

Mark Tewksbury C.C., M.S.M., OLY

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."

Mark's sport leadership career began in 1996 on the International Olympic Committee's Site Selection Commission for the XXVIII Olympic Games. Making front-page news, Mark stepped down from his Olympics posts in February 1999 in response to the ethical crisis facing the IOC. He co-founded OATH, an organization created to hold the IOC accountable to its own ideals. Mark returned to the Olympic Movement as chef de mission for Team Canada in London 2012, and, in 2017 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 LGBTQI2S movement since coming out over 20 years ago as one of the first openly gay Olympic champions in the world. 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 in a 2015 Canadian Museum for Human Rights exhibit, recognizing the enormous impact Mark has had.

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. 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 contribution to society, Tewksbury has received five honorary degrees, the Queen's Jubilee Silver Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada, a Muhammad Ali Humanitarian Award for Gender Equality, and most recently, Mark was appointed Companion of the Order of Canada, the nation's highest civilian honor. At any given time, there is a limit of 165 Canadians that carry this distinction and honour.