



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

identifying data deleted to
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy

PUBLIC COPY



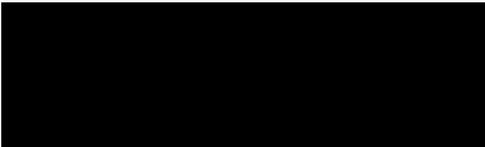
DI

FILE: WAC 04 092 51780 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date: **AUG 16 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 the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner provides freight forwarding logistical services. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a "purchase price logistics 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.

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 "purchase price logistics analyst." Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's February 10, 2004 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: compiling statistical data on international and domestic freight forwarding rates; analyzing rate costs offered by national and international freight forwarding and transportation companies; determining level of integrated services offered such as warehousing, air, land, and sea networks; assessing integration of services such as computerized inventory control tracking and tracing; analyzing most economical and efficient operators within various transportation networks; establishing price rate objectives for customers; staying informed on technological changes in transportation and their impact on costs; using spread sheets for cost analysis; assessing factors that determine costs and competition; preparing reports, graphs, and charts for management and customers; and making recommendations to the petitioner's purchasing personnel. Although not explicitly stated, it appears that the petitioner requires a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent in international business for the proffered position.

The director found that the proffered position, which is similar to a purchasing manager, buyer, and purchasing agent, was not a specialty occupation. Citing to the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)*, 2004-2005 edition, the director noted that the minimum requirement for entry into the position 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, in part, that the director misinterprets the findings in the *Handbook*, which indicate that a degree for purchasing managers, buyers, and purchasing agents is a normal industry-wide standard. Counsel states further that the proposed duties are so complex as to require a bachelor's degree.

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. Minn. 1999)(quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Sava*, 712 F. Supp. 1095, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1989)).

The AAO disagrees with the director's finding that the proffered position is that of a purchasing manager, buyer, or purchasing agent, positions that entail buying goods and services for use by their company or organization, and buying items for resale. See the *Handbook*, 2004-2005 ed. at 61. In this case, the petitioner is a freight forwarding business, and the proffered position is similar to that of a cargo and freight agent. No evidence in the *Handbook* indicates that a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, is required for a cargo and freight agent. Counsel's statement in his April 8, 2004 letter that the petitioner needs to employ a price purchase logistics analyst because the petitioner "is an expanding company" is noted. There is no documentation of record that such expansion is currently underway. Without documentary evidence to support the claim, the assertions of counsel will not satisfy the petitioner's burden of proof. The unsupported assertions of counsel do not constitute evidence. *Matter of Obaigbena*, 19 I&N Dec. 533, 534 (BIA 1988);

Matter of Laureano, 19 I&N Dec. 1 (BIA 1983); *Matter of Ramirez-Sanchez*, 17 I&N Dec. 503, 506 (BIA 1980).

The record contains an opinion from a U.S. university professor, who asserts, in part, that positions such as the proffered position require a bachelor's degree in international business with a specialization in purchasing, or an equivalent thereof. The writer, however, does not provide any evidence in support of his assertion. 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 a valid credentials evaluation demonstrating that the beneficiary holds the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree related to the proffered position. 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 cargo and freight agent positions. Most cargo and freight agents are required to have at least a high school diploma. In this case, the beneficiary holds a bachelor's degree in English language and literature conferred by a Korean institution. An evaluator from a company that specializes in evaluating academic credentials concludes, in part, that the beneficiary's foreign bachelor's degree is the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree in foreign language and English literature. As such, the petitioner has demonstrated 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.