

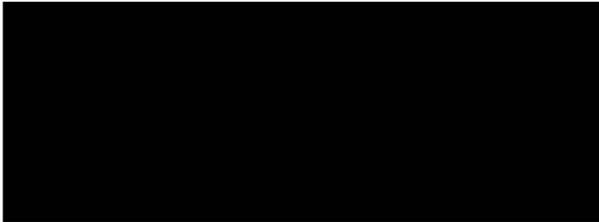
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U.S. Citizenship
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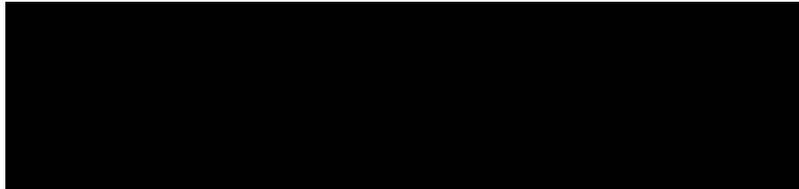
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FILE: WAC 02 234 53760 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date: MAR 21 2006

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:



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.

for *Michael T. Kelly*
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 sustained.

The petitioner sells and markets used vehicles. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a part-time accountant. 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 part-time accountant. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's June 26, 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: preparing general ledger and monthly/yearly reports; monitoring information systems; preparing entries to company accounts; detailing company assets, liabilities, and capital; advising and recommending tax strategies to management; advising on the advantages and disadvantages of business decisions and transactions; performing accounting and inventory of supplies; devising a financial system that will improve inventory procedures; preparing balance sheets, profit-and-loss statements, checks, tax remittances, and financial reports; discussing financial matters with management; modifying and coordinating the implementation of accounting and accounting control procedures; monitoring the budget, performance evaluation, and cost-and-asset management; and preparing correspondence for clients. The petitioner indicated that the beneficiary is a qualified candidate for the job because he possesses a foreign bachelor's degree in commerce with a major in banking and finance.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the job is primarily that of a bookkeeper. Citing to the Department of Labor's (DOL) *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)*, 2002-2003 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 proffered position is that of an accountant, and is not a bookkeeper or accounting clerk position. Counsel states further that the proposed duties, which entail monitoring the petitioner's finances and information systems, require specialized knowledge and training in accounting.

The AAO disagrees with the director's finding that the proffered position is not a specialty occupation and the beneficiary is not qualified to perform a specialty occupation. In this case, the proffered position is that of an accountant for the petitioning entity, which sells and markets used vehicles and has 15 employees and a gross annual income of \$12,500,880. A review of the *Handbook*, 2006-2007 edition, finds that most accountant and auditor positions require at least a bachelor's degree in accounting or a related field. The beneficiary in this case holds a foreign bachelor's degree in commerce with a major in banking and finance, and has several years of related experience. An evaluator, who is an official with 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, has determined that the beneficiary's educational background and employment experience are the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in accounting from a regionally accredited college or university in the United States. As such, the petitioner has overcome the director's objections. In view of the foregoing, it is concluded that the petitioner has demonstrated that the proffered position is a specialty occupation within the meaning of regulations and that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of the 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 sustained that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be sustained and the petition will be approved.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained. The director's order is withdrawn and the petition is approved.