

## Emily Kimelman '93

*Author of best-selling mystery series*

For Emily Kimelman '93, an average day might include writing for a few hours, doing yoga, reading, and then writing a bit more—in locales from her home base in Hudson Valley, NY, to exotic places such as Costa Rica, Hawaii, and India. As an author of a popular series of mystery novels and apocalyptic urban fantasies, Emily has experienced growing success in the eBook world since her first self-published book was released online in 2011. "I'm supporting my family with my creativity," she said. "It's my dream coming true."

Her journey to success was not an easy path, however. At around the age of 6, she remembers that she couldn't say her R's or L's, and the alphabet remained a mystery. "It didn't take long for my parents and teachers to realize I was severely dyslexic," she said. Shortly thereafter, Emily began at Benchmark. Emily said between the reading she was doing at Benchmark and her father reading to her every night at home, it didn't take much for her to begin falling in love with books. "My young heart yearned for those jumbles of squiggles to make sense," she stated.

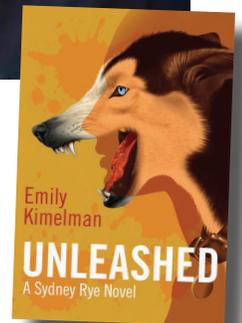
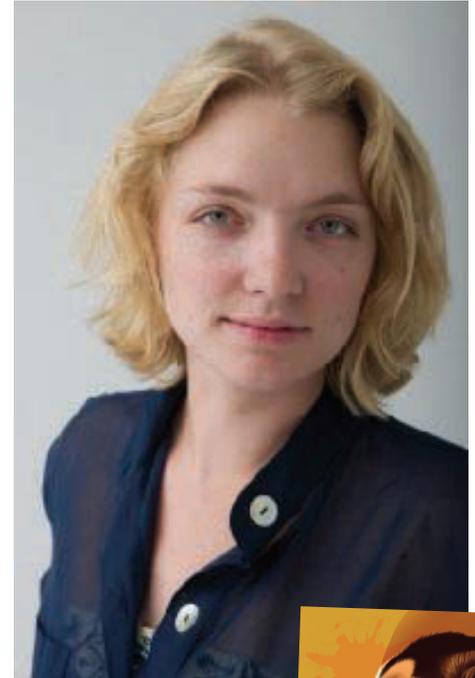
While it took some time and a lot of hard work, Emily remembers that at around the age of 10 or 11, something

just clicked and she could finally read. "Some of the first books I read were Agatha Christie novels, and mystery novels quickly became my genre," she stated.

From there, Emily began her path to become the author she is today. After spending her high school years at The Baldwin School, Emily went on to dedicate her collegiate studies at New York University (NYU) to the history of forensic science, homicide, and detective novels. "I always thought I couldn't be a writer, but I've always been a storyteller," she commented. "I remember that while I was at NYU, I read a terrible mystery novel and thought 'well, I could do better than that!'" And that she did.

Beginning in 2011, she began e-publishing the first of six mystery novels in her best-selling Sydney Rye series—an adult mystery series based on a strong female protagonist and her dog, Blue. Most recently, Emily has e-published an adult series called KISS, an apocalyptic urban fantasy serial, under the pen name E.J. Kimelman.

For the future, she looks forward to traveling to more exotic locales with her husband and dog to get ideas for her next books, and of course, to do more writing. "I have so many books I want to write," Emily said.



"There are people who want to read all kinds of material, and I hope to just keep building my readership. I love my readers and wouldn't be able to do what I do without them."

From the fact that Benchmark helped her embrace technology at an early age, to the confidence Benchmark developed in her, Emily sincerely credits her time at Benchmark for helping her get to where she is today. "I don't know who I would be without Benchmark," Emily said. "Benchmark really instilled in me that I could do absolutely anything and gave me confidence to do things in my life that I wouldn't have done otherwise."

Emily's advice to Benchmark students is to "really put in the work, because you will see it pay off. Take the confidence that Benchmark has in you and use it to be great. Benchmark wouldn't have accepted you if they didn't think you could do this. It's okay to get discouraged; you just can't let it stop you." 

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