

Gay Rights Stance Pushes Dartmouth to Un-Hire Anglican Bishop

Dartmouth College has rescinded the appointment of Bishop James Tengatenga of Malawi as dean of a foundation at the Ivy League school in New Hampshire over his past comments about **homosexuality**.

Reached by e-mail on Thursday, Tengatenga said he was “disappointed” by the decision.

Dartmouth President Philip Hanlon said the school revoked the appointment because “the controversy (Tengatenga’s comments) created have compromised his ability to serve effectively.”

Tengatenga had been named as dean of the school’s William Jewett Tucker Foundation, which seeks to educate Dartmouth students “for lives of purpose and ethical leadership, rooted in service, spirituality and **social justice**,” according to the college’s website.

The appointment drew criticism after it was announced last month because of Tengatenga’s leadership of an Anglican church in Africa that opposed **gay rights**. He served as diocesan bishop of Southern Malawi and chair of the Worldwide Anglican Communion’s Anglican Consultative Council, a network of 44 churches.

“The issue is that he has championed the church’s official position against **homosexuality**,” Dartmouth junior Andrew Longhi wrote in a blog post on *The Huffington Post* website. “The tendency to discriminate against (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people is so diametrically opposed to how I understand faith and religion that selecting a ‘social conservative’ to this post baffles me.”

Tengatenga said in a statement following the appointment, but before his hiring was blocked, that his views on homosexuality had changed.

“Let me state unequivocally and categorically that I consider all people equal regardless of their sexual orientation,” he wrote. “As is the case with many people, my ideas about homosexuality have evolved over time.”

On Thursday, he reacted to Dartmouth’s decision.

“I am disappointed,” he said by e-mail. “It’s a sad for the liberalism they claim. It is what it is. Life goes on.”

He noted changing attitudes toward **gay rights**, particularly in the United States after the consecration of Gene Robinson as the first openly gay Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire in 2003.

Hanlon, the Dartmouth president, said the move came after much reflection and consultation with senior leaders at the college and “in light of concerns, specifically surrounding **gay rights**, expressed by members of our community.”

The college’s support of gay rights, he said, was “complete and unwavering.”

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