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Meet
**Jamie
KUCIA**

The Author
& Publisher
Next Door



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From Bedtime Stories to Bookshelves

HOW JAMIE KUCIA BUILT SUNBERRY PRESS



Local author and Spaulding neighbor launches two children's book series and prepares for a national debut at the American Library Association Conference

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB JACOBS OF RJ3 STUDIOS



When you meet Jamie Kucia, you quickly discover two things: a love of storytelling and a deep affection for her daughter and their playful pup—who inspired the characters in her stories. A neighbor, children's author, and founder of Sunberry Press, Jamie is reaching a major professional milestone this spring with the launch of two debut books, each serving as the foundation for its own heart-centered series.

What began as stories scribbled in a notebook to answer her daughter's questions and create bedtime tales has grown into a thoughtful publishing venture rooted in creativity, character-building, and community.

A Dream That Grew Bigger Than One Book

Like many great ideas, Jamie's journey began at home, inspired by the everyday magic (and occasional mess!) of childhood. Her daughter's curiosity and playful energy—and the antics of their loyal pup—sparked the stories that would eventually become Ariel and Marigold Twinkletooth.

As she continued writing, Jamie realized she wasn't just creating one book; she was building story worlds inspired by everyday family moments.

Rather than waiting for a traditional publisher to approve her vision, Jamie took an entrepreneurial leap and founded Sunberry Press, an independent children's publishing house dedicated to producing high-quality books that nurture imagination while reinforcing the positive values parents care about most.

"I wanted creative control," Jamie says. "But more than that, I wanted to build something lasting—a brand that stands for quality and heart, and

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something that can grow alongside the children reading the stories.”

Two Series, Two Adventures

This year marks an exciting debut for Sunberry Press as Jamie introduces readers to two distinct series inspired by different moments of childhood.

The first release, *The Tissue Issue: Ariel and the Dirty, Yucky, Icky, Sticky, Stinky Tissue*, turns an everyday parenting challenge into a giggle-filled adventure. Every parent has been there—the sticky hand, the runny nose, and the refusal to grab a tissue. Through Ariel’s eyes, Jamie helps children (and parents!) navigate daily habits with humor.

At the same time, Jamie whisks readers into a magical world with

Marigold Twinkletooth and the Star-Coin Surprise: A Tooth Fairy Tale, a series celebrating childhood milestones. Inspired by her daughter’s imagination, Marigold Twinkletooth turns losing a first tooth into a whimsical celebration of growing up.

“Each series serves a different purpose,” Jamie explains. “One finds the fun in everyday routines, and the other leans into the sparkly magic of being little.”

Jamie hopes her stories become the kind children ask to read “just one more time” before bed, giggling at the adventures of Ariel and the mischievous pup along the way.

The Entrepreneurial Journey

Launching Sunberry Press meant stepping into roles far beyond “author.” Jamie

became a creative director, brand builder, and logistics expert, overseeing everything from selecting illustrators to ensuring the visual spirit of Ariel and Marigold matched the stories she imagined.

“It’s been one of the most challenging and rewarding things I’ve ever done,” Jamie says. “There’s so much invisible work behind a thirty-two-page picture book. Learning the technical side of publishing has made the creative side even more rewarding.”

Taking the Stage: The ALA Conference

While Sunberry Press was born right here in Clarence, it is already gaining national attention. This June, Jamie will travel to the American Library Association (ALA)

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Annual Conference & Exhibition, one of the largest gatherings of librarians and educators in the country, where thousands come to discover new books for children and families.

Jamie has been invited to host an official author signing, giving her the chance to showcase her debut titles directly to the librarians who help bring stories to young readers nationwide.

"To share Ariel and Marigold with librarians from across the country is an incredible opportunity," Jamie says. "Libraries play such an important role in helping stories reach children."

Rooted in Our Community

Despite the national buzz, Jamie's heart remains local. She believes literacy begins at home and grows through community connections, and she hopes her stories help families create joyful reading routines together. To celebrate her launch, she will appear at several local events this spring and summer, from neighborhood markets to school readings.

Families attending will meet Jamie, enjoy story time readings, and take home signed books.

"This community has been so supportive throughout this process,"

Jamie says. "Launching my first books here at home feels incredibly special."

Looking Ahead

As Sunberry Press grows, Jamie hopes to expand the company's catalog and eventually publish other authors who share her vision for imaginative, heart-centered children's stories. For now, she's celebrating an exciting milestone: two books, two series, and the beginning of a lifelong journey creating stories for children everywhere.

Discover Jamie's books and upcoming events at jamiekucia.com. Follow her on Instagram at @jamiekucia

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