

Mark Herzlich Bio

Mark Herzlich, Director of Team Freedom at IJM, the largest anti-human trafficking NGO in the world, is a prominent figure in the sports industry. Currently serving as a studio analyst and color commentator for ESPN's college football ACC Network, Herzlich's journey is one of remarkable achievements and unwavering resilience.

Hailing from Conestoga High School in Tredyffrin Township, PA, Herzlich's prowess on the football field earned him recognition early on. Recruited by Boston College in 2006, he made an immediate impact, garnering honorable mention on the College Football News Freshman All-America team after participating in 13 games. As his college career progressed, Herzlich's skill and dedication were acknowledged through multiple accolades, including First-team All-American titles from Rivals.com and Scouts.com, third-team All-American recognition from the Associated Press, and the distinguished honor of being named ACC Defensive Player of the Year. Additionally, he received notable acknowledgments such as being named ACC Player of the Week on three occasions, reaching the quarterfinals for the Lott Trophy, and becoming a finalist for the prestigious Butkus Award, bestowed upon the nation's top linebacker.

Tragically, Herzlich's aspirations were momentarily halted when he was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare form of bone cancer, in 2009. Despite the adversity, he courageously battled the disease, undergoing intensive chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery. In a momentous announcement on ESPN's College Gameday in September 2009, Herzlich declared himself cancer-free, becoming a source of inspiration for countless individuals.

Undeterred by his past challenges, Herzlich made a triumphant return to the field in 2010, rejoining his teammates and starting all 13 games. His extraordinary comeback earned him accolades such as the Rudy Award and the ACC's Brian Piccolo Award, along with the Disney Spirit Award, the ESPY for Best Comeback Athlete of the Year, an honorary Lott Trophy, and the ACC Commissioner's Cup. In 2010, he also achieved academic success, graduating with a bachelor's degree in marketing and a master's degree in administration.

Continuing his journey in professional football, Herzlich signed with the New York Giants as a rookie free agent in July 2011. Over the course of his seven-year tenure with the Giants, he solidified his presence on and off the field. Herzlich was recognized as a finalist for the esteemed Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year award, won the United Way Gridiron Community Champion Award, and received the Ed Block Courage Award. Additionally, he assumed influential roles within the NFLPA, serving as an elected member of the executive committee and later becoming the union's Treasurer.

Beyond his athletic achievements, Herzlich has actively engaged in philanthropy and advocacy. He serves on the board of advisors for Coach Tom Coughlin's Jay Fund, which raises funds for families of children battling pediatric cancer. He is also a board member of A Call to Men, an organization dedicated to promoting healthy and respectful manhood while combatting attitudes and behaviors that marginalize women, girls, and other vulnerable groups. In addition,

he holds positions on the Executive Committee and as Treasurer for The Joyful Heart Foundation, an organization committed to transforming society's response to sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse, and supporting survivors on their path to healing.

Furthermore, Herzlich is an elected member of the NFLPA executive committee and subsequently elected as Treasurer of the union. He continues to motivate audiences across the county with his story of overcoming illness and perseverance. Today, as the Director of Team Freedom at IJM, the world's largest anti-human trafficking NGO, Mark Herzlich champions the cause of justice and dedicates his efforts to eradicating the scourge of human trafficking. His multifaceted journey, marked by athletic prowess, triumph over adversity, and unwavering commitment to philanthropy, serves as an enduring source of inspiration for individuals across the globe.