

CHICAGO

New Architecture Sparks Revival and Spurs Debate

Commentary by
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Green building gets star treatment The Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) new Santa



DiCaprio (center) and David (right) at the NRDC opening.

Monica office has attracted a star following. Named the Robert Redford

Building after its major donor, the building recently earned a top platinum LEED rating from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Its ground floor attractions, the David Family Environmental Action Center and the Leonardo DiCaprio e-Activism Zone, were dedicated in January by actor DiCaprio and TV producer Laurie David, wife of *Seinfeld* creator Larry David.

Designed by Moule & Polyzoides Architects and Urbanists of Pasadena, the building has three atria to bring in natural light. It will use 60 percent less water than comparable build-

ings, and 20 percent of its electricity is generated by rooftop solar panels. The ground floor features exhibits on issues like water pollution and global warming, and a small retail store for eco-friendly clothing and outdoor gear. "The value of this building as a demonstration project cannot be overstated," said Christine Ervin, USGBC's president, at the January dedication. *Deborah Snoonian, P.E.*