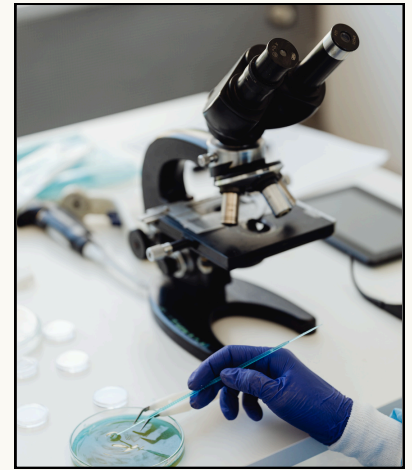


# Keystone on Tap

Kilachand Co-Curricular



**Friday, December 5, 2025**  
**4:30-6 pm**  
**Kilachand Common Rm, 101**



## **Olivia Scappa**

### ***Micropollutants, Macroconsequences***

My research is an analysis of resistance genes (AMR) in bacteria, studying how microplastics act as mediums that worsen AMR spread, and examining how wastewater treatment plants influence microbial communities and patterns of genetic resistance. All together, it maps how environmental pollution shapes the emergence and movement of resistance pathogens.

## **Lauren Bell**

### ***Activating Innate Immunity through cGAS-STING Agonist Nanostructures***

I am developing DNA nanostructures that activate the cGAS-STING pathway, an important controller of the body's immune response. By delivering potent, patient-specific immune signals, these nanoscale designs aim to help the body better recognize and attack cancer, offering a new avenue for immunotherapy.

## **Ishtiyahq Shajahan**

### ***Reimagining Urban Sustainability Through Community-Led Food Justice***

My project examines how resident-led food access initiatives, such as community gardens, co-ops and urban agricultural sites, can reduce food insecurity and advance environmental justice in Boston. Using interviews, spatial data, and participatory research, I analyze existing programs and prototype Community Roots Hub, a model transforming underused urban spaces into neighborhood food, education, and climate resilience centers.

## **Dylan List**

### ***The Potential for an Urban Wind Turbine on Boston University's Campus***

Typical weather conditions in Boston, combined with Boston University's campus architecture, create a unique wind environment where fast moving air gets funneled into tight corridor, noticeably amplifying its speed. My project explores this potential for extracting energy from this higher-speed wind to generate usable power on campus.

## **Catherine Knox**

### ***19th Century Fiction Revisited: A Deep Dive Into My Manuscript***

My project is to revise my manuscript, *The Heartbeats We Cannot Hear*, a YA historical fiction novel set in 19th century England. During the course of the year, my goal is to finalize the manuscript as the deliverable. This includes condensing my 217,000 word draft into a concise version by strengthening my plot, characters, and historical accuracy of the settings. My future plans would be to seek publication and share my story with a larger audience.

## **Jessica Laman**

### ***The Illusion of Separation: An Illustrated Book on Our Connections to Nature***

For my Keystone project I'm bringing together my passion for Wildlife Conservation and art by writing and illustrating a picture book. The story will take readers around the world as they learn about how humans and animals' lives are all interwoven.

## **Venessa Odera**

### ***What Happens in Texas Shapes the Vote: How State Election Laws Affect Student Voter Engagement***

My project examines how Texas election laws and administrative practices shape both the ability and willingness of eligible citizens, specifically university students, to participate in elections. Using a mixed-methods approach that includes interviews, surveys, archival research, and analysis of electoral data, the study investigates not only structural barriers students encounter but also the emotions and perceptions that arise when they try to exercise their voting rights.

## **Berit Schaus**

### ***Advancing Maternal Health: A Portable Diagnostic Device for Malaria, Chlamydia, and Trichomoniasis Detection***

Our project aims to detect three common pathogens, *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, and *Trichomonas vaginalis*, that cause poor maternal health outcomes in resource-limited settings. Our device uses a non-invasive sample and sensitive isothermal DNA amplification with a simple visual readout for fast, easy and accurate detection.

**Perna Shankaar**

***Personally Motivated Interests Modulate Attention Similarly in Autistic and Nonautistic Children During a Shared Storybook Reading Task***

Personally motivated interests (PMIs) shape attention in Autism-Spectrum Disorder, yet findings conflict on how they affect engagement. In naturalistic contexts, this remains unclear. This project examines how PMIs affect attention during shared storybook reading. We predict that embedding PMIs in stories will increase attention to social stimuli and text in autistic and nonautistic children.

**Kaylin Torres**

***Sensory Overload vs. Structured Learning: The Role of Children's TV in Speech Development***

What if I told you that supporting speech development versus overwhelming a child could be as simple as choosing Franklin over Cocomelon? This presentation explores how the sensory design of children's television shapes speech. I examine how overstimulating media can hinder speech processing, while structured programs can support meaningful learning.

**Dylan Gozdziwski**

***Lola***

A short film following a young man who discovers his late uncle was a drag performer during the height of the AIDS epidemic. He is drawn into the world of drag, while forced to confront his mother's silence, his own identity, and the legacy of queer resilience.

**Thank you for joining us!**

**The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Keystone Symposium is  
Saturday, April 25, 2026.**



Scan the QR code to visit the  
Symposium website to learn more  
[[bu.edu/khc/keystone-symposium-2026](https://bu.edu/khc/keystone-symposium-2026)]

