On July 26, B-CU Athletic Director Lynn Thompson announced that an agreement in principal has been reached with Jason Beverlin to become the Wildcats’ new Head Baseball Coach.

Beverlin, 37, was the pitching coach at the University of Tennessee and played professionally with the Cleveland Indians and Detroit Tigers after being selected by the Oakland A’s in the fourth round of the 1994 Major League Draft.

“We have a championship-caliber team returning, and we wanted to make sure that we placed significant attention on the pitching aspects of our program,” Thompson said. “New bat regulations in college baseball have made pitching and defense more important than ever, and to have a new head coach with extensive knowledge of pitching, professional experience and upper Division I recruiting savvy is the right combination for us to continue our quest to reach the College World Series.”

Beverlin replaces Mervyl Melendez, who accepted the head coaching position at Alabama State after 12 seasons with the Wildcats.

“I think it’s an extreme honor to join the Bethune-Cookman Athletic Department family,” said Beverlin. “Coach Melendez did an unbelievable job here; and while we hope to continue the tradition of success he started here, we want to take that to the next level in getting this program to a Super Regional and the ultimate goal of going to the College World Series.”

Beverlin comes to Bethune-Cookman from Tennessee, where he was the pitching coach the past two seasons. Over his time with the Volunteers, the pitching staff’s earned run average improved from 6.16 in 2009 to 5.28 in 2011. He inherits a Wildcat pitching staff led by Freshman All-American Scott Garner, former Freshman All-American Ali Simpson and returning All-MEAC performers Patrick Goelz, Jordan Dailey and Gabriel Hernandez, and others who could be direct beneficiaries of Beverlin’s professional and collegiate experience.

He began his coaching career as a member of the staff at Georgia Southern (GSU) from 2009-10. While at GSU, he helped develop an All-Southern Conference pick, another selected in the draft and a freshman that led the staff in appearances, while positioning several players for free agent signings through his career, with 22 players he’s coached getting an opportunity to play professionally.

In addition to proven player development, Beverlin has show recruiting ability as well, notably bringing in All-American and 25th round draft pick Chris Mederos to GSU, and current UT closer Nick Williams.

Beverlin, a former All-American pitcher at Western Carolina University, also brings 13 years of professional playing experience to the Wildcats program.

After one year in the Oakland organization, Beverlin was traded to the New York Yankees, advancing to Class A during his six years in the Yankees organization. Beverlin joined the Anaheim Angels and played in their organization in 2001.

The following year he was a member of the Cleveland Indians, where he made his debut in the majors. That same year he moved to the Detroit Tigers and also got the call to the big leagues. Beverlin made seven career appearances with the Indians and Tigers during the 2002 season. He made four relief appearances for the Indians and started three games for the Tigers.

Adding more diversity to his experience, Beverlin played three years professionally in Japan for the Yakult Swallows and Yokohama Baystars of the Nippon Professional Baseball League. He was selected as an All-Star in 2004.

Beverlin’s wife, Heather, and two sons, Cole and Lucas, will be joining him in Daytona Beach.
Dr. Paula McKenzie, associate professor of communication, is conducting research at the Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) in Washington, D.C., this summer and has taken along the work of B-CU’s founder.

McKenzie recently discussed with the WIFP summer interns her critical analysis of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune’s 1939 speech, “What Does American Freedom Mean to Me?”

“It is an honor to have a chance to talk with WIFP interns,” said McKenzie. “I’m interested in knowing what they think about Dr. Bethune’s speech and I am looking forward to a discussion about activism.”

On the eve of America’s entrance into World War II, Bethune gave her speech as she joined a panel discussion on NBC radio’s weekly public affairs broadcast of “America’s Town Meeting of the Air.”

She concluded with a hopeful statement for equality in democracy:

“Perhaps the greatest battle is before us, the fight for a new America: fearless, free, united, morally re-armed, in which 12 million Negroes, shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Americans, will strive that this nation under God will have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, for the people and by the people shall not perish from the earth. This dream, this idea, this aspiration, this is what American democracy means to me.”

The United Methodist Church Women’s School of Christian Mission held a very successful Annual Conference on the grounds of B-CU from July 19-24.

Approximately 175 people attended the weekday events and nearly 500 people attended the weekend conference events.

According to Jackie Whitehouse, the dean of the School of Christian Mission, the attendees not only took classes, but they attended focus groups on human trafficking, how to become a Deaconess, and social justice. The district officers received officer update information from the conference team. The youth participated in workshops and also held a talent show.

“Thank you so much for all you did,” said Whitehouse. “We really appreciate Bethune-Cookman University welcoming us with open arms.”

Starting August 1 at 10 a.m., tickets for the Wintley Phipps concert will go on sale at the B-CU box office and at Ticketmaster. This fall, the Grammy-nominated international singer and recording artist will perform on campus with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra.

Phipps is widely known for his performance of “Amazing Grace” at the 2009 Inaugural Prayer Service for President Barack Obama at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC.

The event will support the Sallie Nichols Shelton Culver Professional Leadership Endowed Scholarship.

The B-CU concert will be at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 23 in the Mary McLeod Bethune Performing Arts Center. Call the box office at (386) 481-2926.