

Success Stories



We cannot tell the whole story of Service Management Systems, Inc. (SMS) without telling the story of Angie Dean. Angie has seen a lot of change over her 35-year career with SMS and now SMS Holdings. “Too many to put on paper,” she said with a thoughtful grin. After all, she was the **FIRST EMPLOYEE** of SMS!

William T. “Bill” Coakley, our late founder and CEO (*pictured right*), used to tell everyone that he hit the jackpot when he asked Angie to come work with him at SMS. The two met when the company Angie was working for was acquired by the company Bill was working for.

“It’s funny,” Angie said with a reflective smile, “I met Bill when I was called in to work to go to a meeting. I knew something was up; I had never been called in on a Sunday.”



As it turned out, she was right! The meeting was to announce to the employees that their company had been sold to another company. Angie was asked to join the “new” company and she eventually became Bill’s Regional Assistant. Three years later, in 1988, Bill decided to start his own company, and SMS was born. “When Bill told me he was starting his own company and asked if I would come work with him, I didn’t even think about it,” Angie recalled. “I just said, ‘Sure!’ To know Bill was to know that the company would be a success!”



“She came with absolutely no guarantee of a paycheck or anything else. In the early days, it was just us two in a two room office.” – **Bill Coakley SOURCE: 15-Year Milestone Recognition Write-Up (2003)**



Angie Dean working in the original offices at SMS during the early years.

Angie was Bill’s Administrative Assistant, which really meant she did it all! As far as the office went, “It was a one-woman show. I had to wear all kinds of hats – payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable – basically, if it needed to be done, that’s what I did,” she said. This allowed her to learn and grow with Bill as a direct mentor. “When the company opened, our intercom system was a yell between offices, and we started with only one account,” she remembered.

Part of Angie's assertiveness, determination, and growth can be attributed to the many personal battles she has endured. In 1995, Angie was diagnosed with Leukemia, a form of cancer that affects the bone marrow and blood cells. After weeks of intense treatment and a nine-month leave of absence from work, Angie returned, determined to get right back into the swing of things. Though life can knock you down, she believes that her faith and family, including her work family, gave her the strength to persevere and a greater appreciation for what really matters. She learned to cherish every moment through her illness and the loss of multiple family members. "In 35 years, you do a lot of life together. The relationships you have at work truly do matter. There are acts of kindness from team members that I will remember until my last days," Angie emphasized. Angie is now happily married and has been blessed with three children who now have children of their own.

"She has to be one of the most amazingly positive people I have ever met, despite the many challenges she has faced in her life." – **Bill Coakley** **SOURCE: 15-Year Milestone Recognition Write-Up (2003)**

Bill's opinion of Angie seems to be shared by everyone at both our Customer Support Center (CSC) and our teams in the field. Just a few of their appreciation comments are shared below.

"Angie was the first person I met when I started with SMS in 1991. She was then, and still is now, as Bill would say, the "moral compass of SMS." She was very welcoming and helpful to me when I started, and even though at times I could have been a little on the rough side, she always remained calm and helped no matter what the situation was. We all wore a lot of hats back then and she probably wore the most by far! I am so proud that she has chosen to remain a part of SMS Holdings for all these years, and I know Bill is smiling fondly down upon her and us. Angie is truly a good person and someone I look up to." – **Keith Wolken | Chief Executive Officer**

"Angie is just a joy to work with on any project. She is such a positive person with a can-do attitude. Everything she does is thorough and accurate, which is so important in the areas that are Angie's specialties. She is always ready to tackle any task and do 'Whatever it Takes!' to get the job done." – **Hiram Cox | Chief Financial and Administrative Officer**

"Angie IS our number one employee, but for more than her tenure. She has vast experience and knowledge surrounding SMS Holdings. I count Angie as a dear friend, whose grace and, yes, sense of humor, is warmly received by all." – **Rickie Hall | Chief Information Officer**

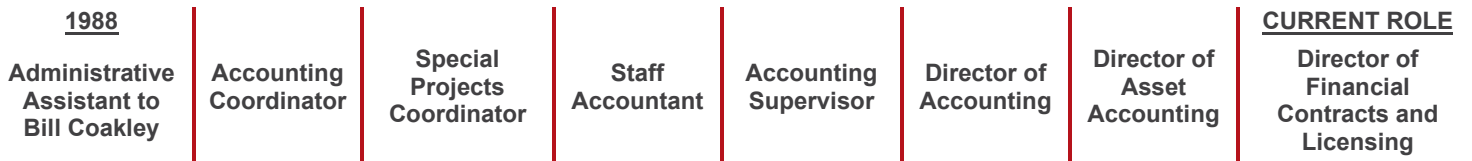
"I first met Angie in September of 2000, as Valor Security Services was being integrated into what would become SMS Holdings. Since that very first meeting, Angie has been the embodiment of 'Whatever it Takes!' She connects the current SMS team(s) to the past, as a living and breathing reminder of the core values upon which SMS was founded. Through decades of change, Angie has been the one constant, evolving with the times, but ever the connection to our roots." – **Scott Born | SMS President**

"Congrats on 35 amazing years with SMS - Employee #1 Angie Dean! I have had the privilege to work with Angie for over 20 of those years. She has had an unwavering commitment to SMS Holdings from the beginning, and personifies the company's core values. We have collaborated on many projects over the years, for both accounting, as well as more global initiatives. Angie was always consistent in making sure we were doing the right thing for SMS, its employees, and (our) customers. She has the unique ability to look at projects from all angles and guide team members to the best possible solution. Angie has great knowledge in Accounting Operations and treats everyone on the team with respect. There is no question when Bill Coakley hired employee #1 that she set an example for all future team members to follow! Congrats, Angie, on your 35 years of dedication to SMS and SMS Holdings." – **Kevin Gleason | SMS Division Vice President**



Pictured Left to Right: Keith Wolken, Angie Dean, and Bill Coakley

Angie's 35 years with SMS and now SMS Holdings have taken her through the following career journey and roles:



Within a few years, SMS had grown to the point where each person's job was more defined, and Angie was prompted to choose a more focused career path. Looking toward opportunities in the accounting field, she decided to take on responsibilities in Accounts Payable, Receivables, and other accounting tasks. She also took several training courses to expand her skill sets. She stated, "At that time, there were lots of long hours and hard work put in, but the rewards were great and worth it." While some of her career moves were lateral, her path was based on the needs of the employees, the company overall, and our customers.



Angie Dean (left) and Kim Coakley (wife of Bill Coakley) in 2008, celebrating Angie's 20 Year Milestone Work Anniversary

"When you look at all sides of the spectrum, it's a win/win for everyone. It has always been especially important to remain open to change, as change has been a constant. Though change can be hard, our leaders have always embraced change, and those changes have kept our company healthy through some difficult times." – **Angie Dean**

When asked why she stayed through all the change to remain with SMS for 35 years, she replied, "When I think about why I stayed 35 years, I think about the great bosses I have gotten to work with, the loyalty shown to me, and the investment they made in me. Starting with Bill, his expectations were high and he truly cared, not only about your work performance, but about the events we all face personally. He took time to check in, especially when times were hard. I've reported to a number of people through the years, and it's been those who were great mentors that had the greatest impact. They provided opportunity and guidance that led the way. There is a mutual trust, and I couldn't be more grateful that Bill and those who came behind him believed in me and provided the opportunity to go far beyond anything I could have imagined."



"I don't like being in the spotlight. But you don't go through things to not share your story with others, so that they can use your story for their own growth or encouragement in their own lives. I've always tried to share parts of my story that will help other people." – **Angie Dean**

We are grateful to Angie for sharing her story. Through her, we have learned how great leadership leads to team member growth and loyalty, how our company's core values and motto shape each of us as individuals, and how one person can truly make a difference. We wish Angie continued success in life and at SMS Holdings as we celebrate her 35 years with the company.