

IT'S A NET LOSS IN VISA LOTTERY

Daily News (New York)

January 3, 2004, Saturday, SPORTS FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2004 Daily News, L.P.

Section: NEWS;

Length: 264 words

Byline: By LESLIE CASIMIR DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Body

Note to U.S. green card **lottery** seekers: When applying electronically, don't go down to the wire.

An avalanche of hopeful entrants crashed the **visa lottery** Web site, leaving many unable to apply before this week's deadline.

"At first we thought it was our computers, but then we heard people all over the city were having the same problem," said immigrant advocate Rufus Zumo Arkoi, who helped applicants at Staten Island's African Community Center. "It was a bit frustrating - everybody just wanted the chance."

Applicants had from Nov. 1 to 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday to apply for the U.S. Diversity **Visa Lottery**. Under the program, the State Department gives out 50,000 immigrant **visas** to people who come from countries with low rates of immigration to the U.S.

"The issue here is waiting until the last minute and that's their choice," said Kelly Shannon, a spokeswoman at the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

While prior **lotteries** took applications only by mail, this one tried to curb fraud by requiring applications to be submitted electronically.

An estimated 800,000 people were successful in submitting their electronic applications in the last three days of the **lottery**, Shannon said. Before that, more than 5.4 million people worldwide applied for the random drawing, she said.

Kim Nichols, co-executive director of the African Services Committee in Harlem, said many lessons were learned.

"The State Department should have advised the public to apply early and should also improve their server's capacity to make sure they can handle all the applicants," she said.

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: PASSPORTS & **VISAS** (90%); IMMIGRATION (90%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (77%); DIPLOMATIC SERVICES (72%)

Company: **VISA** INC (91%); **VISA** INC (91%)

IT'S A NET LOSS IN VISA LOTTERY

Ticker: V (NYSE) (91%)

Industry: LOTTERIES (90%)

Geographic: NEW YORK, NY, USA (77%); UNITED STATES (92%)

Load-Date: January 7, 2004

End of Document