

Is Flores the Latina star Dems have been waiting for?

By Benjy Sarlin, MSNBC

LAS VEGAS – “I don’t have the background of a typical politician, right?” Lucy Flores told a crowd of Democratic activists as she accepted the party’s nomination for lieutenant governor of Nevada in June.

It’s a line you’ve heard before: Candidates love to brag about how they didn’t grow up like those “typical” politicians. But there’s no other way to describe Flores, a Latina rising star who was born into an impoverished family of 13 children, whose mother abandoned her in grade school, who fell in with a gang, who was sentenced to a youth prison, who dropped out of high school and who became a lawyer and a state legislator— all by age 31.



Lucy Flores

“There are Lucys in every town across this state,” she told activists. “That’s why my focus is on making sure that this is a state that works for every Nevadan, not just the privileged few.”

Flores isn’t the only one betting big on her life story either. Nevada Democrats are looking to her underdog tale to lead their entire party in a challenging year.

Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval is running virtually unopposed and may challenge Sen. Harry Reid in 2016. Because the lieutenant governor would take over if Sandoval wins, Reid and Sandoval are each throwing their full weight behind strong candidates for that office – Flores for the Democrats and Mark Hutchison, a state senator and successful attorney, for the GOP. This proxy fight makes the Flores-Hutchison matchup one of the most closely watched races of the year in the West.

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