

Documentary 'Third Degree Burnout – A Survivor's Guide' Receives United Nations International Impact Award

Award presented by the United Nations Association of Los Angeles during the 2025 City of Angels International Film Festival

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, December 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The feature documentary Third Degree Burnout – A Survivor's Guide has received the United Nations International Impact Award, recognizing its contribution to global conversations on burnout, resilience, public health, and planetary wellbeing. The award was presented by Shruthi Mathur, President of the United Nations Association of Los Angeles, in partnership with the City of Angels International Film Festival, founded by Lisa Crosato.

The award honors the documentary's ability to translate rigorous, evidence-based research into an accessible and emotionally resonant narrative -connecting personal burnout to broader systemic challenges including food systems, healthcare strain, climate stress, and social resilience. The recognition aligns with the spirit and values of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to health, education, and climate action.

Third Degree Burnout – A Survivor's Guide was produced by The Virsa Foundation Inc., a Boston-based nonprofit dedicated to connecting personal, public, and planetary health through research, storytelling, and systems-thinking. The film is rooted in insights from large-scale consumer research conducted through the Foundation's flagship JIVINITI Research and Advocacy Program.

"This award affirms a truth we hope viewers take with them," said Nivi Jaswal-Wirtjes, Director



Filmmaker Nivi Jaswal-Wirtjes with Award (City of Angels International Film Festival)

and Executive Producer of the film and Founder & President of The Virsa Foundation Inc.

"Burnout is not a personal failure - it is a systems signal. This film exists to help people see that connection clearly and to imagine pathways toward resilience that are grounded in evidence, compassion, and agency."

The documentary's creative origins and guiding purpose were explored in depth on the Making Media Now podcast, hosted by former PBS (WGBH, Boston) producer and independent media creator Michael Azevedo, and produced under the aegis of the Boston-based nonprofit Filmmakers Collaborative. The episode traces the personal and intellectual spark behind the film, offering listeners insight into the filmmaker's "WHY" and the early narrative seeds that shaped the documentary's direction.



Award Presented by the UN Association of LA

"Some films begin with an issue; others begin with a question," said Michael Azevedo. "What struck me in this conversation was how Third Degree Burnout emerged from lived experience, deep research, and a genuine search for meaning. That combination - heart, rigor, and curiosity - is often what gives a documentary its staying power."

“

What gives this film its power is the combination of lived experience, deep research, and a genuine search for meaning - heart, rigor, and curiosity working together."

*Michael Azevedo, Former
PBS/WGBH Producer, Host of
Making Media Now*

The film has screened across the United States and internationally, and received widespread recognition for its hybrid format, which blends expert interviews, original research, animation, and dramatized storytelling. Since launching its 2025 Film Festival Tour, the documentary has garnered more than 12 awards in approximately four months, reflecting strong resonance with juries and audiences across health, social impact, and environmental categories.

"As a festival strategist, I see firsthand which films truly connect with audiences," said Dr. Rebekah Louisa Smith, PhD, Festival Strategist for the documentary. "Third Degree Burnout – A Survivor's Guide stands out because it brings urgency, empathy, and clarity to an issue that affects people everywhere. It deserves to be seen widely - across the U.S. and around the world - because its message is both timely and universal."

“From the outset, this project required both precision and care,” added Anja Thompson at Superside, Lead Producer and Head of Operations for the film. “This recognition reflects the trust we placed in interdisciplinary collaboration and the responsibility we felt to steward a story that sits at the intersection of health, climate, and human resilience.”

As the film continues its festival journey and expands into educational and community-based screenings, The Virsa Foundation Inc. is preparing for 2026 as its ‘Year of Impact.’ The Foundation is developing a broader impact campaign around the documentary, focused on coalition-building, educational outreach, and resource development to support individuals and institutions navigating burnout and systemic stress. [CLICK HERE FOR 2025 FESTIVAL TOUR!](#)

Sustaining and scaling this next phase of work will require philanthropic support. [CLICK HERE TO CONTRIBUTE!](#) The Virsa Foundation Inc is a 501c3 nonprofit and Tax Deductions are available.

The Making Media Now podcast episode featuring Third Degree Burnout – A Survivor’s Guide is now available. [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN!](#)

To learn more, visit the Making Media Now website homepage: <https://fcmakingmedia.podbean.com/>

About The Virsa Foundation Inc and JVINITI:

The Virsa Foundation Inc. is a Boston-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing personal, public, and planetary



Festival Strategist, Dr. Rebekah Louisa Smith with Dir and Exec Producer, Nivi Jaswal-Wirtjes



Awards Ceremony at the City of Angels International Film Festival

health through evidence-based research, creative storytelling, and systems-thinking. Its flagship initiative, the JIVINITI Research and Advocacy Program, produces large-scale consumer research and translates insights into films, educational tools, and impact campaigns designed to foster resilience, informed decision-making, and collective action.

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