## FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

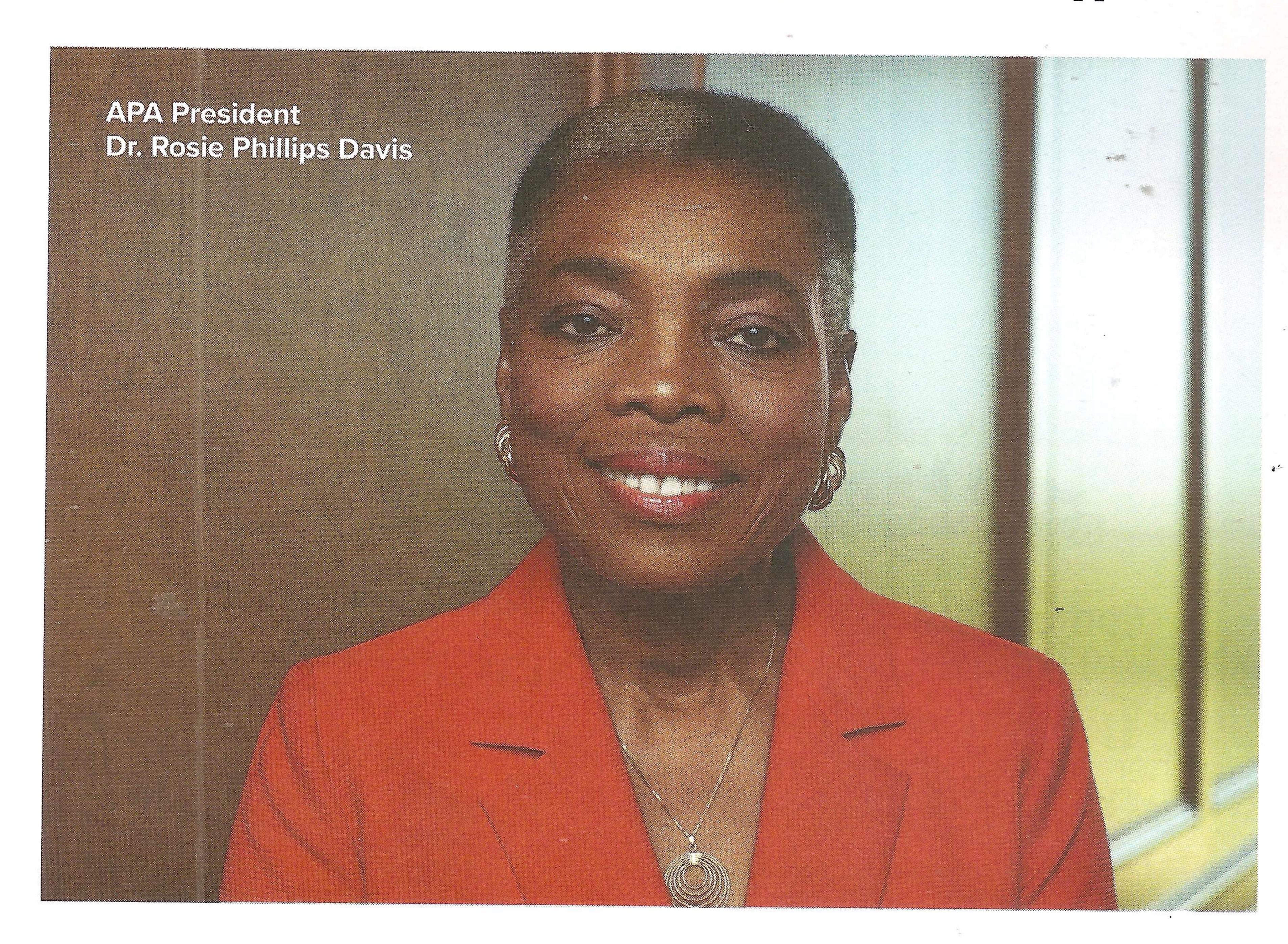
We must make psychological science more accessible to the public. Here are ways to do that.

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hen I want my young nieces and nephews to understand psychological science I ask, "What makes you pick up your smartphone every few minutes?" As they look up from their screens, I tell them about variable intermittent reinforcement schedules and how

the software developers who created texting, apps and social media relied on psychological knowledge to keep us well connected to our devices. That explanation gives my nieces and nephews a better understanding of psychological science in their everyday lives, and I educate "the public."

APA exists for the benefit of all, and that benefit rests on a foundation of science. I believe we must make psychological science far more accessible to the public so that people understand the connections between the brain and thoughts, and feelings and behaviors. By making psychological knowledge more visible in everyday life, the public can better appreciate



the role of psychologists in health care, education, the workplace and other domains.

Here's another story that I like to share about the importance of psychologists' knowledge: I have suffered with back pain. My doctor wanted to give me a steroid injection even though my MRI revealed a relatively healthy spine. As a psychologist, I knew that my pain could be linked to feelings of anxiety and anger, so I declined the shots and concentrated on addressing biopsychosocial aspects of the pain through cognitive therapy and behavioral interventions. My back got better without medication.

If psychologists make information available about the interaction of the brain and the rest of the body, perhaps the medical profession will begin to rely more on psychological treatment for pain management, including to prevent and treat opioid addiction.

Sometimes an audience can understand science better from someone who seems to be more like them. The good news is that psychological scientists are as diverse as society and that diversity allows scientists to take a broader view of behavior and develop hypotheses and theories in ways that make our science more generalizable. Further, it can transform the communication of scientific outcomes in ways that are more understandable and consumable by those communities represented by those diverse scientists.

Psychological science must be shared broadly. As a part of an effort to communicate psychological science, APA has launched the PsycShorts science video festival and competition, which is one of my two presidential initiatives for 2019. Can you accurately and creatively explain a concept or finding from psychological science in less than two minutes? If so, consider sharing your knowledge in a video! Learn more at https://on.apa.org/PsycShorts.