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Structures Awards 2022

# Nvidia Voyager is the 2022 Structures honoree for Interiors Project

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**Editor's note:** Each year, the Silicon Valley Business Journal presents its Structures Awards, which honor the best commercial real estate projects, deals and people in the region. Leading up to a special awards ceremony and celebration this Thursday, the SVBJ will announce a group of this year's winners each day. For tickets to the event at the Signia by Hilton in San Jose, [click here](#).



JASON O'REAR

## **Nvidia's newest campus addition, Voyager, casts a futuristic presence along San Tomas Expressway. Inside, nature's inspiration is everywhere.**

Nvidia's Voyager office building represented an effort bring nature indoors.

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While studying electrical engineering at Oregon State University in the early 1980s, Nvidia founder and CEO Jensen Huang often admired the Pacific Northwest's lush, mountainous terrain.

Thirty-five years later, that ecosystem became the design inspiration for a series of immense vertical living walls in Voyager, the second phase of the technology company's corporate campus. Nvidia is working with Sares Regis of Northern California and architecture firm Gensler to develop its Santa Clara-based headquarters.

Huang's belief that innovation comes through collaboration was the mantra the architects used to inform Voyager's 750,000-square-foot open office and lab space design.

"What Huang liked to say is that to get 3,400 people to work together, you need to bring them all into one room," Gensler principal and managing director Hao Ko said of the number of employees who could eventually occupy Voyager. "Everything else was about how to make it a great human experience, and how to mitigate sound."

Enter David Brenner — horticulture pioneer, artist and founder of Habitat Horticulture, a Berkeley-based living wall and botanic installer — who was charged with warming up the space and abating the acoustical challenges. The intention was to create a central "mountain" within the building and infuse the three-story space with horizontal and vertical greenery.

"We used plants not only to help inspire people by bringing the outdoors in, but it also helped attenuate sound in a large room," Ko said.

Nature-inspired metaphors like mountains, canyons and valleys serve as significant landmarks to enhance wayfinding in the substantial space. The trio of 50-foot-by-18-foot mountain installations are meant to connect people horizontally and vertically. The valleys are widely used for circulation, and drive daylight into the lower floors.

Open booths and tables dot the space for impromptu meetings and eating. A canyon with terraced flooring serves as an all-hands space for large gatherings and announcements. All offices are oriented toward windows so employees have outside views. Elevated outdoor “bird nests” equipped with tables, seating and Wi-Fi offer additional space to work and meet.

The soaring, undulating structure — which boasts a complementary design to its phase one neighbor, Endeavor — leaves an indelible and architecturally significant mark on the Silicon Valley horizon. The dual corporate buildings are linked by a tree-lined park and shaded by a solar-paneled aerial trellis.

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## Key Facts

**Address:** 2888 San Tomas Expressway, Santa Clara

**Size:** 750,000 square feet with basement parking

**Cost:** Confidential

**Status:** Started in May 2018; completed in February 2022 (most Nvidia employees still currently work from home)

**Unique feature:** Three 50-foot-by-18-foot vertical living walls that include 13 different plant species.

**Tidbit:** Voyager joins the similarly-sized Endeavor as the primary buildings of Nvidia’s headquarters campus. In 2018, as Endeavor came online, the Silicon Valley Business Journal awarded the developing campus its Structures Milestone project of the year.

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## Key Players

**Development manager:** Sares Regis Group of Northern California

**General contractor:** Devcon Construction Inc.

**Architect:** Gensler

**Structural engineering:** IMEG Corp.

**Landscape architect:** Hood Design Studio/Walter Hood

**Living walls:** Habitat Horticulture/David Brenner



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