



Dr. Herbert Nathaniel Watkins Sr.

August 29, 1940 - February 26, 2026

A Life Well Lived • 85 Years of Excellence, Dedication & Contribution

Born August 29, 1940 | El Dorado, Arkansas

Died February 26, 2026 | Buda, Texas

Herbert (Herb) N. Watkins departed this life after 85 remarkable years, leaving behind a legacy shaped over a lifetime of service to his classrooms, communities, and family. A husband, a father, a scholar, and an educator, he was a man of relentless curiosity, curated habits, and quiet resolve whose influence will ripple far beyond his years.

Born in El Dorado, Arkansas, Herb was educated in a one-room schoolhouse where he earned his high school diploma at the age of 14. After working for a few years, he served four years in the United States Air Force, earning an honorable discharge. He then enrolled at Kentucky State College (now Kentucky State University), where he played football, pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and excelled academically — earning the nickname “4-Point Watkins” from his peers. Herb went on to earn advanced degrees from the University of Wisconsin–Madison before devoting his professional life to higher education as a teacher and administrator, primarily at historically Black colleges.

It was at Kentucky State where he met his future wife, Beverly Ann (Neal) Watkins. Herb and Beverly married and remained lifelong partners until his passing. As a young graduate student in Madison, they welcomed their daughter Donna, and a few years later, after Herb began his career as a young professor in Greensboro, North Carolina, their son Herb Jr. was born.

Alongside his professional work, Herb made meaningful contributions as a member of Sigma Pi Phi, a national fraternity of African American leaders, where he served as National Chair of the Audit and Budget Committee for many years. He served on local United Way boards in multiple cities and worked tirelessly to establish the Permanent Alumni Scholarship Fund as an enduring resource for current and future students at Kentucky State University.

Herb was also a chess player, an avid league bowler, and a runner who completed two marathons.

Herb lives on in the memories of his family, his students, and the institutional structures he helped establish and sustain. His quiet drive to always do the right thing is an example to all who knew him.

Herb is survived by his wife Beverly; their children Donna and Herb Jr.; his daughter-in-law Dottie; his granddaughter Maya; his sister Amelia Brown and her sons Sebastien, Nikolai, and Mario; his brother Roger Husband and his wife Lisa and their children, niece Rianna and her daughter grandniece Logyn, and nephew Robert; and his niece Cassandra Davis and her daughter, grandniece Milan.

Cemetery Details

Private Burial

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAR **20**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Santa Cruz Catholic Church
1100 Main Street
Buda, TX 78610

Tribute Wall



“ *John and I became friends with Herb when Herb Jr. married our daughter, Dottie. I found him to be a man of quiet dignity, grace kindness. We will surely miss him.* ”

John and Sharon Lancaster - March 19 at 02:04 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Herbert Nathaniel Watkins Sr..* ”



March 18 at 09:24 AM