



CAPITOL CITY SPEAKERS BUREAU

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Dara Torres

Travels from: Florida

Fee Range: More than \$40,000

Dara Torres is arguably the fastest female swimmer in America. Since her first international swimming competition at age 14, Dara has proven that she is far from your average athlete. She is the first American swimmer to compete in five Olympic Games and has won a total of 12 Olympic medals in her career. In 2008, Dara captured the hearts and minds of people of all ages when she launched her comeback as a new mother at the age of 41 - eight years since her last Olympics when she retired from competitive swimming.

Torres grew up in Los Angeles the fifth of six children and the older of two girls. At age seven, Torres started following her brothers to swim practice at the local YMCA and later joined the Culver City swim team. Dara attended the Westlake School for Girls (now Harvard-Westlake School), and swam under coach Darlene Bible, where she set California Interscholastic Federation records that remain to this day. As a teenager in the 1980s, she swam for the Mission Viejo Nadadores, in Mission Viejo, under Mark Shubert, the 2008 Olympic swimming coach. During her junior year in high school, Torres moved to Mission Viejo, California to train for the 1984 Olympics. She started attending the University of Florida in 1985. At Florida, Dara earned 28 NCAA all-American swimming awards, the maximum number possible during a college career.

Torres was one of the 2000 Olympic swimmers featured in the book *Gold in the Water*, by P.H. Mullen. It describes Torres' comeback for the 2000 Olympics under coaches Richard Quick and Dick Jochums. She broke the World Record in the Women's 50-meter Freestyle race three times during the early 1980s.

On August 1, 2007, at the age of 40 (just 15 months after giving birth to her first child), she won gold in the 100 meter freestyle at the US Nationals in Indianapolis, her 14th win at these events. Three days later, she twice broke her own American record in the 50 meter freestyle, 26 years after she first set the American record as a 15-year-old.

At age 41, Dara Torres returned to the pool to obtain a spot in her fifth Olympic Games, unprecedented for an American female swimmer, especially given the fact that she sat out the 1996 and 2004 Games. On July 5, she qualified for the finals when she broke the American record in the 50 meter freestyle. The next day, in the finals, she broke that record for the 9th time, setting it at 24.25 seconds and winning the top American women's spot in the 50 meter freestyle.

At the Beijing Games in 2008, Dara became the oldest swimmer to compete in the Olympics. When she took three silver medals - including the infamous heartbreaking 50-meter freestyle race where she missed the Gold by 1/100th of a second - America loved her all the more for her astonishing achievement and her good-natured acceptance of the results.



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Dara Torres continued

Outside of swimming, Dara has had great success as a TV commentator and a print model. She was a feature correspondent for Good Morning America and worked on-air for ESPN, TNT and Fox News Channel, including stints on NHL Cool Shots and Fox Sports Sunday. The first female athlete to grace the *Sports Illustrated* Swimsuit Issue, Dara Torres has also appeared as a commentator on such networks as Fox News, ESPN and the Discovery Channel. Her memoir, *Age is Just a Number: Achieve Your Dreams At Any Stage in Your Life*, was published in April 2009 and was listed as one of the top 25 best-selling business books in the month of June. Her second book, *Gold Medal Fitness: A Revolutionary 5-week Program* was released in May 2010.

In 2009, Dara was named one of the Top Female Athletes of the decade by *Sports Illustrated* magazine. She also won the Best Comeback award at the 17th Annual ESPY Awards. Dara underwent knee surgery and rehabilitation in late 2009, and the CBS Early show did a special on this in December 2009. Currently, she is working on her second fitness book to be released in summer 2010.

Olympian, author, mother and role model, Dara Torres is many things to many people, but above all, she is an inspiration.

Most Requested Programs...

- Never Give Up Your Dream
- You're NOT Too Old to Chase Your Dream
- The Olympic Experience
- Women's Empowerment

