

## **Biography of Dominique Dawes**

To her coach, teammates and fans, she is "Awesome Dawesome." Gymnast. Dominique Dawes has the Olympic, world and national medals that make the nickname genuine.

She burst into international prominence with a team bronze at the 1992 Olympics. Over the following decade she won more national gymnastics medals than any other athlete, male or female, and four World Championship medals.

She was part of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics gymnastics team that won the gold medal and captured the hearts of America. At the same Olympics, Dawes became the first African-American to win an individual medal, taking bronze in floor exercises.

In 1994 at the U.S. National Championships she became the first woman in 25 years to turn every event into gold, winning the all-around championship and all four individual events.

Following her Olympics successes, Dawes appeared on a Wheaties cereal box, in the Broadway production of the musical "Grease" and on a Disney television show, "The Jersey." Dawes was a gymnastics analyst for TNT television coverage of the 2001 Goodwill Games in Australia. She will graduate from the University of Maryland with a degree in Communications in May of 2002.

And now Dawes is reaching out to America again as spokeswoman for Choose To Move, the American Heart Association's free physical activity program for women.

The role is a natural fit for Dawes. "Being more physically active helps me stay fit and gets me energized so I can do everything I need to do," she says. "Plus, I've learned the importance of regular exercise to keep my heart healthy."

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