

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Chandni Ravindan Otter

Ph.D. Candidate

MacQueen Lab

Molecular Biology & Biochemistry

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

I am originally from India. I got my undergrad and masters degrees from Newcastle University in the UK and will soon be finishing up at Wesleyan with my PhD! Outside of research, I enjoy reading fantasy fiction novels and painting.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CURRENT RESEARCH

My research focuses on meiosis, a specialized cell division process in sexually reproducing eukaryotes that results in the formation of gametes (such as egg and sperm). The synaptonemal complex (SC) is a multi-protein structure that forms between homologous pairs of chromosomes to help keep them together until they are ready to segregate during meiosis. Defects in SC assembly are associated with inviability, infertility, miscarriages, and aneuploidy; yet not a lot is known about the proteins that form the SC. My PhD project investigates the molecular basis of the budding yeast synaptonemal complex, specifically, two proteins that make up the central element of the SC, Ecm11 and Gmc2. Ecm11 and Gmc2 have previously been shown to interact with each other, and my project aims to shed more light on their architecture and function using various genetics, cytological, and biochemical analysis, and biophysical approaches.

WHAT BOOK DO YOU RECOMMEND?

At the moment I am reading the Throne of Glass series by Sarah J Maas, and if you like long series + multi-series crossovers + fantasy, highly recommend! It's three series and a total of fifteen fantasy books at the moment, with more to come, so it'll pull you in for a good while!

WHAT SONG HAS BEEN STUCK IN YOUR HEAD LATELY?

Today it's Long Live from Speak Now (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift, such a good song! But 95% of the time it's a Taylor song stuck in my head, I'm in my Eras era.

WHAT SUPERPOWER WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE?

I would choose to be able to read minds, like Edward Cullen. I just think that would be a convenient little trick to be able to use as and when needed.