



Rick Nathanson: Sensei Nathanson is a Hachidan, 8th Degree Black Belt in Shorin Ryu karate and has been a certified chief instructor in the Jim Hawkes Karate organization since 1982. He also holds a Shodan in Okinawa Kenpo Kobudo.

Mr. Nathanson grew up in Chicago, Ill. He became interested in karate in 1968. The following year he began to study Goju Ryu karate under Senseis Gerald Gillman and Edward Guarderas of the Chicago Midwest Karate Association. Some 10 years later he was awarded his Shodan black belt. About the same time, Mr. Nathanson took a job as a reporter and staff writer at the Albuquerque Journal. He sought out Sensei James Hawkes, who's name and reputation he'd been familiar with since his introduction to Black Belt magazine. Sensei Hawkes agreed to accept Mr. Nathanson as a student, beginning a teacher-student relationship and friendship that lasted 33 years until Sensei Hawkes' death in 2012.

All of Mr. Nathanson's subsequent black belt promotions after Shodan were awarded by Sensei Hawkes, including his current rank, which was conferred in July 2010.

During the 1980s and into the early 1990s, Mr. Nathanson was a regular tournament competitor and was periodically ranked nationally in kumite, kata and kobudo.

Mr. Nathanson was inducted into the Seki Ryu Kai society in June 1983, presented the Bushido Award in 1997, the Samurai Sword for Outstanding Contributions to the Martial Arts in 2001, and the Bunbu-Ryodo "Pen and Sword" Award in December 2015.

Mr. Nathanson is a member of the U. S. Association of Martial Artists, under which he is a certified tournament judge. He also has membership in the International Karate Koboudo Federation and the United States Karate Alliance.

As a professional writer, Mr. Nathanson has authored martial arts-related articles that have been published in the Albuquerque Journal, as well as a number of magazines and newsletters, including Action Martial Arts, Official Karate, Bushido Bulletin and the Samurai Sentinel.

After receiving his undergraduate degree, he joined the United States Peace Corps, where he served from 1976-1978 as a reporter and editor for the government operated newspaper in the Tonga Islands, South Pacific. He also taught karate to the native Tongan islanders.

Mr. Nathanson continues to work as a staff writer for the Albuquerque Journal, the largest daily newspaper in New Mexico. He lives in Rio Rancho, where he raised his two daughters, Lauren and Dinah.