

## Local twins to receive smile makeovers

NORTH COUNTY —

Two teens born with a rare birth defect will receive life-changing services thanks to a special partnership between Vista Community Clinic and Fresh Start Surgical Gifts.

Stephanie and Ramses, twins who attend San Marcos High School, were born with amelogenesis imperfecta, a genetic condition that impedes the development of enamel. Without enamel on their teeth, the twins have had difficulty eating, brushing their teeth, and are self-conscious about smiling.

Vista Community Clinic and Fresh Start Surgical Gifts, a local nonprofit which provides free reconstructive surgery, speech therapy, and laser and dental procedures to children in need, are teaming up to change all that. Fresh Start Surgical Gifts will provide all of the necessary crowns and molds. Treatment will be provided through a team of volunteers led by Steven Beal, DDS. Vista Community Clinic, which provides primary health care to more than 51,000 patients each year, will provide the twins' fluoride treatments, hygiene and routine care.

"I am excited," Stephanie said. "This would change the way people look at me. They judge me. I don't pay attention though — I don't want it to hurt me."

Her brother agrees. "I think we've been through a lot of pain already," Ramses said. "I know this treatment is going to hurt but, you know, nothing is impossible. I won't let it stop me from talking to girls."

The twins' transformation is expected to take several months to complete.