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**CHICAGO INNOVATION AWARDS CELEBRATE LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS  
WITH GOVERNOR RAUNER AND SMS ASSIST**

**CHICAGO**, Sept. 14, 2016 – The Chicago Innovation Awards and Governor Bruce Rauner today joined local business leaders to celebrate winners of the [2015 Chicago Innovation Awards](#) at the newly expanded headquarters of SMS Assist.

“Innovation not only creates a competitive advantage for companies, but it directly builds the economy in Illinois and the Chicago region,” said Tom Kuczumski, founder and co-chair of the Chicago Innovation Awards. “The Chicago Innovation Awards recognize those with the courage, confidence and good sense to take risks in the name of innovation.”

More than 1,500 attendees are expected at the official 15th Annual Chicago Innovation Awards event on Oct. 25 at Chicago’s Harris Theater. Winners are selected based on innovations that fill unmet needs, provide new value, exceed market expectations and improve people’s lives. All of the award’s past 204 winners are still in business and 36 have been acquired with exits totaling \$76 billion.

“For companies throughout the region, innovation is about big ideas, education and especially collaboration,” said Mike Rothman, chairman and CEO of SMS Assist. “While our technology fuels our growth, it’s our commitment to growing the community of entrepreneurs and business leaders that helps us thrive.”

As a 2012 Chicago Innovation Awards winner and a sponsor of the 2016 events, SMS Assist’s expansion is emblematic of the entrepreneurial spirit and how technology can be used to transform traditional businesses into disruptive industry leaders. The company recently grew to 565 employees – an increase of more than 175 employees in the last year – which represents a more than 1,000 percent increase since 2010.

In addition to its ranking on the first Forbes Cloud 100 list and one of the fastest-growing companies on the Deloitte Technology Fast 500, SMS Assist also recently raised \$150 million from Goldman Sachs Investment Partners, the same team that invested in Uber, Facebook, Pinterest and Spotify.

SMS Assist’s proprietary technology platform and fully integrated business solution connect a network of more than 20,000 subcontracted affiliates and an estimated 500,000 technicians to provide the highest quality maintenance services to more than 130,000 client locations across the U.S.

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**About The Chicago Innovation Awards**

The Chicago Innovation Awards, established in 2002, has grown from a single awards ceremony to a year-long series of events and activities designed to celebrate innovation in the Chicago region, educate people and organizations about the principles of innovation, and connect the corners of the economy by building relationships that strengthen companies, grow the economy, and create jobs. The organization's expansion has included the Chicago Innovation Awards Women's Mentoring Co-op to support the growth of female innovators, the Chicago Neighborhood Award to promote entrepreneurship in Chicago's diverse neighborhoods, an Innovation MBA program developed jointly with the Illinois Institute of Technology and The Innovators Connection, which connects large companies with Chicago-based start-ups. For more information, visit [chicagoinnovationawards.com](http://chicagoinnovationawards.com).

**About SMS Assist**

SMS Assist is a Chicago-based technology company providing multisite property management to a roster of clients with more than 130,000 service locations. Using its proprietary software platform to manage its network of more than 20,000 affiliate subcontractors, SMS Assist offers a suite of property management benefits including leveraged pricing of products and services, \$50 million risk indemnification, real-time services validation, instant invoicing, automatic service audits and data analysis to ensure quality and cost efficiency. SMS Assist is revolutionizing multisite property management services for its growing list of national and Fortune 500 clients including Family Dollar (NYSE: FDO), JPMorgan Chase (NYSE: JPM), Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated (NYSE: JLL), O'Reilly Automotive, Inc. (NASDAQ: ORLY) and Colony Starwood Homes (NYSE: SFR). To learn more, visit [smsassist.com](http://smsassist.com).

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