Dr. Michael Cavanaugh graduated from the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1983. He became the chief executive officer of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) in January 2010. As such, Dr. Cavanaugh is responsible for AAHA’s national headquarters located in Denver, Colo. where he oversees a staff of 75, the annual budget in excess of $11 million, and carries out the Association’s programs and policies. He also represents AAHA on the board of the National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues (NCVEI) and at the North American Veterinary Medical Educational Consortium.

He practiced at AAHA-accredited hospitals including West Ridge Animal Hospital in Topeka, Kansas, which he opened in 1988. During his practice years, Dr. Cavanaugh was very active in organized veterinary medicine and held numerous volunteer leadership and committee positions within AAHA. He became a Diplomate of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners (Canine and Feline) in 1996, and later recertified in 2006. He gained valuable experience in the animal health industry working with several organizations including Pfizer Animal Health where he was director of veterinary hospital services.

In 2002 Dr. Cavanaugh received the Alumni Recognition Award from Kansas State University, and in 2009, was named Industry Partner of the Year by the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association. He is an affiliate faculty member in the department of clinical sciences at the Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.