Richard T. Miyamoto, M.D., will be the recipient of the American Cochlear Implant Alliance’s Lifetime Achievement Award at the upcoming CI2021 Virtual, Cochlear Implants in Children and Adults. The award, given annually to an individual with an exemplary body of work in service to advancing cochlear implants, will be presented at the Opening Session of the conference on April 29, 2021 at 9:45 AM ET.

As a surgeon, Dr. Miyamoto is truly one of the trailblazers in cochlear implantation, having trained as a fellow under Drs. William and Howard House in Los Angeles. In 1979, Dr. Miyamoto, on faculty at Indiana University School of Medicine, was chosen by Dr. William House to participate in the first national clinical trial of cochlear implants in adults. This was at a time when many, including some colleagues within the fields of otology and hearing science, doubted or openly opposed cochlear implants on the grounds that they were not effective.

With the success of the adult CI trials, the FDA initiated the first pediatric clinical trial in 1983, with Dr. Miyamoto as one of seven co-investigators. He testified at the FDA hearings for both the first adult and pediatric cochlear implant approvals. Dr. Miyamoto spent his entire career at the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, rising to chief of otology and neurotology and chairman of the department of otolaryngology, positions he held until his retirement in 2014.

Dr. Miyamoto was also a trailblazer in supporting a team approach to cochlear implantation and helping craft what is now the accepted practice of a CI multi-disciplinary team. With his kind and encouraging style of mentoring, he trained and inspired a whole generation of cochlear implant professionals, including surgeons, researchers, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, educators and psychologists.

Dr. Miyamoto’s career includes a staggering record of research support. He was PI of the first NIH RO1 grant awarded to study speech perception and production in pediatric CI recipients. Throughout his tenure at Indiana, he had continuous support from the NIH and later, NIDCD. He was a charter member of the advisory council for the newly-created National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD). A prolific author, Dr. Miyamoto contributed hundreds of research articles and clinical papers to the professional literature.

For his courage in being a cochlear implant trailblazer and his commitment to research and practice in our field, we will honor Dr. Miyamoto with the ACI Alliance 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award.