

## **Mar Sanchez, PhD**

### **Introduction:**

I am a behavioral neuroscientist, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Core Scientist and Chief of the division of Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience at the Emory National Primate Research Center (EPC).

The goal of my research program is to understand the neurobiology of stress and emotion regulation, and how early experiences affect its development, particularly how mental illness is often rooted in early adverse experiences. I study nonhuman primate (NHP) models of early life stress (ELS) of translational relevance to human developmental psychopathology to capitalize on the experimental control and mechanistic information that they provide. Early adverse experiences, including alterations in maternal care and chronic psychosocial stress, impact normal physiological/cellular/molecular, emotional and brain development; pose a risk factor for the development of anxiety/mood disorders; and disrupt circadian rhythms and homeostasis across the life span.

### **Area(s) of expertise:**

My research areas of expertise relate to mother-infant relationships and health; effects of early experiences and social environment on brain development and stress/emotional regulation; behavioral and developmental neuroscience and animal models. My lab uses behavioral, cognitive and brain structural and functional MRI and PET approaches as well as neuroendocrinology to examine levels of stress hormones and inflammatory markers. In addition to my experience getting NIH grants and publishing papers, I have a strong commitment to institutional and national service, including serving in the Psychiatry and Neuroscience graduate program executive and SOM FCAP committees, NIH Study sections and neuroscience advocacy efforts in Congress. Finally, my teaching role in the last 5 years has focused on research mentoring of junior faculty in the Dept. of Psychiatry and the EPC, postdocs, graduate and undergraduate students.

### **Relevant personal details:**

I am from Spain and was the first in my family to get a high school, college and PhD degrees. I moved to Emory Univ to do my postdoc and loved it here. I am deeply interested in Eastern philosophy, and love hiking and deep friendships.

### **Approach to mentoring and availability:**

My focus is on research and career mentorship. I strongly believe in our responsibility to prepare the next generation of scientists with strong skills in research, collaboration, critical thinking, grantmanship, lab management, and ethical standards, in parallel to fostering an active engagement in their communities through public outreach, education and science advocacy. I have mentored individuals from diverse backgrounds and levels, from high school to faculty. I follow a holistic approach to mentoring, providing guidance and tips from my experience at different levels, including work-personal life and family balance.