of years of vocational preparation required for a particular position. Neither classification describes how those years are to be divided among training, formal education, and experience, nor specifies the particular type of degree, if any, that a position would require.

Counsel asserts that the AAO has already determined that the proffered position is a specialty occupation since it has approved other, similar petitions in the past. This record of proceeding does not, however, contain all of the supporting evidence submitted to the AAO in the prior cases. In the absence of all of the corroborating evidence contained in those records of proceeding, the documents submitted by counsel are not sufficient to enable the AAO to determine whether the other H-1B petitions were parallel to the proffered position.

On appeal, counsel does not submit any evidence regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry or from professional associations regarding an industry standard. Nor does counsel submit any documentation to support the complexity or uniqueness of the proffered position. The petitioner has, thus, not established the criteria set forth at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) or (2).

The AAO now turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(3) – the employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position. As counsel does not address this issue on appeal, it will not be discussed further.

Finally, the AAO turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(iii)(A)(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.

To the extent that they are depicted in the record, the duties do not appear so specialized and complex as to require the highly specialized knowledge associated with a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty. Therefore, the evidence does not establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(4).

As related in the discussion above, the petitioner has failed to establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. 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.

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