In selecting James L. Tomlinson, DVM, MVSc, Diplomate ACVS, for the ACVS Founders’ Award for Career Achievement, the ACVS membership recognizes a world renowned veterinary orthopedic surgeon and one of the leading international authorities on fracture repair, minimally invasive techniques, and angular limb deformity.

Dr. Tomlinson completed a surgical residency at the University of Saskatchewan and began his nearly 40-year career at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine in 1981. He became an ACVS Diplomate in 1985 and currently is Professor Emeritus and Adjunct Professor of Small Animal Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Missouri.

Dr. Tomlinson is one of the first veterinary surgeons in the world to explore the use of arthroscopy in the dog, a practice that has since become commonplace and a standard of care. His work to develop fluoroscopically-guided minimally invasive techniques has carried over to the area of traumatology where he developed procedures to reduce and stabilize fractures without the need for larger and more traumatic incisions. Dr. Tomlinson’s influence and contribution has not been limited to orthopedic surgery, as his clinical expertise reaches to neurologic surgery as well. He has developed a novel and effective technique for the treatment of caudal cervical spondylomyelopathy in severely affected dogs.

Dr. Tomlinson is devoted to the veterinary surgery profession in the classroom, in research, and in clinical settings. Having been instrumental in the training of residents and more than 40 ACVS Diplomates, throughout his career he immersed himself in the ACVS community as he earned a number of grants and large grant-sustained research studies. He is the author of over 20 first author manuscripts and at least 70 abstracts in some of the most acclaimed veterinary journals and was invited to author 19 book chapters in well-known textbooks such as Johnston and Tobias Veterinary Surgery: Small Animal and Slatter’s Textbook of Small Animal Surgery. He was editor for Bojrab’s Current Techniques in Small Animal Surgery, Bojrab’s Disease Mechanisms in Small Animal Surgery, and AO Principles of Fracture Management in the Dog and Cat, to name a few. He has been a reviewer for Fossum’s Small Animal Surgery (1993), the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, and the American Journal of Veterinary Research.

For over 30 years, Dr. Tomlinson has held numerous leadership positions and has contributed extensively to continuing education. He has served as chairman for the annual AO-ASIF courses nationally and internationally since 2006 and developed surgical models and laboratory manuals for AO-ASIF osteotomy courses. He has also been a chairman for multiple small animal minimally invasive osteosynthesis courses. Dr. Tomlinson has played an integral role in the AO Foundation in North America and internationally. He is an active member of the Veterinary Orthopedic Society and an ambassador member of AOVET and has served as both a member of and chairman for the Board of Referees for Veterinary and Comparative Orthopaedics and Traumatology since 2007.

A colleague noted: “Everyday Dr. Tomlinson challenges you to be the best you can, never allowing you to settle for just good enough. He pushes you to be prepared and efficient not because you are afraid of him, but because he inspires that desire to be the best.”

The ACVS Founders’ Award for Career Achievement was established to recognize the service of ACVS Diplomates who have distinguished themselves in the pursuit of surgery by making significant contributions to the development of surgical techniques and methodology, and disseminating knowledge to colleagues, residents, and students.