

PINECREST



PHOTOS BY NISSA BENJAMIN/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

'WE NEEDED TO HELP': Gulliver Prep student Julian Costa shows how a solar-powered water purification system works. This system might be sent to help people in Haiti.

STUDENTS SHOW SMARTS, COMPASSION

■ Students at Gulliver Prep in Pinecrest are developing ways to provide clean drinking water to storm-ravaged Haiti.

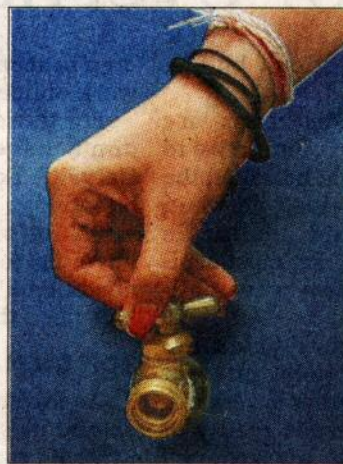
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What started off as a science project at Gulliver Prep will soon provide clean drinking water to people in Haiti.

A team of 13 biomedical sciences and engineering students invented a solar-powered water purification system that they'll be sending to a hospital when the school year starts.

The project first took off last September, after a string of tropical storms and hurricanes ravaged Haiti, killing hundreds and leaving thousands homeless.

"We saw everything that happened and knew we



CLEAN WATER: Nikita Mayani holds the handle where water will pour from the system.

needed to help," said Julian Costa, 17.

The students had learned that access to clean drinking

water was a problem in Haiti. So they decided to invent a water-purification system that would work well in that country's conditions.

For an entire month, students in the biomedical sciences program cultured bacteria similar to that found in Haiti's water. They then studied different ways to kill the bacteria, ranging from distillation to ultraviolet light purification.

"The UV light was one of the most effective things we tried," explained Nikita Mayani, 15, a biomedical sciences student.

Nikita and her peers passed the information along to students in the school's engineering program who were to design and build a prototype.