



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Gina Covell

Phone: 832-338-5188, Email: gina@artisan-collection.com

Artisan Group Member Is first in Nebraska to Achieve the Coveted Marble Institute of America Accreditation

Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces in Omaha has just become Nebraska's First Stone Fabrication Shop to be Accredited Through the (MIA).

OMAHA- (March 3, 2010) — Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces (CKF) owner and Artisan Group member Sam Marchese is the first stone fabricator in Nebraska to be Marble Institute of America Accredited. Accredited Natural Stone Fabricators represent the best companies that work on residential and commercial stone projects.

“Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces is now able to proudly display the accreditation logo, which symbolizes that it is among the finest in the natural stone industry with respect to craftsmanship, safety, and business practices,” says Garen Distelhorst, the Accreditation Manager at the MIA.

“Achieving MIA Accreditation was a very important goal for Consolidated, and gives our customers the confidence and assurance that they are dealing with the very best in the industry,” says Sam Marchese, owner of CKF.

Receiving accreditation is a demanding process, but the persistence needed to achieve it represents Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces' commitment to customer satisfaction. MIA accreditation is a positive reflection on the commitment from the entire CKF team, from sales, to fabrication, to installation.”

To become an Accredited Natural Stone Fabricator by the MIA, a company must have successfully completed three phases of application. Phase one was the completion of a lengthy application that required the applicant company to provide various documents and references which ensure that the company is in compliance with the 10 standards of accreditation as laid out by the MIA Accreditation Commission. Phase two required the company's qualifying agent (the designated company representative responsible for filing and maintaining accreditation records for the applicant company) to pass a 200 question multiple-choice test. The exam tested the applicant's knowledge and application of material usage, installation, fabrication, restoration, care and maintenance, administration, legal/contracts, and jobsite and shop safety. The third phase was a comprehensive site visit, which included a facility review, document review, and one or more installation site visits.

Currently, only 39 Natural Stone Fabricators in the country have achieved accreditation, 15 of which are Artisan Group members: Blume's Solid Surface Products (Freeport, PA), Creative Countertops (Las Vegas, NV), Innovative Surfaces (Hastings, MN), NBC Solid Surfaces (Springfield, VT), Fineline Pacific (Seattle, WA) Rocky Mountain Stone (Albuquerque, NM), Solid Tops (Easton, MD), Surface Products

-more-

(Cornelius, NC), Rocksolid (Cleveland, OH), Block Tops, Inc. (Anaheim, CA), Duracite (Fairfield, CA) Top Master (Kansas City, KS) Bangor Wholesale Laminates (Bangor, ME) Consolidated Kitchens and Fireplaces (Omaha, NE) and Solid Surfaces Inc. (Rochester, NY.)

Artisan Group™

Artisan Group is the premier network of stone fabricators in North America. All Artisan Group members have achieved, or have begun the process to achieve full accreditation with the Marble Institute of America. The group is among the first granite fabricators in the world to be working towards this distinction. The Artisan Group's extensive network allows the organization to offer the world's best granite from the best sources around the globe. Utilizing the most technically advanced, automated shops in the industry, highly skilled craftsmen ensure that each and every installation meets exacting standards. From classic to exotic, it offers the most extensive array of color choices in the industry, and with short lead times and competitive pricing, Artisan Group granite countertops are closer than one might expect. For more information, visit www.artisan-collection.com.

About Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces (CKF)

Founded in 1923 as Consolidated Supply Company, the company was established as a wholesale building material distributor servicing lumber yards throughout Nebraska and Iowa. Over the years, the company has continued to grow adding new locations in Des Moines, Iowa and in Lincoln, Nebraska and is now known as the specialty dealer Consolidated Kitchens & Fireplaces. Major product lines include: cabinetry, countertops, cultured marble, fireplaces and wood flooring. CKF sells directly to dealers, builders, remodelers and consumers in the metropolitan areas of Omaha, Des Moines (Kitchens & Fireplaces), and Lincoln (Consolidated Kitchens). In all other rural markets the products are distributed through a dealer network. The company has a staff of professional designers ready to help homeowners build their dream kitchen. For additional information about CKF, please call the toll-free number at 1-800-888-2667 or email info@ckfco.com.

About the MIA

For over 60 years the Marble Institute of America has been the world's leading information resource and advocate for the natural dimension stone industry. MIA members include marble, granite, limestone, sandstone, and other natural stone producers and quarriers, fabricators, installers, distributors, and contractors around the world. The purpose of the MIA's accreditation program is to provide excellence in the natural stone industry and recognize companies demonstrating compliance with quality standards, so that the public values, has access to, and benefits from consistent, competent, and safe fabrication, installation and maintenance of natural stone.

###