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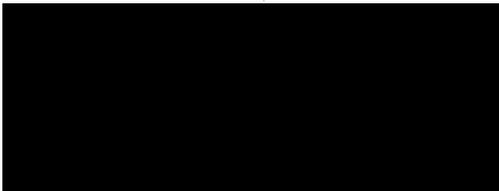
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FILE: SRC 04 014 50325 Office: TEXAS SERVICE CENTER Date: **SEP 06 2005**

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:



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 a subsequent motion to reopen and reconsider. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner remanufactures truck brakes. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a part-time market research analyst. 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 and the beneficiary is not qualified to perform a specialty occupation. On appeal, counsel submits a brief.

The AAO will first address the director's conclusion that the position is not a specialty occupation.

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; (5) the petitioner's motion to reconsider; (6) the director's decision affirming the

denial of the petition; and (7) 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 part-time market research analyst. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's September 30, 2003 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: researching market conditions in local, regional, or national area to determine potential sale of products; assembling data on competitors and analyzing prices, sales, and marketing and distribution methodology; preparing reports and graphic illustrations of findings; checking consumer reaction to new or improved products; attending conferences and submitting findings to management for consideration; researching and assessing e-commerce viability and profitability; researching business-to-business and business-to-consumer models, online retailing, and e-procurement of components; evaluating and reporting on commercial distribution and distribution channels such as chains, independent retailers, specialists, and direct sales; planning, developing, and implementing targeted marketing strategies; analyzing sales and financial data; determining new products to promote and implementing promotional strategies; and managing inventory and ordering products. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in marketing.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the proposed duties are not so complex as to require a bachelor's degree. 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, in part, that the director does not explain why she contradicts the expert analysis of two evaluators. Counsel submits copies of two previously submitted academic opinions as evidence that the proffered position meets the criteria for a specialty occupation.

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 counsel that the proffered position is that of a market research analyst, a position that, in business and industry, normally requires a master's degree in business administration, marketing, statistics, communications, or some closely related discipline. See the *Handbook*, 2004-2005 ed. at 174. In this case, the proffered position does not require a master's degree. The

beneficiary holds a foreign bachelor's degree in tourism services from a Venezuelan institution, and has more than six years of employment experience as a sales representative. It is additionally noted that, even though the petition reflects that the petitioner was established in 2001, information on the petition reflects only a projected gross annual income, as opposed to the petitioner's actual gross annual income. The record also contains no evidence of the petitioner's claimed four employees, such as the petitioner's federal income tax return and quarterly wage reports. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes 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)). A review of the record in its entirety indicates that the proffered position is similar to that of a marketing manager. No evidence in the *Handbook* indicates that a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, is required for a marketing manager job.

The record contains evaluations from two university professors, who assert, in part, that positions such as the proffered position require a related bachelor's degree. The writers, however, do not provide any evidence in support of their assertions. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes 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 record does not include any evidence regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry. The record also does not include any evidence from 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 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)(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).

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

The director also found that the beneficiary was not qualified for the proffered position because the beneficiary's education and job experience were not equivalent to a baccalaureate degree in a related specialty. On appeal, counsel states, in part, that the record contains academic evaluations that demonstrate that the beneficiary holds the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree in a related specialty. As discussed above, no evidence in the *Handbook* indicates that a baccalaureate or higher degree in a specific specialty, or its equivalent, is required for marketing manager positions. In this case, the beneficiary holds a foreign bachelor's degree in tourism services from a Venezuelan institution. The record contains three credentials evaluations

indicating that the beneficiary's foreign bachelor's degree is the U.S. equivalent of three years of university-level credit. The record also contains employment letters indicating that the beneficiary has over six years of sales-related employment experience. As such, the record indicates that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of the proffered position. The petition may not be approved, however, because the proffered position is not 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.