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## Students want to take hunger effort statewide

Fill the Dome adds up to 101 tons of food, \$106,000

Eighteen-year-old Peter Frei and several other local teens have an ambitious goal: end hunger in North Dakota.

By: [Kelly Smith](#), INFORUM

Eighteen-year-old Peter Frei and several other local teens have an ambitious goal: end hunger in North Dakota.

"We want to kind of go deeper and solve it," said the Fargo teen, a senior at Fargo Oak Grove Lutheran School.

The goal may seem lofty, but the students are used to setting high goals, accomplishing them and then exceeding them.

Since the third annual Fill the Dome food drive wrapped up Nov. 23, cash and cans continue to come in for the student-led project, which aimed to collect \$75,000 and 75 tons of food.

As of today, about \$106,000 and 101 tons of food have been collected.

"We'll have to go even higher next year," Fargo Shanley High School senior David Karaz said. "What's cool is just how much we've expanded (Fill the Dome). The more help we get, the better."

Students will celebrate their accomplishments on Dec. 22 and present a check to Fargo-based Great Plains Food Bank.

But the teens aren't done.

Frei and others now want to make a greater impact than the food drive.

This year's Fill the Dome aimed to not just collect cans and cash, but signatures for an online petition that would show policymakers the community's awareness of hunger.

Students only received about 3,200 signatures – far fewer than the 7,500 they aimed to get. They're not giving up, though.

"I don't think that discouraged us," Frei said.

In fact, the teens are studying about homelessness statistics and causes, trying to help solve a statewide problem. They then plan to present ideas to the North Dakota Legislature and to North Dakota's congressmen in the next couple of months.

"It's almost far-fetched," Frei said of their goal, adding, though, that a state as sparsely populated as North Dakota "shouldn't have homeless people at all."

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