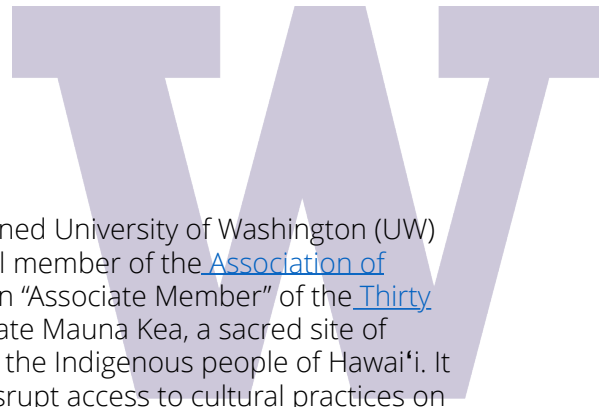


July 24, 2019



Dear President Cauce:

We hope this letter finds you well. We are writing to you as concerned University of Washington (UW) faculty. It has come to our attention that the UW is an institutional member of the [Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy](#) (AURA), which is listed as an “Associate Member” of the [Thirty Meter Telescope](#) (TMT) project. This 18-story telescope will desecrate Mauna Kea, a sacred site of major cultural significance to the Kanaka Māoli (Native Hawaiians), the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i. It will also disturb significant and delicate ecological systems, and disrupt access to cultural practices on the mountain. Over the course of many decades, environmental and cultural impact statements relating to the area, and to smaller proposed developments on Mauna Kea, have warned of substantial adverse impacts on cultural, environmental and other resources. Finally, there are already thirteen working telescopes on the summit of Mauna Kea. We ask, why add another telescope spanning almost one and a half acres to this sacred landscape? From the TMT’s own feasibility studies, there is an equally scientifically viable site in the Canary Islands in Spain, which welcomes the TMT. There is no ongoing cultural, environmental or national opposition to the TMT in Spain as has accompanied the project in Hawai‘i since its inception.

Any institutional affiliation with AURA, including Associate Member, means that we are complicit in supporting a project that will desecrate sacred sites, disturb and threaten ecological systems, and undermine Indigenous sovereignty. We urge you 1) to critically investigate the ways the UW is involved in this project, either through AURA or other scientific endeavors; 2) to condemn and ask to stop increased military and law enforcement action against peaceful and lawful cultural mobilization to honor (not protest on) the mountain; 3) to reach out to other presidents and administrative leaders of institutions that are members of AURA to urge them to stand in solidarity with protectors who support the preservation of Mauna Kea from the TMT; and 4) to write a public letter of support of protectors of Mauna Kea.

For too long, Indigenous peoples and other minoritized groups have been asked to bear the burden of land acquisition, economic development and research primarily to benefit corporate and governmental interests, not for the preservation and honoring of Indigenous culture and space. The TMT project is currently moving forward without the free, prior and informed consent of and appropriate consultation with the Indigenous people of Hawaii, a violation of Articles 19 and 28 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, the project is currently resulting in the criminalization, including arrests of ki‘i, including kupuna (elders) protectors who have been peacefully staged at the entrance to the mountain for the past ten days. As Native Hawaiian elder and protector [Walter Ritte stated to a reporter last week](#) as he blocked the access road, “We’re losing all of the things that we’re responsible for as Hawaiians... We’re responsible for our oceans. We’re responsible for our land. We’re responsible for our future generations. “We support the efforts of Native Hawaiians in expressing their opposition to the construction of TMT and are concerned about our University’s involvement with the telescope.

One of the many things we value about the University of Washington is this institution’s ongoing commitment to being in positive, respectful, reciprocal relationship with the Native people of Washington State. These commitments are represented in many ways, including the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding between the UW and Washington Tribes, and the annual Tribal Leadership Summit, during which Tribes come together with leadership, faculty, and students from the UW to work to collaboratively serve Native communities here on their lands. Another example of this commitment is of course the beautiful [wəˈtəbʔaltxʷ](#) – Intellectual House, which is so central to much Native and Indigenous work on campus. The Tribal Leadership Summit, as well as your annual Presidential Address took place at [wəˈtəbʔaltxʷ](#) this year. Your meaningful acknowledgment of the lands and peoples that began your address this year further speaks to how the UW works to be in ongoing partnerships with Native and Indigenous communities. Our responsibility to uphold such good relationships with Indigenous communities extends of course beyond Washington state and to wherever our faculty and students engage in work. This is stated clearly in your important [Race & Equity Initiative](#): “In order to support and sustain diversity and equity at the UW, as well as in the local,

good relationships with Indigenous communities extends of course beyond Washington state and to wherever our faculty and students engage in work. This is stated clearly in your important [Race & Equity Initiative](#): "In order to support and sustain diversity and equity at the UW, as well as in the local, regional and global communities we serve, we must directly confront bias and racism at the individual, institutional and systemic levels."

We would like to offer letters that have informed and motivated our own: An [open letter](#) from hundreds of concerned astronomers opposing the criminalization of Kanaka Māoli and demanding continued consultation about alternative sites before the TMT project proceeds on Mauna Kea; a [letter](#) from Unangax scholar Eve Tuck, a professor at the University of Toronto, which is a member of The Association of Canadian Universities for Research in Astronomy (ACURA), also involved in the TMT project; a [letter](#) from members of UC Berkeley's Indigenous Americas Working Group (UC Berkeley is a member of the TMT Project); a [letter](#) opposing the project from the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i (ASUH).

We appreciate your leadership on issues of justice, equity, and Indigenous sovereignty. We ask that you respond to this letter informing us what actions, if any, have already been taken and how the UW will move forward in relation to AURA and the TMT project. Please note that we will share this letter with others as a means of raising awareness at other institutions supporting TMT.

Regards,

(Names Listed in Alphabetical Order)

Wayne Au, School of Educational Studies (Bothell)
Filiberto Barajas-López, College of Education
Barbara Baquero, Health Services, Public Health
Anis Bawarshi, Department of English
Miranda Belarde-Lewis, The Information School
Maggie Beneke, College of Education
Anne Beitlers, College of Education
Clara Berridge, School of Social Work
Erika Blacksher, Department of Bioethics & Humanities
Rick Bonus, American Ethnic Studies
Katie Bunn-Marcuse, Burke Museum and Art History
Wylie Burke, Department of Bioethics & Humanities
Ariana Cantu, School of Social Work
Jondou Chen, College of Education
Seema Clifasefi, PBSCI
Anthony B. Craig, College of Education
Charlotte Cote, American Indian Studies
Joana Cunha-Cruz, School of Dentistry
Jean Dennison, American Indian Studies
Bonnie Duran, School of Social Work
Emma Elliott-Groves, College of Education,
Tessa Evans-Campbell, School of Social Work, Indigenous Wellness Research Institute
Molly Fuentes, Rehabilitation Medicine
Malia Fullerton, Bioethics & Humanities, School of Medicine
Anjolie Ganti, School of Public Health
María Elana García, Comparative History of Ideas
Victoria Gardner, School of Public Health
Nanibaa' Garrison, Department of Pediatrics
Sara Gonzalez, Department of Anthropology
Sandy Grande, Banks Center
P. Joshua Griffin, AIS and School of Marine and Environmental Affairs
Juan Guerra, Departments of English & American Ethnic Studies
William Hartmann, School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences (Bothell)
Zynovia Hetherington, School of Social Work
Joon-Ho Yu, Department of Pediatrics
Ann M. Ishimaru, College of Education
Bettina Judd, Department of Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Valli Kalei Kanuha, School of Social Work
Elham Kazemi, College of Education

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Clarita Lefthand-Begay, The Information School
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José Antonio Lucero, Jackson School of International Studies
Jane Macy, School of Social Work
Jennifer Maglalang, School of Social Work
Maureen Marcenko, School of Social Work
Dian Million, American Indian Studies
Robin Zape-tah-hol-ah Minthorn, Educational Leadership
Suhanthie Motha, Department of English
Myra Parker, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Django Paris, College of Education
Rae Paris, Department of English
Devon Peña, American Ethnic Studies
Chandan Reddy, CHID/GWSS
Josh Reid, American Indian Studies & History
Ileana M. Rodriguez-Silva, Department of History
Jennifer Romich, School of Social Work
Margaret Spearmon, School of Social Work
Michael Spencer, School of Social Work & Indigenous Wellness Research Institute
Niral Shah, College of Education
Sarah Shear, Social Studies and Multicultural Education
Mira Shimabukuro, School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences (Bothell)
Helene Starks, Department of Bioethics & Humanities
Dawn Hardison Stevens, College of Education
David Takeuchi, School of Social Work
Christopher Teuton, American Indian Studies
Manka Varghese, College of Education
Aliyah Vinikoor, School of Social Work
Karina Walters, School of Social Work
Rebecca Wirihana, Hospital
Megan Ybarra, Department of Geography

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