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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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FILE: SRC 04 185 50336 Office: TEXAS SERVICE CENTER Date: AUG 07 2006

IN RE: Petitioner: [Redacted]
Beneficiary: [Redacted]

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:

SELF-REPRESENTED

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.

Michael T. Kelly
for Robert P. Wiemann, Chief
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 cargo business that seeks to employ the beneficiary as a full-time marketing and publicity manager. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to § 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, the petitioner submits a brief.

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.

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 full-time marketing and publicity manager. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's undated 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 the following duties:

[The beneficiary] will be responsible for Direct Marketing and publicity activities of the organization with Venezuela and U.S. Companies, preparing reports and the forecast [sic] company business activity based on past, present and expected operations. Establishes or recommends to management, major marketing policies for company [sic] having the knowledge and excellent skills of Venezuelan business practices, creating product strategies to address identified opportunities, lending and service functions within the branch. She also be responsible for develop [sic] a business plan, forecast profitability models, evaluating customer's ability to meet goals and obligations. She will design and develop training programs and techniques to improve the relationship between our company and the customers. As a bilingual professional she will be able to communicate with our customer and provide the best service we perform. [sic]

Although not explicitly stated, it appears that the petitioner requires a baccalaureate degree or higher in publicity and marketing.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the petitioner has not demonstrated how the proffered position will be utilized within its organization. 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, the petitioner's president states, in part, that the petitioner is an "ample and continuous growing" company in need of the services of a marketing and publicity manager. He states further that the record contains supporting evidence including a list of the petitioner's customers and an industry letter.

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 Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (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. 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 its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. The AAO does not concur with the petitioner that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. A review of the Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Managers occupational category in the *Handbook*, 2006-2007 edition, finds no evidence indicating that a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, is normally required for a marketing and publicity manager

job. Further, although two employees are claimed on the petition that was signed by the petitioner's president on May 17, 2004, and the petitioner asserts on appeal that its business is "ample and continuous growing," the petitioner's 2003 federal income tax finds no compensation of officers or salaries and wages paid. Simply going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for the purpose of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Comm. 1998) (citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972)). The petitioner also has not established that the beneficiary's bilingual-related duties are of such complexity that a baccalaureate degree in a specific specialty, as distinguished from familiarity with the English and Spanish languages or a less extensive education, is necessary for the successful completion of its duties. Thus, the petitioner has not shown that a bachelor's degree or its equivalent is required for the position being offered to the beneficiary.

Regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry, the record contains a letter from a representative of a staffing business, who asserts, in part: "Based in our previous experience in recruitment and selection of personnel, we could assure that a company with the size, function, personnel and number of clients as [the petitioner] is, requires a post of MARKETING AND PUBLICITY MANAGER in order to carry out all the planned activities." The writer, however, does not provide any information regarding the educational requirements of a marketing and publicity manager. Further, his assertion is not supported by any evidence that would establish the authority of this individual to speak to industry-wide hiring practices. The AAO may, in its discretion, use as advisory opinions statements submitted as expert testimony. However, where an opinion is not in accord with other information or is in any way questionable, the AAO is not required to accept or may give less weight to that evidence. *Matter of Caron International*, 19 I&N Dec. 791 (Comm. 1988).

The record also does not include any evidence from firms, individuals, or professional associations regarding an industry standard, or documentation to support the complexity or uniqueness of the proffered position.

The petitioner, therefore, has 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 the petitioner does not address this issue on appeal, it will not be discussed further. The evidence of record does not establish this criterion.

Finally, the AAO turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(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).

Based on the foregoing, the petitioner has failed to establish that it will employ the beneficiary as a full-time marketing and publicity manager, and that the beneficiary will be coming to perform services in a specialty occupation, in accordance with Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

Beyond the decision of the director, the petitioner has not established that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the services of a specialty occupation. The record contains a credentials evaluation from a company that specializes in evaluating academic credentials concluding that the beneficiary possesses the U.S. equivalent of a bachelor's degree in publicity and marketing. The record, however, does not contain a copy of the beneficiary's educational credentials. Thus, the evaluator's conclusions about the beneficiary's coursework carry no weight in these proceedings. CIS uses an evaluation by a credentials evaluation organization of a person's foreign education as an advisory opinion only. Where an evaluation is not in accord with previous equivalencies or is in any way questionable, it may be discounted or given less weight. *Matter of Sea, Inc.*, 19 I&N Dec. 817 (Comm. 1988). In view of the foregoing, the petitioner has not demonstrated that the beneficiary is qualified to perform a specialty occupation. For this additional reason, the petition may not be approved.

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.