Start Smart is a program designed to empower and assist women in the salary negotiations. Did you know that women full time in the United States typically are paid just 80 percent of what white men are paid, a gap of 20 percent – and it is even worse for women of color. This workshop fights to close the pay gap, one workshop at a time. Primarily designed for students, Start Smart workshops will help students gain the skills and confidence needed to successfully negotiate their salary and benefits package. By learning strategies and practicing effective language, participants gain valuable skills they can use throughout their lifetime – well beyond their next negotiation.

Facilitator Training: We conducted two facilitator workshops during the summer of 2017 allowing us to train:

- 7 Xavier staff members – Nichole Arbino, Andrea Mersmann, Kelley Bellin, Barbara Turner-Michaelson, Beth Zink, April Robles and Anne Ernst
- 2 WOX Members/Alumna – Judy Smith and Lainie Fertick
- 1 Employer – Tricia Rutherford, Skylight Financial

Program Offerings: In summary we were able to host 7 workshops during the 2017-2018 school year with a total of 85 participants

For the Fall of 2017 – 4 total workshops
10/26 – Women in Business (11 participants)
11/14 – Crosstown with University of Cincinnati (20 participants)
11/15 – Xavier Alumni (8 participants)
11/17 – Xavier student workers (10 participants)

For the Spring of 2018 – 3 total workshops
1/22 – Mentor Program – (12 participants)
3/13 – HERstory Month Programming with LEAD - Ladies with an Emphasis on Achievement and Distinction (6 participants)
4/10 – Women in Business, Beta Alpha Psi, International Business Association, Student Alumni Association (18 participants)

Reflections: Originally, the plan was to have one workshop each semester, but with the number of facilitators we were able to train and the interest from partner organizations, we were able to offer many more. Additionally, AAUW approached Xavier to be the recipient of a grant from LUNA Bars to provide 4 workshops during 2017 which allowed us to receive free LUNA Bars and all printed materials for the workshops. This became a great catalyst for collaboration with this being our first time providing the workshops to Xavier.

I was able to partner with Institutional Research to see if the wage gap was affecting our most recent graduates. We did a comparison by major of median starting salary by gender for the Class of 2014, 2015 and 2016. The wage gap is already apparent with our recent graduates. For example, there is an $8,000 difference between Men and Women with a Psychology major, $5,000 with Information Systems. This additional research proved to me the importance of providing this program to our students.
Feedback from Participants:
"The Start Smart program helped me better understand how to go about the task of salary negotiation. I was able to learn the skills of this negotiation process and also learn more about benefits packages. By practicing out loud and asking these experienced women questions, I grew more confident in my abilities. I now feel capable of holding a negotiation conversation with a future employer, which is a huge asset for newly graduated students."
Emily Carmack
Xavier University, Class of 2019
Williams College of Business, Marketing Major
Xavier Women in Business President

“When I first signed up for Start Smart, I expected to hear about the gender gap and negotiation strategies that mirrored my personal findings. However, I did not expect to learn about such a large "gap" in my own knowledge, especially since I "googled" these topics. Following the meeting, I immediately posted to Snapchat the startling wage differences amongst women based on race. I even shared my notes for negotiating with my roommates, close friends and cousins. Undoubtedly, I walked away more empowered and motivated to quantify my worth. I am truly grateful for the pertinent information shared through Start Smart.”
ALEXIS METTS
Class of 2018
Finance/Economics

Budget:
Original Proposal
$300 Membership to AAUW ($125 starting membership, $175/year sustaining membership
$1,400 – 3 year License for Start smart and all related materials
$750 – Printing/Marketing materials for at least 6 workshops
$300 – Food snacks and refreshments for at least 6 workshops

Spent
$125 - starting membership; will pay $175 after July 1 for sustaining membership
$1,400 – 3 year License
$85.04- Printing
$0 on Food
Our first program on October 26, 2017 with the Women in Business student organization.