

The Voice Of Silence

18 Year-Old Brett Banfe Learns To Speak Without Making A Sound

(NAPS)—A son who doesn't talk back. A brother who doesn't call his siblings names. A student who doesn't whisper during class. If this sounds ideal, meet Brett Banfe, an 18-year-old college student who has embarked on a year-long vow of silence to learn the true meaning of listening.

A conversation with a friend ultimately led Brett to silence. Joking together about whether or not the other could stop speaking, Brett came to realize that he was in fact a poor listener. Unaware of the national buzz he'd create, he decided that taking a vow of silence would actually test his listening skills and improve his ability to set and achieve goals.

Coincidentally, Brett's quest began on the eve of his college career in September, 2000. Leaving home and family for the first time, he set out for William Paterson University in Wayne, N.J. At a time when youth are eager to socialize and stay in touch with their parents, Brett set out to become the ultimate listener.

The timing was difficult to accept for Brett's mom, who would have easily looked to the telephone as a link to her son's new life. There were other obstacles to overcome including communications with professors, dorm mates and his friends back home, 200 miles away. When Motorola heard of Brett's mission, the company immediately identified a solution to his communication predicament

and donated seven of their popular Talkabout T900 2-way messaging devices to him, his friends and his family. With its typewriter-looking keyboard, this compact, wireless product enables Brett to send and receive text messages or e-mail from anywhere, at any time.

Brett is not tied down to a computer or reliant on a pen and paper to communicate. Instead, the T900 allows him to be in constant contact with those around him, as well as distant friends and family. Brett's mom called the T900 a "lifesaver," stating that it has been the family's "link to Brett."

The T900 has also helped Brett make the transition into college life. It has enabled him to communicate with other students and make new friends while keeping his pledge of silence. Making it even easier to communicate with new friends that don't own one, the T900 can communicate with any device that has e-mail capability including a regular PC or even a cell phone with e-mail functionality.

Who would have thought that silence would create such a loud buzz? Since declaring his objective, Brett has appeared on a variety of television shows, including the "Today Show," "Good Morning America," "Oprah" and MSNBC.



Brett Banfe

Banfe's decision has been inspirational to people around the world. Perhaps one of those most inspired by Banfe's vow and commitment to silence is his own mother. When Brett announced his decision to not speak for an entire year, his mother was so moved by his dedication to his vow of silence, she decided to give up smoking. She quit on the very day Brett uttered his last words, which, by the way were "It's going to be a journey, and it's a commitment that I made and I'm sticking to and I'll tell you about it in a year."

To find out more about Brett, visit his Web site, www.notspeaking.com. To find out more about the technology that is helping Brett keep his vow of silence, visit www.motorola/T900.com.