

Archie Kalepa
DHHL Commissioner

PROFILE

A renowned ocean safety expert and dedicated advocate for Hawaiian culture, with over 30 years of experience in rescue operations, cultural preservation, and team leadership. Proven ability to develop and implement life-saving techniques, inspire future generations, and promote community self-sufficiency. Deeply committed to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands mission and eager to leverage skills and experiences to support the development of healthy, thriving communities for native Hawaiians.

EXPERIENCE

Lifeguard, County of Maui — 2012-1983

- United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) certification
- Certified in American Heart Association (AHA) CPR for Health Care
- Provider and Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)
- Skilled in rescue techniques using rescue boards, tubes and fins, jet skis, four-wheel drive ATVs, and first aid supplies.

EDUCATION

Lahainaluna High School, Class of 1982

SKILLS

- Self-sufficient: Proven ability to develop innovative solutions and lead teams to achieve shared goals, supporting the development of self-reliant communities
- Dedicated to preserving and promoting Hawaiian culture, aligning with DHHL's mission to support the well-being of native Hawaiians
- Community Development: Committed to building healthy communities through education, mentorship, and the promotion of cultural heritage
- Partnership: Willing to partner with others to achieve DHHL's mission and support the development of thriving communities



- **Innovative Problem-Solving:** Pioneered using jet skis and water sleds in rescue operations, significantly enhancing response times and saving lives. First, cross the Molokai Channel via stand-up paddleboard, demonstrating endurance and innovation.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Participated in and led voyages aboard the Hokule'a and Hawai'iloa, preserving and promoting the ancient Hawaiian art of wayfinding. Played a vital role in the successful Hokule'a Worldwide Voyage, reaching 23 countries and 150 ports.
- **Leadership and Mentoring:** Served as Head of Maui Ocean Rescue and Safety, training and leading teams to excellence. Mentored crew members and lifeguards nationwide, inspiring a new generation of watermen and women.

AWARDS

- 2012, Duke Kahanamoku Waterman Hall of Fame
- Quiksilver Eddie Aikau Waterman of the Year Award
- 2024, Navy Seals Fire in the Gut Award Recipient