

ARTISAN GROUP™ MEMBER IS FIRST FABRICATION SHOP IN KANSAS TO ACHIEVE MIA ACCREDITATION

TOP MASTER, AN ARTISAN GROUP™ MEMBER, IS THE FIRST STONE FABRICATOR IN KANSAS TO BE MARBLE INSTITUTE OF AMERICA ACCREDITED. ACCREDITED NATURAL STONE FABRICATORS REPRESENT THE BEST COMPANIES THAT WORK ON RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL STONE PROJECTS.

Top Master in Kansas City has just become Kansas' First Stone Fabrication Shop to be accredited through the MIA.

Currently, only 35 Natural Stone Fabricators in the country have achieved accreditation, 11 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), Rocky Mountain Stone (Albuquerque, NM), Solid Tops (Easton, MD), Surface Products, (Cornelius, NC), Rocksolid (Cleveland, OH), Block Tops, Inc. (Anaheim, CA, also an accredited shop), Duracite in Fairfield, CA and Top Master in Kansas City, KS.

"Top Master 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. "Successful companies like Top Master must gain the trust of their customers and potential customers," says Mike Kaufmann, President of Top Master. "Achieving accreditation from the MIA helps us display the professionalism and integrity we promise to our customers to gain their trust. We are proud of this achievement because it is a reflection of the pride and dedication our employees have as a premier countertop fabricator and member of the Artisan Group™."

Top Master has been meeting the needs of homebuilders, remodelers, K&B dealers, and home centers for more than 25 years. Top Master specializes in natural stone, engineered stone, solid surface and wood countertops for both the residential and commercial markets. 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, along with 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.

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, Artisan Group™ shops offer 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 Top Master

Top Master was founded in 1984 as a Corian® fabricator with a shop in Merriam, Kansas. It has since moved to Kansas City and also opened an operation in Wichita, Kansas. Top Master has expanded its product line to include natural stone, engineered stone, wood and all major brands of solid surface countertops. They provide countertops to a range of customers from the individual home owner to large commercial construction companies and national home supply retailers.

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.