American Cochlear Implant Alliance will recognize the lifetime achievements of Ann Geers PhD at the upcoming CI2021 Cochlear Implants in Children and Adults. The recognition was announced in 2020 but was not awarded due to the conference cancellation. The award recognizes Geers’ work in advancing cochlear implant care and follow-up for deaf children over her more than 40-year career in research on language development in children with hearing loss. The prize will be given at the CI 2021 Virtual Conference at the Opening Session on April 29, 2021 at 9:45 AM ET. Recognizing Dr. Geers’ unique contributions that have benefitted children around the world is especially fitting at this gathering of cochlear implant clinicians, educators, and researchers.

Dr. Ann Geers is a Developmental Psychologist with a life-long interest in speech and language acquisition by children with hearing loss. At Central Institute for the Deaf and Washington University in St. Louis, she collaborated with educators to develop a program of clinical research in childhood deafness that focused on creating objective assessment techniques and documenting outcomes of listening and spoken language instruction.

With the advent of cochlear implantation as a treatment for childhood deafness, Dr. Geers’ work helped set the stage for national studies of the factors associated with maximizing language development from sensory aids. In her dual leadership roles in applied research and clinical studies, she was able to seek and participate in NIH funded research as well as work with students just beginning their professional work in the field.

Ann’s appointment at the Department of Behavioral and Brain Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas allowed her to expand her collaborations to include the nationwide NIH-funded longitudinal study Child Development after Cochlear Implantation, which followed children’s progress annually for more than ten years.

Dr. Geers has published over 100 articles and book chapters and presented her work around the world. She has been honest and bold in publication of findings—even when those findings were deemed controversial and opposed by groups promoting a different point of view.

For her tenacity in demonstrating how early intervention focused on listening and spoken language development can benefit children with all levels of hearing loss, we honor Dr. Geers with the ACI Alliance 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award.