

# LOCAL <sup>2A</sup>

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016 ♦ MDJ



GEORGIA LOTTERY

Thursday,  
October 20, 2016

Midday Cash 3: 7-7-  
Cash 3: 1-5-7  
Midday Georgia FIV  
Georgia FIVE: 9-6-3-

\*Unofficial. Matching numbers shoul

## KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY | FUNDRAISER

# KSU addiction and recovery center to host event, raise funds for research

By Mary Kate McGowan  
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**KENNESAW** — Melissa, a Kennesaw State University sophomore, on Saturday is celebrating the two-year anniversary since her last drink by helping raise money for others struggling with addiction.

KSU's Center for Young Adult Addiction & Recovery is hosting its first black-tie outreach event — the Take off the Mask of Addiction Masquerade Ball — Saturday night at the Fox Theatre.

Melissa, who requested her last name not be used, said she attended her first recovery meeting hosted by the center on Oct. 2, 2014. She has been involved with the center ever since.

"I reached a point where things basically got too bad, and I decided to go to a meeting that was on campus," she said.

An aspiring teacher from Alpharetta who serves as the center's president of student leadership, Melissa said the meeting changed her life. She had her last drink on Oct. 16, 2014.

She said she has connected with the other students who receive the center's services — which include Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, educational services and counseling — and with metro Atlanta's AA community.

The center also grants recovering

## IF YOU GO

♦ **What:** Kennesaw State University's Center for Young Adult Addiction & Recovery's "Take off the Mask of Addiction Masquerade Ball"

♦ **When:** 6 to 11 p.m. Saturday

♦ **Where:** The Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St NE in Atlanta

♦ **Ticket information:**

[cyaarball.kennesaw.edu](http://cyaarball.kennesaw.edu)

♦ **Donation information:**

[community.kennesaw.edu](http://community.kennesaw.edu)

students scholarships, priority registration for classes and hosts sober tailgates during football games.

"I didn't care that I went to Kennesaw until I joined the (center)," Melissa said.

Melissa is one of more than 70 KSU students who are receiving services from the center this school year, said center director Teresa Wren Johnston.

Johnston said the majority of the 70 students receive services related to alcohol and drug addiction recovery while about 10 percent require services for eating disorders. Johnston said some students also receive help for self-harm and gaming addictions.

The center, which started in 2007 with two employees, is one of the first collegiate recovery services

that offers students counseling and educational services to help them conquer various addictions.

Johnston said the center has grown to employ eight staff members and two student-assistants with a \$50,000 operating budget. She said the center has raised \$500,000 over the past nine years to fund its research and educational efforts.

To increase that sum, the center is hosting Saturday's event to not only raise funds but to also increase awareness of its work and research. The black-tie event is scheduled to include a sit-down dinner, silent and live auctions, live entertainment and dancing.

Johnston said the center needs more support in order for it to continue to study how addiction and recovery affect people.

"We know very little about how people scientifically understand and maintain recovery," she said. "It's the only disease in the country that doesn't really have one particular foundation that people can contribute to and raise money for."

Johnston, who said she has been in recovery from drug- and alcohol-use for 20 years, said about 75 percent of people are affected by addiction and recovery whether through personally experiencing the struggle or knowing someone who struggles.

"If that's the case, why aren't we speaking out more or doing more?" she asked.