

Amanda Calhoun, MD, MPH
John Burroughs School Class of 2007

Amanda Joy Calhoun MD, MPH '07 is a chief resident of the Child Psychiatry Fellowship at Yale Child Study Center/Yale School of Medicine. She is also a PhD candidate at Yale Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Amanda graduated from Yale University with a bachelor's degree in Spanish; she received her MD and master's degree in public health from Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Multiple national research awards have funded her research in the U.S. and Nigeria. Amanda specializes in the effects of medical anti-Black racism, and her current research study, funded by the Yale Child Study Center and the National Institutes of Health, focuses on the mental health consequences of anti-Black racism in children.

Amanda is the director and creator of the inaugural [Black Youth Mental Health clinical case conference series](#) at Yale Child Study Center, a response to America's ongoing mental health crisis affecting youth and Black youth in particular.

"Black youth suicide rates are rising faster than any other racial/ethnic group and Black children as young as five are nearly twice as likely to die by suicide compared to their white peers," Amanda explains. "A mounting number of studies document the adverse mental health effects of anti-Black racism on Black children, even before birth."

The Yale conference will feature complex clinical cases involving Black youth nationwide that are being presented monthly (virtually and in person) through June. Registration is open to all individuals, whether they have a background in mental health or not. For more information about the series, [click here](#) or email blackyouthccs@gmail.com.

When asked about her memories of Burroughs, Amanda says she enjoyed the rigorous academics, but her memories are mixed.

"As a young Black girl growing up in a predominantly white space, I was not always valued or respected," she writes. "These messages were disseminated quite heavily in passive and active ways, which greatly affected my self-esteem and sense of self-worth. But as a child, it is difficult to explain because you don't have the language for it yet. Fortunately, I have two parents who helped me to find the words and to process what I was experiencing, and that saved me."

She continues, “This is a topic that I am now studying for my PhD dissertation that explores the mental health effects of anti-Black racism in children and adolescents, especially for those growing up in predominantly non-Black areas. I plan to develop interventions to help other little Black children like me and to help adults better support Black children in white spaces and fight back against the anti-Black racism they undoubtedly face.”

Amanda credits her Burroughs English classes for helping to foster her love of writing.

“I was a writer before I decided to pursue medicine,” she said. “I loved learning how to write everything from poetry to creative pieces to critical analyses and I have my English teachers at Burroughs to thank for that training.

“But even in some of these classes, I struggled with the white-centered curriculum and lack of accurate and humanizing representation of Black children and Black people. My favorite English teachers were those who were not afraid when I voiced this discontent and let me engage in discussion about it. After all, what Burroughs wanted to do was create leaders, independent thinkers, and I very much appreciate that.”

Today, Amanda writes extensively for academic journals and general press and has published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *TIME*, *The Washington Post*, *HuffPost*, and many others. Amanda is a Fellowship Leader of [The OpEd Project](#), a public speaker, a consultant, and a guest instructor for a Yale undergraduate course focusing on the history of medical anti-Black racism. She has appeared on CBS News, PBS Newshour, and most recently, MSNBC, discussing issues of racism affecting the health of Black people. [She is represented by Janklow & Nesbit UK](#).

[Click here](#) to learn more about Amanda and her work.

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