

18-year-old seeks state Senate seat

She's running against local legislator

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By TOM JACKSON

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SANDUSKY

Paloma De La Fuente, the 18-year-old Democrat running against state Sen. Theresa Gavarone, R-Bowling Green, says she hopes to give people hope and inspire the voters.

De La Fuente will face off against Gavarone in the Ohio Senate District 2 race. Ohio Senate District 2 includes all of Erie, Ottawa and Wood counties, the western half of Lucas County and small portions of Huron County.

De La Fuente noted how she'll be accepting campaign donations soon and said she will run hard for the position.

"This is my job now," she said.

The incumbent, Gavarone, 57, previously served in the Ohio House and was appointed to the Ohio Senate in 2019 after the previous senator, Randy Gardner, became chancellor of Ohio's higher education system.

Gavarone won about 62% of the vote in 2020 when she won a full four-year term facing off against Democrat

SENATE

■ FROM PAGE A1

Joel O'Dorisio, a Bowling Green State University professor and artist.

Gavarone ran for Congress in 2022 but lost in the Republican primary to J.R. Majewski. Gavarone then announced she would concentrate on seeking re-election to a new four-year term in the Ohio Senate this year.

De La Fuente, a Perrysburg resident, graduated from high school in Perrysburg. She took a gap semester and will

begin school in the spring semester at the University of Toledo, majoring in legal and paralegal studies. She plans to attend law school.

"Ohioans feel forgotten and left behind on the national stage and even on our local stage in Columbus. I think people feel hopeless, as though the future doesn't belong to them," De La Fuente said.

The core values for a leader should be empathy, kindness, compassion, humility and honesty, De La Fuente said, "not corruption, bribery, dark money and greed."

De La Fuente identified her

top four issues:

- Women's reproductive health
- The environment and protecting Ohio's water
- The economy and labor
- Education

She also plans to listen and find out what's important to voters.

De La Fuente's X account, @paloma_ohioSD2, includes a link in which supporters can pledge a donation. She said she'll be set up soon to accept donations for her candidacy.

"I don't like to ask people for money, but that is a part of politics," she said.



Provided photo

Paloma De La Fuente says she's making her first race for elective office.