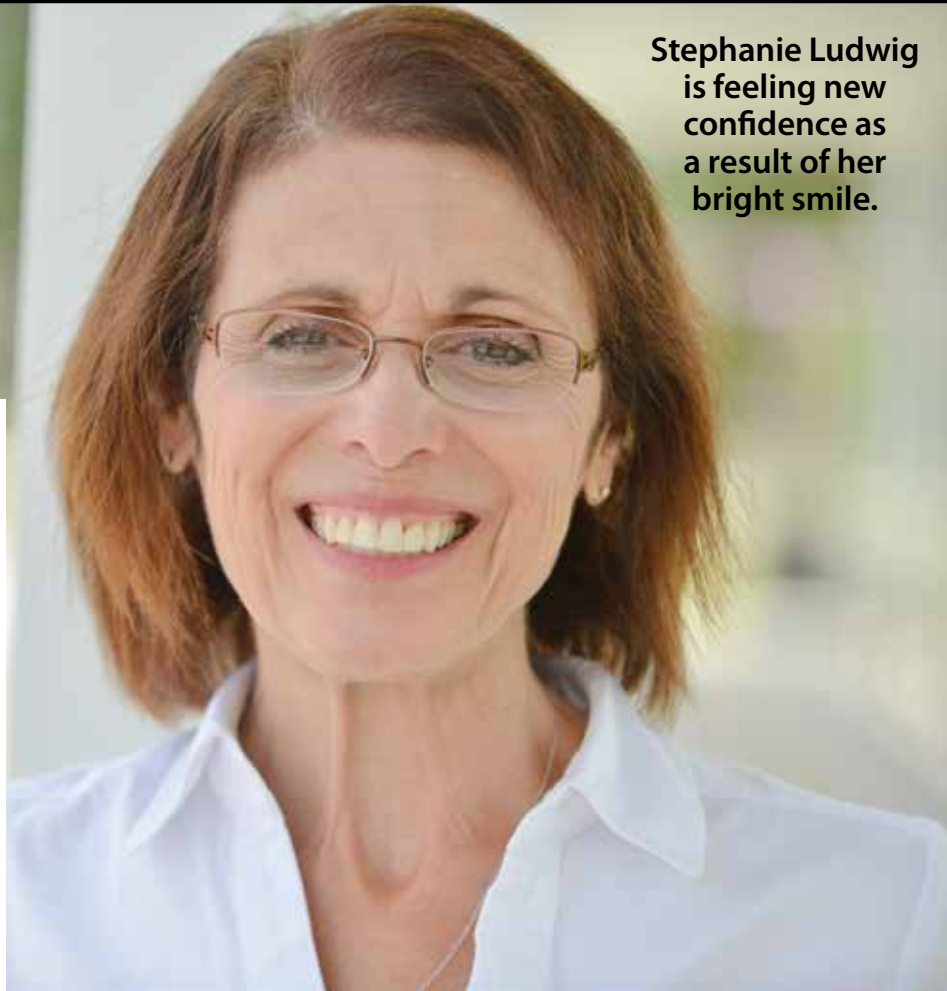


A Dream Smile Becomes Reality

A trusted family dentist has the right skills to make dreams come true.

Stephen Blank, DDS

www.PSLdentist.com



Stephanie Ludwig is feeling new confidence as a result of her bright smile.

FHCN PHOTO BY MARC EDWARDS

Like so many women, elementary school ESE paraprofessional Stephanie Ludwig for many years placed her personal needs well below those of her son and husband.

“My son had just graduated college. And then my husband bought a Harley. I thought, *I work hard; it’s time to do something for me.*” Stephanie says with a chuckle.

Stephanie turned to the family’s trusted dentist to fulfill her dreams.

“We’ve relied on Dr. Blank for many, many years. He took care of my son’s dental needs since age four, when he chipped a tooth. He’s taken care of both my parents, my mother-in-law, my husband and me.”

Stephen G. Blank, DDS, practices cosmetic and functional dentistry in Port St. Lucie. Considering each patient’s needs and expectations, Dr. Blank chooses his cosmetic dentistry procedures and methods carefully. He takes his time in evaluating both the patient’s dental condition and how the new smile will fit with other facial features.

Affirms Dr. Blank: “Stephanie has been a patient of mine for almost twenty years. She’s wanted to fix her smile but only recently has been willing and able to make it a priority.

“A beautiful smile is the best accessory and can make a positive difference in a person’s confidence and self-regard. That’s the underlying assumption driving all of our efforts in the work we do for our patients. We design a plan that corrects any underlying issues so that the stunning smile we create will last.”

Stephanie’s treatment began with the first priority of correcting the large

amount of space separating her front teeth. She was delighted to learn of a new alternative to traditional braces.

“I’m fifty-eight and had no interest in metal braces like those my son wore as a teenager,” Stephanie declares emphatically.

“Invisalign is an effective option for patients like Stephanie with crooked or spaced teeth. It works well for patients whose teeth are either spaced too closely together or are spread too far apart,” observes Dr. Blank.

“There were several additional concerns to address,” recalls Dr. Blank. “Her

lateral incisors, the small teeth on either side of the front teeth, weren’t sufficiently large to hold her front teeth in the correct position. One had been crowned years before and the crown wasn’t in good shape. And she had some pretty significant discoloration overall.”

Invisalign®

Invisalign is an almost invisible method to straighten teeth without metal wires, traditional braces, or brackets, and the aligners are removable for eating and dental hygiene.

“Once we determine that a patient is a good candidate for Invisalign, which Stephanie was, the case begins by taking x-rays and impressions of our patient’s teeth. I submit the data, along with a written prescription describing the technical details and types of movements I want to accomplish, to Align Technology, the developer of Invisalign.

“Using three-D computer technology, they digitize this information, formulating a treatment plan showing the projected movements step-by-step. We work back and forth with the lab technician, looking at the requirements and evaluating the computer analysis.”

As soon as the dentist approves the plan, the Invisalign software determines the number of aligners the patient will require to straighten his or her teeth. A series of precisely customized, clear, plastic aligners are fabricated to achieve that goal.

The aligners are then sent back to the dentist. The patient is given the first set of aligners, which are worn for two weeks. Each aligner moves teeth

incrementally, millimeter by millimeter, through a combination of movements, just like traditional metal braces do.

The aligners are very comfortable to wear. When patients first put them on, they feel like there is something tight over all of their teeth, but within a short time that dissipates. Patients can often tell which teeth are being moved.

Invisalign provides many advantages to qualified patients, points out Dr. Blank: “They can remove them to eat their meals so there are no food restrictions like there are with traditional

braces. Patients can floss their teeth and brush them regularly because there is nothing in the way. The aligners are clear, so they are almost invisible. Patients report that their friends don’t know they are wearing Invisalign aligners.

“And for patients whose teeth are very crooked but who want veneers, Invisalign can be used initially to give the patient better alignment so that when we adhere the veneers, the cosmetic outcome will be much better.”

Smiling with pride

Stephanie estimates it only took about nine months from start to finish to straighten her teeth. “Invisalign was really great, easy to wear and no one could see them,” she recalls. “They corrected the slight overbite I had as well as the spaces.

The next step to creating the smile of her dreams was to remove the discoloration with a professional whitening treatment called *Opalescence*. “It’s a tried-and-true product,” explains Dr. Blank. “We’ve used it for a long time with very, very good results. It pulls out the colors that the teeth have absorbed over the years. With *Opalescence*, the teeth become lighter within about two weeks and remain strong and durable.”

“I look at myself now and think, *Wow!*” Stephanie reflects happily. “I have perfect strangers coming up to me and complimenting my teeth. Friends who haven’t seen me in a long time tell me how good I look. They say, *We can’t figure out what’s different.*”

“Every step along the way, Dr. Blank was so helpful. You’re not ever rushed and you don’t feel nervous in his care. If I became uncomfortable, he’d just get on the computer and show me what was happening; he’s really one of a kind.

“The girls in the office were fantastic, too, just so positive and supportive at each step. The whole office staff

makes you feel like family.

“It really does make you just feel so much better about yourself when your smile is so bright and clean,” says Stephanie.

“Now, I really take pride in my teeth.

FHCN—Elizabeth A. Leib

View your own Virtual Smile Makeover

To learn more about *Invisalign* by Dr. Blank, go to www.PSLDENTIST.com/invisalign. For a complimentary Invisalign consultation, call the office and ask!



FHCN FILE PHOTO



Invisalign® is the alternative to traditional braces. Comfortable and effective, they are nearly invisible when you smile and you can continue to enjoy your favorite foods. You are able to take them out to brush and floss. Dr. Blank offers complimentary consultations for patients considering Invisalign.



Stephen G. Blank, DDS, is a 1982 graduate of Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago. He has since completed intensive continuing education studies. Dr. Blank has studied TMJ under Mark Piper, MD, DMD, at the Piper Education and Research Center. He has completed the course continuum at the Dawson Center for Advanced Dental Studies. Dr. Blank was a clinical instructor with the Hornbrook Group, teaching dentists from all parts of the country in live, hands-on courses on the various aspects of smile design, occlusion, full mouth reconstruction, and complete patient care. He is a facilitator/mentor with the Dental Boot Kamp program. Dr. Blank enjoys teaching dental teams around the country.

Scan the QR code for Dr. Blank’s contact information.



SNAP Instant Dental Imaging

Dr. Blank and his staff look forward to meeting the readers of *Florida Health Care News*. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (772) 878-7348. His office is located at 184 NW Central Park Plaza in Port St. Lucie. Ask how you can see your smile enhanced with SNAP Instant Dental Imaging. You will be able to see your new smile before you make any decisions.



Gold Medal Winner

Dr. Blank was awarded gold medals by the Florida Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (FACD) Scientific Session competition, which is designed to reward excellence in clinical cosmetic dentistry. The FACD is an organization devoted to seeking improvements in the science and art of cosmetic dentistry.

Dr. Blank invites you to visit his website at www.PSLDENTIST.com.