

# ***Tom Gallagher, Diplomat Who Became a Gay Activist, Dies at 77***

By **Neil Genzlinger**

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Tom Gallagher used to say that during his long career as a Foreign Service officer, he worked in countries where he might have been imprisoned or worse if officials learned he was gay. For much of that time his home country wasn't welcoming either; he had to keep his sexual orientation hidden to stay on the job.

After coming out — he is widely recognized as the first Foreign Service officer to do so publicly — Mr. Gallagher left the service in 1976. But he lived to see and benefit from a transformation that not only allowed him to resume his government career, but also saw him celebrated in State Department publications and singled out by Hillary Rodham Clinton, then secretary of state, at a 2012 event.

The occasion was the 20th anniversary of Glifaa, an organization for L.G.B.T. State Department employees. Mrs. Clinton cited Mr. Gallagher as a pioneer.

“I don't want any of you who are a lot younger ever to take for granted what it took for people like Tom Gallagher to pave the way for all of you,” she said.

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