Incoming Grad Perspective: UGA
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Melanie just graduated from California State University, East Bay and will begin rotations in the Integrated Plant Sciences Program at the University of Georgia on the path to her PhD this Fall (2019).

Intended research area: Plant Genetics

“I am starting my PhD program at University of Georgia in less than a month, and I am simultaneously nervous and really excited! The most helpful advice I was given was to read as many papers as possible, and familiarize myself with individual faculty's research interest. Instead of contacting large numbers of faculty members at each university I applied to, I spent a lot of time focusing on one or two potential advisors per school. This was super helpful when interviews rolled around--I was able to ask questions that demonstrated my understanding of their work, which led to good, in-depth conversations. One thing I would do differently if I could go back and do the application/interview process again: give myself more time, wouldn't try to do everything while I'm a full time student and working part-time. For future prospective grad students, it might be worth it to wait until you've graduated undergrad to start applying. I was majorly stressed, and underestimated the time commitment of the whole process. I'm super happy with how things turned out, but I could have gone through the application process more efficiently if I waited til my schedule wasn’t so packed. Also, if you weren’t a perfect straight A student, don't let it affect your confidence or motivation. I had good grades once I declared my major, but I had several years of pretty bad community college transcripts that I was absolutely convinced would ruin my chances of getting into grad school. Turns out most professors cared a lot more about experience, enthusiasm, and work ethic than my GPA. :)

~ Melanie