

## BIOGRAPHY

**Mark Tewksbury** first came to prominence as an Olympic swimming gold medalist, but it's his remarkable life post-Olympics that has come to truly define him.

The *Toronto Star* said, "Only the greatest fight for what they believe in, taking on people and institutions and closed minds because the battle is important. Few have done that more often, more successfully, and more importantly than Tewksbury."

In 1998 Tewksbury made front-page news when he came out as one of the first openly gay Olympic champions in the world. Since that time, Mark has used his voice and ever-evolving leadership positions within the Olympic movement and beyond to make a difference for others.

Mark's sport leadership career began in 1996 on the International Olympic Committee's Site Selection Commission for the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad. Making front-page news again, Mark stepped down from all of his Olympics posts in February 1999 and co-founded OATH, an organization created to hold the IOC accountable to its own ideals.

Tewksbury redefined the role of Chef de mission for the Canadian Team competing in London 2012, and was nominated as Best Sport Analyst for the 2017 Canadian Screen Awards for his coverage of the Rio 2016 Olympics. Mark ran for election in 2017 and currently sits as a Director of the Canadian Olympic Committee, where he continues to fight for inclusive, fair and principled sport.

Mark has been involved with the global LGBTQ+ movement since coming out over 20 years ago. He was invited by the government of France to be part of history as the first Declaration to decriminalize homosexuality was introduced at the United Nations in 2008. Tewksbury as one of the three pioneers featured at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights 2015 exhibit, recognizing the enormous impact Mark has had by his example. In 2019 Mark was awarded a Muhammad Ali Humanitarian Award for his work in gender inclusion and sexual diversity.

Since 2009 Mark been on the Board of Directors of Special Olympics Canada. During his term, he has founded the Champions Network, a group of celebrities 50+ strong that use their profile to highlight the sport accomplishments of people with an intellectual disability. He also Chaired the Board 2017 - 2019. Mark's ongoing fight for justice, fair play and equal rights is what defines him, a unique Olympic icon whose reach goes far beyond sport.

For his athletic achievements, ethical leadership, and contributions to society, Tewksbury has received five honorary degrees, the Queen's Jubilee Silver Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada.