As a high school student, she excelled by producing an award-winning citizen journalist documentary about Teen Court, where she served as a student attorney for cases involving youth offenders.

Her work caught the attention of 91.5 KRCC’s Operations Manager Mike Procell, who offered Brooks-Kistler a volunteer position that led to voiceover work for their “Looking Up” programming.

She also completed an associate’s degree in political science at Pikes Peak Community College.

Yet, even though she had compiled a prolific record of achievement, Brooks-Kistler never believed she could attend her dream school, Colorado College.

Despite hearing from others that CC was out of her reach, she applied for an El Pomar Scholarship and was selected. The scholarship covers her tuition, room, and board for four years at Colorado College.

“I’ve known about this scholarship since I was a kid and my mom told me, ‘Chloe, you should go for that scholarship.’”

Receiving the scholarship also was a relief for Brooks-Kistler and her family.

“I have two younger sisters, so I worried about how our family was going to pay for college,” she says. “The scholarship from El Pomar really helps. I don’t have that stress anymore and now I can completely focus on attending CC and receiving all the opportunities I’ve been given.”

She believes Colorado College will become more accessible for students from families like hers because of the Colorado Pledge, a pilot program the college launched at the beginning of the 2019-20 academic year that aims to make CC as affordable as the state’s flagship university for low- and middle-income Colorado families.

The college also has launched a $20 million fundraising initiative to permanently endow the Colorado Pledge and extend it beyond the pilot phase. With a funding model in place, the college hopes to grow attendance for students from Colorado.

“Students who grow up in the Springs don’t think they can get into Colorado College,” Brooks-Kistler says. “The Colorado Pledge is going to open up CC a lot more to them as a possibility.”

At Colorado College, she has been selected as a “community engaged fellow,” a program that connects students’
“STUDENTS WHO GROW UP IN THE SPRINGS DON’T THINK THEY CAN GET INTO COLORADO COLLEGE. THE COLORADO PLEDGE IS GOING TO OPEN UP CC A LOT MORE TO THEM AS A POSSIBILITY.”

coursework with community-based learning through four years of service. Students who become community engaged fellows are selected in part for their demonstrated commitment to community service.

She continues to work at KRCC as part of her commitment with the Community Engaged Fellows Program. Through the program that partners students with local organizations, she also has explored service with other local organizations, including Citizens Project, which encourages voter registration, and Inside Out Youth Services, which works with LGBTQ youth in the Colorado Springs area.

Although she is still completing her first semester at Colorado College, Brooks-Kistler says that she already feels comfortable at CC and appreciates the experiences the Block Plan provides, like close interactions with faculty and students, in-depth classroom discussions, and an emphasis of focusing on one class at a time. She plans to major in political science and study abroad, perhaps in Italy, the U.K., and Ireland.

“Colorado College is an amazing school and to have this place that provides so many opportunities right in your backyard makes it attractive for Colorado students,” she says.