

# GEORGE TAKEI

b. April 20, 1937

## ACTOR

**In 1966, he landed the role of Mr. Sulu, helmsman of the Starship Enterprise, on the television series “Star Trek.”**

*“Diversity is one of the strengths of our society.”*

George Takei is an actor best known for his role as Mr. Sulu on “Star Trek.” He is an outspoken advocate for LGBT equality.

Born in Los Angeles to second-generation Japanese-American parents, Takei’s life changed at the start of World War II. From age 4 to 8, he was held with his family in Japanese-American internment camps. Although he did not understand the reasons, Takei recalls feeling like an outsider from early in life.

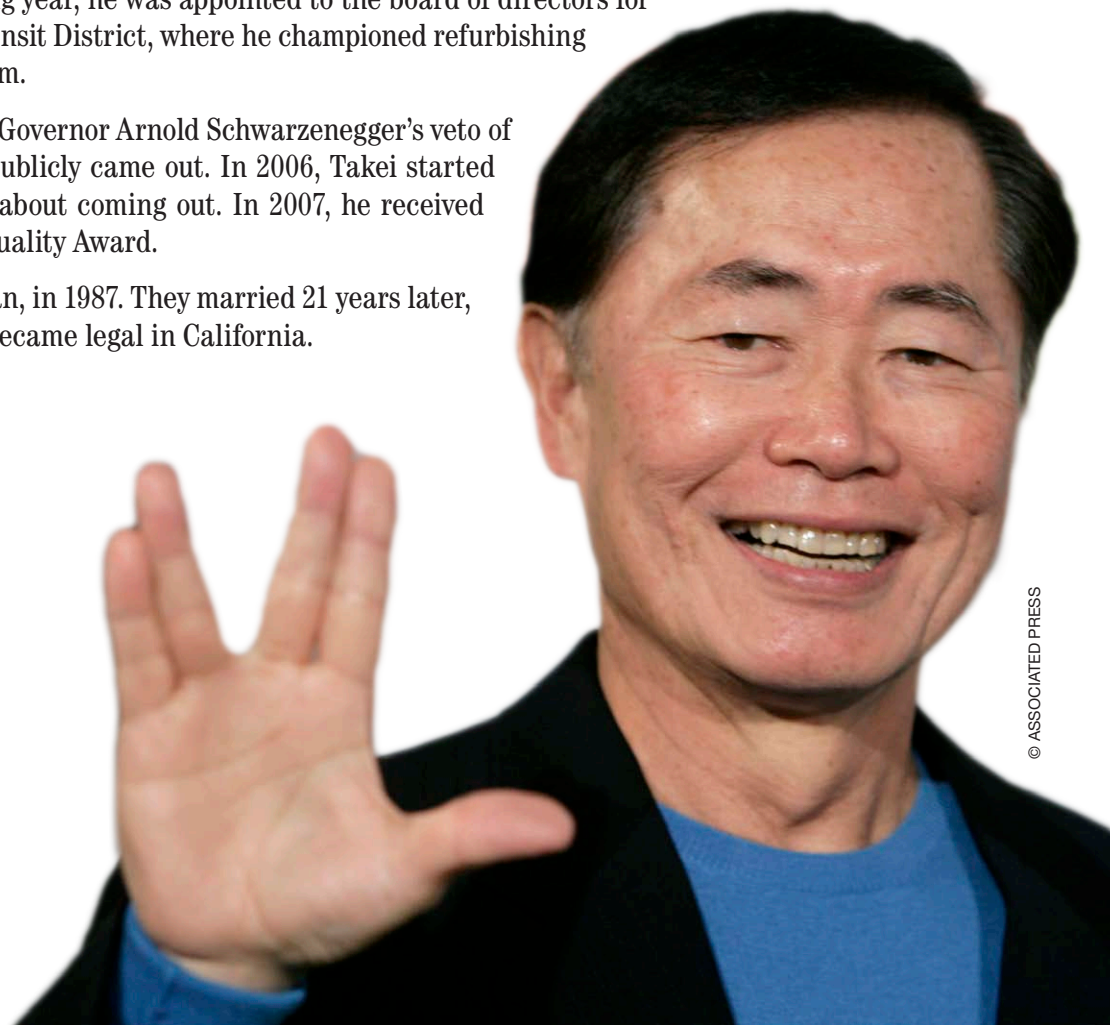
Takei attended the University of California, Berkeley to study architecture. After two years, he transferred to UCLA to pursue his passion for theater. After graduating, he studied at the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-Upon-Avon. Takei returned to California where he earned a master’s degree in theater from his alma mater.

In 1966, he landed the role of Mr. Sulu, helmsman of the Starship Enterprise, on the television series “Star Trek.” He was encouraged by the show’s commitment to diversity, which was a first for a major television series. Producer Gene Roddenberry urged the cast to think of the Starship Enterprise as “a metaphor for the Starship Earth.” Takei continued his role on the television show for three seasons and in subsequent “Star Trek” films.

Takei became involved in local and state politics. In 1972, he served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. The following year, he was appointed to the board of directors for the Southern California Rapid Transit District, where he championed refurbishing the Los Angeles Metro Rails system.

In 1995, in response to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger’s veto of a same-sex marriage bill, Takei publicly came out. In 2006, Takei started “Equality Trek,” a speaking tour about coming out. In 2007, he received the Human Rights Campaign’s Equality Award.

Takei met his partner, Brad Altman, in 1987. They married 21 years later, shortly after same-sex marriage became legal in California.



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