

# Obituary: Stewart Morris

March 18, 2024

[Stewart Morris](#), one of the founding fathers of what is now Houston Christian University, died March 11. He was 104. He was born Oct. 28, 1919, to William Carloss and Willie Stewart Morris in Houston. He began work as an office boy at age 10, sweeping floors, running errands and tending to other miscellaneous tasks for \$5 a week at Stewart Title, a company his extended family founded in 1893. He went on to become longtime president and chairman emeritus of the company, now known as Stewart Information International. Morris earned degrees from the University of Texas and Southern Methodist University Law School. He served as an officer in the U.S. Navy in the Pacific Theater of Operations during World War II. Morris secured the funding for the establishment of Houston Baptist College and was instrumental in its founding. HCU President Robert Sloan said Morris “sustained the university in times of economic distress, and throughout the years has given to every major project in our history.” In addition to endowing several scholarships at the university, Morris and his family gave the lead gift to establish the Joella and Stewart Morris Cultural Arts Center and the Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty at HCU. Morris House, the university president’s home, was named in his honor. The university awarded him its inaugural Founders Medal, along with its Spirit of Excellence Award on two occasions and the President’s Lifetime Achievement Award. The Joella and Stewart Morris Foundation also received the HCU Legacy Award. Morris was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Joella Mitchell Morris, in 2013. He is survived by three children: Carlotta Coffman, Stewart Morris Jr. and Lisa Simon; eight grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. A



celebration of life service in his honor is scheduled at 1 p.m. on April 6 at Second Baptist Church in Houston. [Memorial gifts](#) can be made to the Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty at HCU. Call 281-649-3222 or mail Houston Christian University Advancement Lockbox, P.O. Box 4897, Dept. 527, Houston, TX 77210.