Aloha Mai kakou,

My name is Kialoa Mossman, a student at the University of Hawaii at manoa majoring in Anthropology and Geography and I firmly oppose the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) on the sacred Mauna a Wakea. I oppose the development and construction for cultural reasons, for political reasons as well as sustainability reasons.

First off I would put into question the cultural advisors put in charge of the construction of TMT. It may be speculation but I believe that the cultural advisors put in charge of such matter are not the archaeologist or cultural advisors that are well versed and well respected in the Hawaiian community; but instead they are the ones who work for ʻImiloa. Although I respect the knowledge that they have, the work that would be desicrating our mauna would be a conflict of interest for them as they have a financial obligation to make sure that TMT is built. Mauna a Wakea or Maunakea is truly as sacred as Mount Fuji is to the Japanese, or Mount St. Helen to the native Americans and is as important as Mt. Rushmore is to the citizens of America. I understand that the building site “has no archaeological shrines or features...and no burials” (Maunakeaandtmt.org) but the entire mountain is an archaeological shrine, the entire mountain is an archaeological feature and the montain is littered with the ʻiwi (bones) of our kupuna (ancestors), so to say that there isnʻt anything there is in opinion ignorant. If they do their research they will see that our culture believes in the different Wao (areas). The TMT is being built in the most sacred wao and that is the Wao Akua. According to our traditions, nothing was to be built up there, this was the land of our gods, our ancestors and as the University of Hawaii, whose mission is to promote a “Hawaiian place of learning” and to “prioritize environmental, cultural and economic sustaibability” you, the Board of Regents should know this (UH Manoa 2011-2015 Strategic Plan).

With this being said I appreciate what TMT is doing and what they want to bring to the world. My people is not against science and the expansion of knowledge, in fact quite the opposite, we welcome it. If one looks back at the history of our people, they will see how far ahead of our time we were. But do to the historic events that lead to the illigal annexation of Hawaii and it’s ungodly development, the cutting off of our water supply in Maui, the military occupation of Makua valley, Pohakuloa, Mokapu, and Kahoolawe, and the building of 17 telescopes, 9 of which are not in use, and now the building of another one was the straw that broke the camels back. No more shall Hawaiians just sit quietly in the corner as they watch every inch of this land taken from them, this land which is rightfully theirs. The protest will not stop and they will die down, we are Hawaiians and we are here to stay, we will not be forgotten. No more will we let other governments from all over the world tell us what to do. This is our ʻaina, let us be the stewards.
As stewards of this ʻaina we do deeply care about sustainability, with our water, our plant and animal life, even the job sustainability for our Kanaka (people). A huge argument is made that TMT offers Hawaiians jobs, but for how long. How long will my cousins work in the construction of this telescope just to be tossed aside as soon as the building is finished. An overall 12 year process, 5-7 of which will be construction but Iʻve seen this act before. Our Kanaka will build things for you and you will toss them on the side as soon as they are not needed. Those who will work up in the new observatory will be people from out of state from either the continental U.S. or other countries leaving our people in a place worse off before with no job and now no land as well. As for our water aquifers, the USGS website stated that Maunakea has two water sheds unlike what TMT manager Sandra Dawson said saying there is no evidence of a watershed on Maunakea. Not even the USGS knows how the watershed works so how can TMT say with conviction that they will not effect the watershed at all? Nothing about digging more than two stories under ground and putting septic tank up on the mountain says environmentally friendly. Not only that but to build on conservation lands, lands that we cant even travel up to or hike will be demolished in order to pave way for this telescope. So from a sustainability aspect and a environmental science perspective, this TMT is not in the best interest of this ʻaina or its people.

Like I have stated in the previous paragraphs, I am not against TMT but I do oppose its construction on Mauna a Wakea, the piko of our sky father and I oppose the universities handling of such situation. If you truly do care about being a hawaiian place of learning and being mindful of our environment and the sustainability of our ʻaina, you will oppose this building as well for the hawaiian people now and for the Hawaiian people of the next generation.

Kialoa Mossman