

# Researcher ‘On Verge of Making Very Significant’ Coronavirus Findings Shot to Death

By [Tim Stelloh](#)

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*The Pennsylvania researcher “was on the verge of making very significant findings toward understanding the cellular mechanisms that underlie” COVID-19, his university said.*

Below are selected quotes from NBC report together with a statement from the the University Research Unit to which he was affiliated.

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A medical researcher said to be on the “verge of making very significant” [coronavirus](#) findings was found shot to death over the weekend in Pennsylvania, officials said.

**Bing Liu**, 37, a researcher at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, was found dead Saturday inside a home in Ross Township, north of Pittsburgh, the Allegheny County medical examiner said.

He had been shot in the head and the neck, the agency said.

An hour after Liu’s body was discovered, a second person, **Hao Gu**, 46, was found dead inside a car less than a mile away, the agency said.

Ross Township police **Detective Sgt. Brian Kohlhepp** told NBC News that the men knew each other. Investigators believe Gu killed Liu before returning to his car, where he died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The investigation has been forwarded to federal authorities because neither of the men were U.S. citizens.

In a statement, the University of Pittsburgh described him as an excellent mentor and prolific researcher who had co-authored more than 30 papers. His work focused on systems biology.

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The Following are excerpts from a text by the [Department of the School of Medicine](#), which confirms the nature of his scientific work (emphasis added)

**“Bing was on the verge of making very significant findings toward understanding the cellular mechanisms that underlie SARS-CoV-2 infection and the cellular basis of the following complications,”** the school said. “We will make an effort to complete

what he started in an effort to pay homage to his scientific excellence.”



It is with deep sadness and shock that we learned of the untimely passing of Dr. Bing Liu, Research Assistant Professor in our department on Saturday, May 2nd, 2020.

[Dr. Bing Liu](#) was an outstanding researcher, who has earned the respect and appreciation of many colleagues in the field, and made unique contributions to science. His area of expertise was computational modeling and analysis of biological systems dynamics. He had developed high-performance computing techniques and advanced machine-learning approaches for modeling the time evolution of complex cellular interactions, Bayesian network models and methods, and statistical model checking and sensitivity analyses.

Dr. Liu received his BS and PhD in Computer Science, at the National University of Singapore, under the supervisions of Drs. [P.S. Thiagarajan](#) and [David Hsu](#), and did his postdoctoral studies in the lab of [Professor Dr. Edmund Clarke](#) at Carnegie Mellon University, after which he joined the Bahar lab, as a Research Associate, and was recently promoted to a Research Assistant Professor position within our department.

**Bing was on the verge of making very significant findings toward understanding the cellular mechanisms that underlie SARS-CoV-2 infection and the cellular basis of the following complications. We will make an effort to complete what he started in an effort to pay homage to his scientific excellence.**

His loss will be felt throughout the entire scientific community. Please keep his family, friends, and colleagues in your thoughts. Thank you.

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**Tim Stelloh** is a reporter for NBC News, based in California.

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*Featured image is from University of Pittsburgh*

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