

Krystal (Underwood) Settlemaier - MSW 2013

My name is Krystal Settlemaier and I recently earned my MSW degree in social work at Azusa Pacific University. Being a recent grad has its challenges, but I believe my experience at APU is helping me overcome these challenges. I currently work at a hospice agency that serves the San Gabriel Valley. This setting alone can, at times, be emotionally heavy as I serve others in end-of-life care. The patients and loved ones I encounter on a daily basis have a unique story to share and all require my support, advocacy, attention and service. Looking back at my studies at APU, I obviously gained an education that enables me to complete the obligations, duties and ethics that are required of a MSW, Master's in Social Work. However important, I would like to highlight other components from my time at APU that have given me the strength and stamina to wake up every morning and do my job again and again. The professors that stood before me in the classrooms had their agendas, syllabi and assignments, but they also shared their insights. I have absorbed and taken on what they have imparted to me. These insights are self-care, always wear the learner's cap and, most importantly, find God in all situations. This formula has enabled me to be the social worker I am today. I give myself permission to rest and heal after entering into a broken situation. I ask questions and seek advice with the understanding that constructive criticism may come my way. I discover, with God's help, the joys and beauty in end-of-life care. I am blessed and honored to be a hospice social worker. I am grateful to APU for giving me such an opportunity and for professors who ultimately care. May God bless the current undergraduates, graduates and alumni as we all seek to serve in the profession of social work.

Editor's note: you may contact Krystal at krystal.settlemaier@gmail.com.