

circle of life

Clients approaching the LifeWorks Youth & Family Alliance—a nonprofit in Austin, Texas, serving those at risk—might first notice the canted columns that rise the full height of the building by Miró Rivera Architects. Then there's what's behind the columns. The facade sports bands of cedar, stucco, and aluminum, a trio meant to symbolize counseling, education, and development, the three types of activities taking place inside.

Practically every inch of the 33,600-square-foot interior receives daylight, bounced off the super-reflective ceilings. Solar power generators contribute to a nearly 80 percent reduction in the electrical bill. Sun also shines through the oculus above the platform

DESIGN **wire** GREEN



that bridges the breezeway between the building's two volumes, facilitating alfresco meetings. To encourage eco-commuting, bike racks and electric-car charging stations are provided, and the location is deliberately near several transit routes. Is it working? A five-star rating from Austin Energy Green Building says, "You bet."

Clockwise from top: A breezeway is a major feature of Miró Rivera Architects's building for the LifeWorks Youth & Family Alliance in Austin, Texas. The breezeway's two oculi, the lower one with a steel parapet. Bands of cedar, stucco, and aluminum on the facade. ➤