

The Atacama Large Millimeter/Submillimeter Array (ALMA) is a joint North American, European, and East Asian facility, an interferometric array that opens mm-submm wavelengths for general astrophysical exploration. ALMA provides high angular resolution imaging and high spectroscopic resolution in frequency bands ranging from 86 to 950 GHz. Despite being a general-purpose instrument, provisions have been made to enable solar observations with ALMA. Radiation from the Sun emitted at ALMA wavelengths originates mostly from the chromosphere, a layer of the solar atmosphere that plays an important role in the transport of energy and matter from the photosphere up into the corona, and in heating the outer layers of the solar atmosphere. In this talk we describe recent efforts to commission ALMA for solar observing to ensure that can be usefully exploited by the scientific community to address outstanding questions in solar physics. In particular, we summarize activities under North American and European ALMA development studies, including instrument testing, calibration and imaging strategies, as well as science simulations. We also present examples of observations made by ALMA during two recent campaigns. With the support of solar observations, ALMA joins next-generation ground based instruments that can be used alone or in combination with other ground-based and space-based instruments to address outstanding questions in solar and heliospheric physics. Among these is the Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope (DKIST), optimized for high-resolution studies of the Sun in the optical and infrared bands, currently under construction on Haleakala, Maui. Opportunities for the wider community to contribute to these efforts will be highlighted.