

ADAM RIPPON

b. November 11, 1989

OLYMPIC FIGURE SKATER

“I thought of everything I had been through as a young kid to get to that moment, and to feel confident, and to feel that I really liked who I was.”

Adam Rippon is an Olympic figure skater and an advocate for LGBT rights. In 2018 he became the first openly gay American athlete to win a medal at the Winter Olympics. At 28 he also became the oldest first-time Olympic skater to compete for the U.S. in more than 80 years.

He is the first openly gay American athlete to win a medal at the Winter Olympics.

Rippon was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, the eldest of six children. He started skating at age 10. The renowned coach Yelena Sergeeva trained him for seven years, beginning when he was 11.

At the 2005 U.S. Championships, 16-year-old Rippon won the silver medal at the Novice level. He went on to win the 2007-08 ISU Junior Grand Prix Final, the 2008 and 2009 World Junior Championships and the 2016 U.S. Championships.

Rippon came out publicly in the October 2015 issue of Skating Magazine. He was one of three male figure skaters selected to represent the United States at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

A month before the games, Rippon received a flurry of media attention for denouncing Vice President Mike Pence for his anti-LGBT positions. Rippon publicly opposed the selection of the vice president to lead the U.S. delegation to South Korea. He declined to join his American teammates in meeting Mr. Pence before the opening ceremonies.

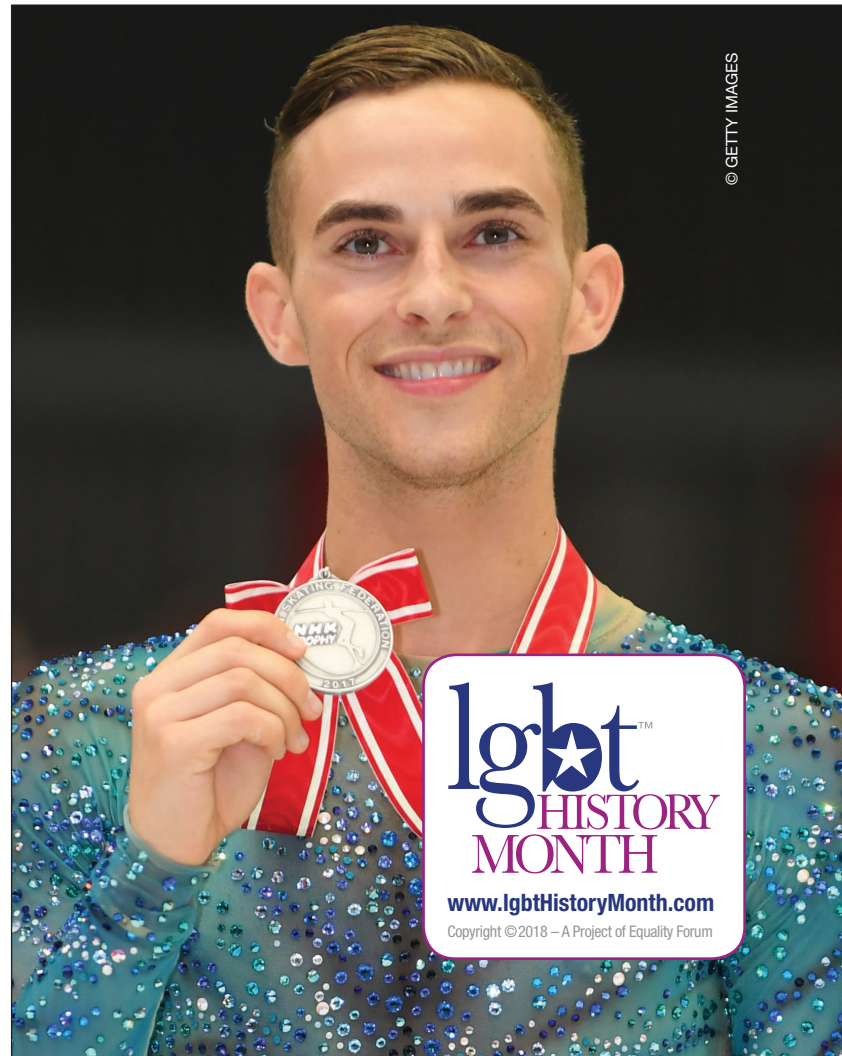
In Pyeongchang, Rippon became a crowd favorite. He used Instagram and Twitter to connect with fans and demonstrate his playful, biting wit. His impeccable performance helped the United States capture the bronze in the men's figure skating team event.

Rippon emerged from the Winter Olympics a celebrity. TIME magazine named him to its list of 100 Most Influential People in 2018. Cher contributed to the TIME feature on Rippon. She wrote, “Adam is a skater who happens to be gay, and that represents something wonderful to young people.”

Rippon's Olympic achievements and LGBT advocacy have earned him interviews with numerous media outlets, including Out Magazine, The New York Times, “The Ellen DeGeneres Show” and “NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt.”

In May 2018 Rippon competed in the 26th season of ABC's “Dancing with the Stars.” He became the first openly gay man to win.

Rippon performs in the “Stars on Ice” tour. He lives with his boyfriend, Jussi-Pekka Kajaala.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2018 – A Project of Equality Forum