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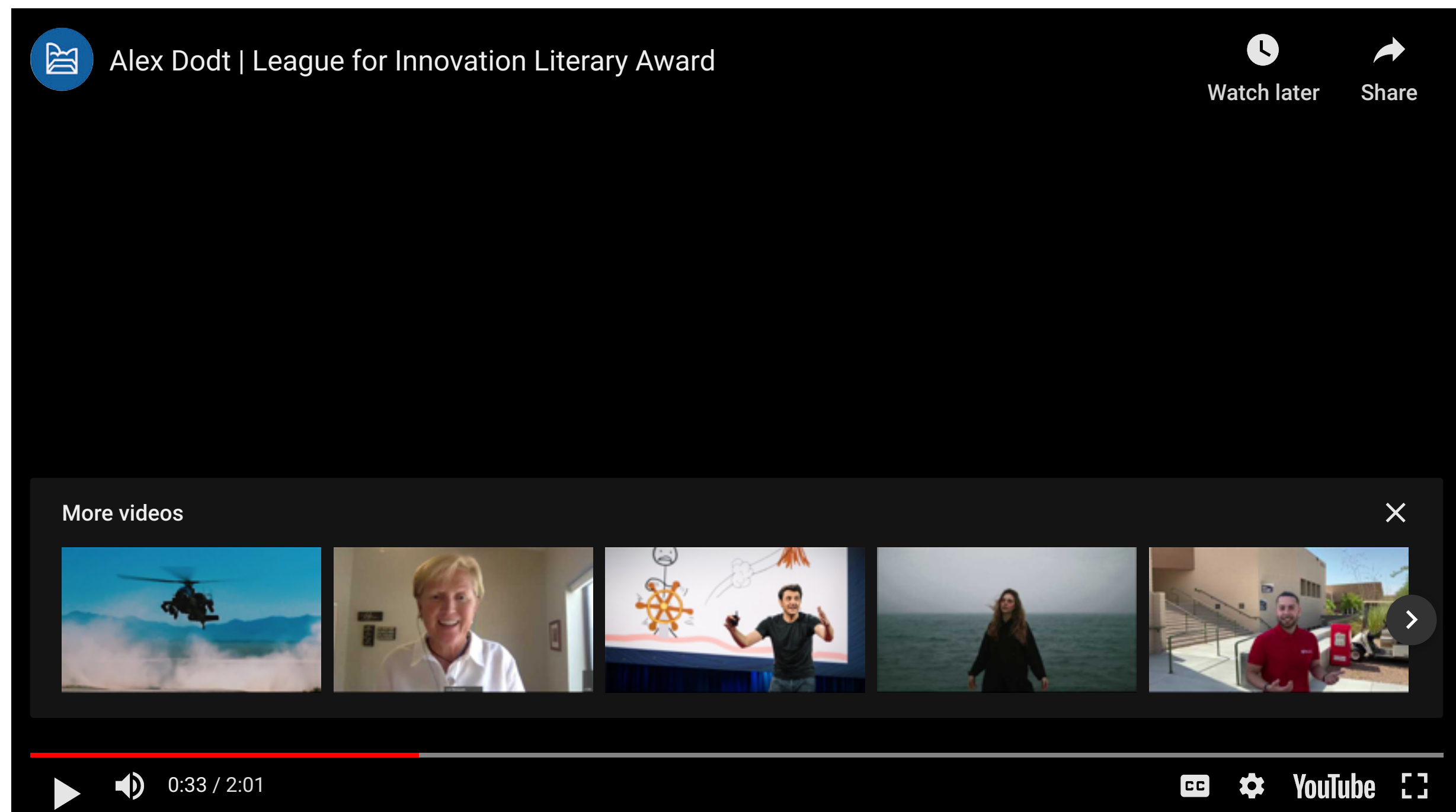
Mesa Community College Student And Valley Teacher Wins National Literary Competition

By Tom Maxedon
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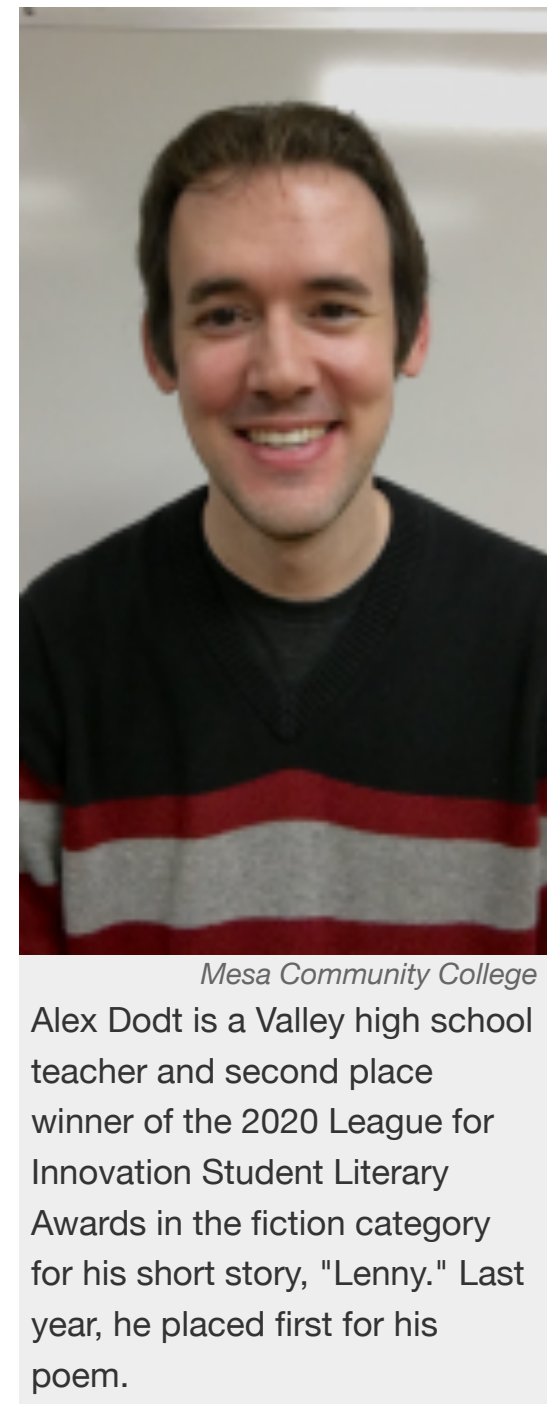
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A Mesa Community College student has placed second in a national literary competition for his short story.



Mesa Community College
Alex Dodt is a Valley high school teacher and second place winner of the 2020 League for Innovation Student Literary Awards in the fiction category for his short story, "Lenny." Last year, he placed first for his poem.

"Lenny" is a Christmas tale written by student Alex Dodt and describes a family's quest to pick out a tree.

Dodt is a Valley high school teacher with a degree in journalism from the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. He said while those skills have translated to his creative work, he has more freedom in fiction.

"The very immediate deadlines of print journalism especially are similar — the word count and the economy, simplicity and directness of language. But, I think I definitely get into some more ornate stuff in creative writing that no journalism editor would allow me to do," he said.

This is the second year in a row he has won at the national level. Last year, he placed first in the poetry competition.

While Dodt teaches history and philosophy, some of his students discovered his creative side and wanted to engage him on that front.

"So, I started up a creative writing club where we'll do some poetry, we'll do some fiction, just kind of whatever the kids want," he said. "It's really interesting to me to get on that side of the writing since I'm so green myself. I've only been really focused on fiction and poetry for a couple of years."

And yet, he's won twice in two years.

The award comes from the [League for Innovation](#), a national collective of community colleges.

Dodt receives \$500 from the League and his work is published in a print and electronic publication.

Each year, winners of the Maricopa County Community College District [Artists of Promise Creative Writing contest](#) are entered into the League for Innovation Student Literary Awards to compete nationally with other community college students.



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