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Bobby Wade, a 2015 University of Georgia Tifton campus graduate and current sales representative for TriEst Ag Group, Inc., credits UGA–Tifton for the professional success he’s enjoying today.

Wade is a Crisp County, Georgia, native who studied plant protection and pest management. Now he works with farmers and industry personnel and sells soil fumigants, plastic mulch, drip irrigation and grafted plants.

UGA–Tifton provided Wade with opportunities to work and study under UGA–Tifton scientists like Bob Kemerait, UGA professor of plant pathology.

“By going to UGA, the hands-on training you receive, the people that you meet (and) the network you acquire while you’re there (are) just as helpful as the education you receive,” Wade said. “I can honestly say ... I would not be (where I am professionally) if not for the awesome environment I was able to study in.”

UGA–Tifton is one of three UGA campuses in Georgia where students can receive an education from UGA’s College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES). CAES is also represented on the university’s main campus in Athens, Georgia, and the campus in Griffin, Georgia.

The UGA–Tifton campus attracts many transfer students from across Georgia. It draws nontraditional students, like Wade, to a lesser extent.

Wade, 43, has been married to his wife, Lessie Wade, for 20 years. They have an 8-year-old son, Jackson Wade. Living in Cordele, Georgia, the short commute to UGA–Tifton made the campus an ideal choice for Bobby Wade, who was trying to juggle the daily duties of being a husband and father.

“Having a family while attending college is, no doubt, hard. But I was fortunate enough to be blessed to have a wonderful support system in place, while also attending a school in a program I admire and appreciate,” Bobby Wade said.

His close proximity to UGA–Tifton was not the only factor that weighed in Bobby Wade’s decision.

“I enjoy that it’s a smaller campus and you feel very important because you get to know just about everyone there at some point or in some fashion,” Bobby Wade said. “As far as feeling like you’re a family, I almost can’t explain it. But I completely felt like I was a part of the UGA family when I was (at UGA–Tifton).”

Bobby Wade said that graduation was his most memorable moment. It was bittersweet, but happy.

“You make so many friends,” Wade said. “As you leave and you go from seeing them every day, you realize you may only see them once a year at best, but it was a great time.”